

**Minutes of the Municipal District of Shannon Meeting
held on Tuesday 26th May 2015 at 9:45 am, at the offices of the
Municipal District, Town Hall, Shannon, Co. Clare**

Present: Councillors Cathal Crowe (Cathaoirleach), Pat McMahon, PJ Ryan, Gerard Flynn, Mike McKee & John Crowe

Mr Niall Barrett, Area Coordinator, Mr Eugene O'Shea, Senior Executive Engineer, Fiona Mooney, Meetings Administrator.

1. Minutes of meeting of Shannon Municipal District held on 25th March 2015

The minutes of the meeting of 25th March 2015 were proposed by Cllr Ryan, seconded by Cllr McKee and agreed.

2. Minutes of meeting of Shannon Municipal District held on 30th March 2015

The minutes of the meeting of 30th March 2015 were proposed by Cllr Flynn, seconded by Cllr McMahon and agreed.

3. Meeting with Irish Water

Members expressed disappointment that there was no news of a meeting in the public domain with representatives of Irish Water. The chairman read correspondence received from Irish Water on 25th May in response to correspondence inviting Irish Water representatives to attend a statutory meeting. It was agreed to reissue invitation to Irish Water to meet the members in a public forum, and to have the item on the agenda again.

4. Fix date for AGM

Monday 15th June 2015 was fixed as the date for the AGM at 3.30pm. The venue would be the Council headquarters in Ennis or the Municipal District offices in Shannon, depending on whether there would be an adjourned full Council meeting on that date.

5. Roads Programme

The senior executive engineer (SEE), Mr O'Shea reported that the main activity currently underway was the preparation for surface dressing.

6. Draft Community Grants Scheme for Municipal District of Shannon

The members considered the draft eligibility criteria and guidance scheme, as well as the draft application form, both of which had been circulated. It was clarified that the grant fund in total was €50K, as agreed by members at the January 2015 meeting. It was agreed that adherence to the application submission deadline was important, that ensuring a wide distribution of the funds was important so that the benefit of the grants scheme could be spread over a variety of groups and throughout the district, and that an 'own funds' threshold would not be set within the scheme criteria. The draft grants scheme as circulated was proposed by Cllr Cathal Crowe, seconded by Cllr Mike McKee and agreed.

7. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Mike McKee

Ar moladh Cllr McKee

Cuidithe ag Cllr G Flynn agus glacadh leis:

“That Clare County Council install a pedestrian crossing close to the Aidan Park bus stop to Ballycasey to enable all residents, particularly the elderly, have a safer environment when going to the shops, pharmacy etc in Ballycasey.”

Eugene O’Shea, SEE, replied as follows:

There are a number of factors in relation to this particular location that merit examination as a potential location for a pedestrian crossing not least of which is the width of the main road (Bothar na Luachra), the extent of residential development, the presence of the various retail outlets, schools etc.

In order to assess the need for a Pedestrian Crossing it will be necessary to undertake a survey of the physical environment, traffic and pedestrian counts etc. The Shannon Municipal District Office will liaise with the Road Design Office in this assessment. If a Pedestrian Crossing is considered warranted then a source of funding will have to be identified.

Cllr McKee was satisfied with the reply.

8. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Mike McKee

Ar moladh Cllr McKee

Cuidithe ag Cllr G Flynn agus glacadh leis:

“That SMDC invite Cluid housing agency to a meeting to discuss a possible joint venture to construct badly needed social housing in the Shannon area.”

Niall O’Keeffe, Administrative Officer Housing Department, replied as follows:

Clare County Council Housing Services are in regular communication with Cluid Housing Association, along with other Approved Housing Bodies, to progress delivery of much needed Social Housing projects in Clare. To date one such project has been delivered in this manner, 22 units at Pound Lane in Ennis. A number of other projects are under consideration. At this stage the financing of new construction is problematic for the AHB sector so efforts have been concentrating on the purchase of already constructed units. If the Councillor has a particular project in mind the Council can request an evaluation of same by interested Approved Housing Bodies.

The Minister for Environment Community and Local Government recently announced approval to the construction of 15 units by Clare County Council in Shannon and it is expected that work will commence on site later next year.

Cllr McKee expressed the view that certain groups were not currently being prioritised for social housing, in particular following marriage breakdown where access to children necessarily involved both parents having a home available to them. It was felt that Cluid could develop

mixed accommodation units that would suit smaller housing unit needs, eg. for single people, for elderly people, for disabled people. The voluntary sector was seen as a mechanism to boost supply of social housing.

9. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Pat McMahon

Ar moladh Cllr McMahon

Cuidithe ag Cllr PJ Ryan agus glacadh leis:

“In view of the dangerous junction there at present I am asking Clare County Council to install traffic calming measures on the roadway leading to the crèche off the Ennis Road leading to the Obair offices.”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

Government policy in relation to the control of speeds in housing estates regards the increased use of 30 km / h speed limits as a means of improving safety for the most vulnerable road users. This cul de sac road is included in the Shannon Municipal District list of estates that will benefit from this new policy for implementation over the coming weeks.

Cllr Ryan felt that the speed limit would not solve the problem owing to motorists not adhering to the limit, and that physical barriers like ramps would be more effective.

10. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Pat McMahon

Ar moladh Cllr McMahon

Cuidithe ag Cllr J Crowe agus glacadh leis:

“I will ask that Clare County Council to install double yellow lines on one side of the road outside Newmarket On Fergus GAA pitch as emerging vehicles can be disrupted at match times.”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

While the need for double yellow lines at this location will be monitored on the ground, the centre and both edge sets of road markings that have become faded since first installed at the pedestrian crossing outside the GAA pitch will be renewed as soon as possible.

Cllr McMahon said the location was very difficult to negotiate, with vehicles being badly parked and there was a fear that potential obstruction of emergency vehicles is a very serious matter at this location.

11. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Pat McMahon

Ar moladh Cllr McMahon

Cuidithe ag Cllr G Flynn agus glacadh leis:

“That Clare County Council take over “Rosan” estate in Bunratty, Newmarket On Fergus.”

Bernadette Haugh, Administrative Officer Planning & Enterprise Development Department, replied as follows:

A S180 request from the residents was received by the Planning Authority on 22nd December 2014 and has been included in the list of estates currently being examined under Section 180 and will be considered in due course.

The Planning Authority made a full claim on the bond on 17th December 2014 enclosing a Preliminary Schedule of the outstanding works in relation to this development. The bondholders were also notified on the same day of the issues pertaining to Public Lighting within the development and we requested their engagement in agreeing a satisfactory resolution to this particular issue as a matter of urgency, in isolation of other outstanding works.

We have been in recent telephone contact with the bondholders and understand that they are currently assessing our claim and we await receipt of a response from the bondholders in this regard.

Cllr McMahon highlighted the issues being contended with by residents included roads, manholes and street lighting.

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor John Crowe

Ar moladh Cllr John Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr P McMahon agus glacadh leis:

“That Shannon Municipal District repair the footpaths on the Knocksaggart Road from O'Hallorans house to Cantys. The footpaths in this road are in a deplorable state and need to be replaced. This path is in bad repair for a number of years and urgently needs to be repaired.”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

The main issue with this footpath is caused by vegetation and moss. Subject to available resources maintenance works will be undertaken in due course.

Cllr Crowe expressed disappointment with the proviso about resources in the reply.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor John Crowe

Ar moladh Cllr John Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr PJ Ryan agus glacadh leis:

“That Shannon Municipal District upgrade the roads in Mount levers estate. With all the different services that have come in over the past few years it has led to an amount of pot holes, including deterioration around manhole covers.”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

Over the years trenches and road furniture have been installed in the roads in the Mount levers Estate to accommodate various services and some of these trenches are now in a poor state of repair. Subject to available resources repair works will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

Cllr Crowe referred to the active and successful residents' association over the years.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor John Crowe

Ar moladh Cllr John Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr PJ Ryan agus glacadh leis:

"I ask that Shannon Municipal District carry out urgent repairs on the Corcass Rd, Rossmanagher, Sixmilebridge as the road is in a deplorable state."

Eugene O'Shea replied as follows:

This local tertiary cul de sac road, the L71161, serves a number of houses and farmland close to the Ratty River. The inner section of the road is in a poor state of repair and, subject to available resources, repair works will be undertaken in due course.

Cllr Crowe expressed the concern that the road may disintegrate, if not repaired, and welcomed repair works.

At this point in the meeting, it was agreed on the proposal of Cllr Cathal Crowe and seconding of Cllr Gerry Flynn to suspend standing orders to allow for the completion of the business of the meeting. This was agreed by all.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor PJ Ryan

Ar moladh Cllr Ryan

Cuidithe ag Cllr Cathal Crowe agus glacadh leis:

"That this Municipal Authority would carry out repairs to Wood Road Cratloe opposite the Community Hall as this road is subsiding."

Eugene O'Shea replied as follows:

Subject to available resources repairs will be undertaken at this location at the earliest opportunity.

Cllr Ryan was satisfied with the reply.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor PJ Ryan

Ar moladh Cllr Ryan

Cuidithe ag Cllr P McMahan agus glacadh leis:

“That this Municipal Authority would request the NRA to carry out fence repairs on the dual carriageway adjacent to Bunratty Bridge as there is a danger of livestock getting out on to the road.”

There was discussion about danger and accident risk from poor fencing in the area and members felt that the risk needed to be attended to urgently.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor PJ Ryan

Ar moladh Cllr Ryan

Cuidithe ag Cllr John Crowe agus glacadh leis:

“That this Municipal Authority would give an update on the road design status regarding the footpath in Cratloe leading to Craughaun Graveyard.”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

The Road Design Office applied for funding under the Low Cost Safety Scheme for 2015 to include traffic calming, pedestrian facilities etc in Cratloe village and funding has been granted. This is one of eight Low Cost Safety schemes throughout the county, three of which are in the Shannon MD, currently being progressed by the Road Design Office for approval by the Regional Road Safety Officer. Once approval has been received all relevant documentation will be prepared with a view to commencing construction in the autumn of 2015. The extent of the works to be undertaken will be determined by the level of funding available.

During discussion, Mr O’Shea agreed to facilitate a delegation from the area with a meeting. Cllr Ryan was satisfied with the reply to the motion. Members expressed the hope that Iarnróid Éireann would be co-operative with the local authority, in the event that the recommended design needed a small parcel of land from Iarnróid Éireann.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Gerard Flynn

Ar moladh Cllr Flynn

Cuidithe ag Cllr McKee agus glacadh leis:

“That the avenue leading up to Ballycasey Workshops be included for a complete overlay of road surface and that the road edge be landscaped and tree stumps removed.”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

These necessary works will be undertaken in the course of the current year’s Schedule of Municipal District Works.

Cllr Flynn expressed the view that the area in question could be a tourism location and that an area for coach/bus parking at the top of the road would be helpful.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Gerard Flynn

Ar moladh Cllr Flynn

Cuidithe ag Cllr McKee agus glacadh leis:

“That double yellow lines or some other measure be put in place at the top of Corrib Drive leading to Fergus Road due to traffic safety issues”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

It is anticipated that the introduction of the new 30 km / hr speed limit in the Fergus Road / Corrib Drive area will lead to a reduction in traffic speeds on the local road network and that this in turn will lead to a reduction in traffic safety issues. The introduction of other measures is considered premature at this time pending the introduction of the new speed limit. It should also be noted however that it is illegal to park a vehicle within 5 metres of a road junction.

Cllr Flynn was not satisfied with the reply, as he was concerned that non-adherence to the limit would be a problem.

20. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Gerard Flynn

Ar moladh Cllr Flynn

Cuidithe ag Cllr Cathal Crowe agus glacadh leis:

“That the Minister for Finance be requested to respond to concerns of local people in relation to the downgrading of services at the local branch of the Bank of Ireland concerning (1) Reduction in face to face transactions; (2) Centralised phone response; (3) High degree of electronic transactions. Could the Minister advise if a possibility of closure exists or is this part of some policy to reduce costs.”

Cllr Flynn referred to the customer dissatisfaction and widespread preference for face to face interaction with staff.

21. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Cathal Crowe

Ar moladh Cllr Cathal Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr PJ Ryan agus glacadh leis:

“That Clare County Council commit to the removal, cutting back and replacement of trees throughout the Municipal District.”

Eugene O’Shea replied as follows:

There are a number of locations on public property throughout the Shannon Municipal District where tree felling / pruning is required. This includes locations where trees are overhanging road traffic lanes, are over-mature, blocking public lighting infrastructure etc etc. While it is intended to deal with some of these issues on a priority basis in the current year it is important to bear in mind that the extent to which corrective measures can be taken is limited by the available budget in the 2015 Schedule of Municipal District Works.

Where trees are removed consideration will be given to replacing them with suitable native species. It should also be noted that there is an obligation, in accordance with Section 70 of the 1993 Roads Act, on landowners and occupiers of land to take all reasonable care to ensure that trees, hedges and other vegetation growing on their lands do not endanger users of public roads.

Members discussed the February 2014 storm which knocked in excess of a thousand trees in the district. Mr O'Shea clarified that the Council has responsibility for damaged trees on public property, but not where trees are on private land. Trees inside or on the boundary are the responsibility of landowners.

22. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Cathal Crowe

Ar moladh Cllr Cathal Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr John Crowe agus glacadh leis:

"That Clare County Council tidy up and resurface the open spaces near Meelick Church which are used for car parking by church goers and parents dropping / collecting their children from Scoil Mhuire NS."

Eugene O'Shea replied as follows:

Subject to available resources arrangements will be made in due course to tidy up the areas in question.

Cllr Crowe highlighted that the surface was very poor and that even the filling of all the holes in the surface would help mitigate the problem for people parking there.

23. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Cathal Crowe

Ar moladh Cllr Cathal Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr G Flynn agus glacadh leis:

"That Clare County Council remove the vast accumulation of green waste in the Westbury estate."

Paul Moroney, Acting Senior Engineer Environment Department, replied as follows:

A very substantial quantity of green and other waste has been illegally dumped at a number of separate locations within the Westbury estate over a period of time by some residents, and persons unknown, who have consistently failed to manage their household waste appropriately. This is a historical and ongoing problem.

Clare County Council have investigated alternative options for the treatment or removal of this illegally dumped waste, all of which are proving to be very expensive. A quote received from a licensed waste operator amounted to €30,000 approximately. If we use our own resources to carry out the cleanup it will cost a substantial sum. It will in any event divert important resources from other environmental initiatives to carry out this cleanup of illegally dumped waste.

Clare County Council are also carrying out an extensive investigation under the Waste Management Act and also the Household Waste Management Bye-Laws to determine how residents of Westbury are managing their waste with a view to identifying those households who have no authorized waste collection service or other legal means of properly managing their waste.

Once the area is cleaned up Clare County Council will monitor the area including the use of CCTV to ensure that any further dumping incidents are appropriately dealt with. Clare County Council wishes to advise the residents that it is their own legal responsibility to deal with waste that they produce including green waste and garden waste. It is an offence under Waste legislation to deposit such waste on other persons property.

Owing to constraints of time, Cllr Crowe said he would discuss the reply with Mr Moroney after the meeting.

24. *Correspondence*

The letter from the EPA, received 8th April 2015 was noted.

The letter from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, received on 6th May 2015 was noted.

The meetings administrator confirmed that the meetings administrator for the full Council had confirmed that the attendance of a delegation at the full Council would have to be approved by the full Council.

25. AOB

The chairman gave a briefing about the new chain of office and thanked the library service in particular for their work in its design. The chairman wished the next chairman success with all ceremonial functions with the new chain of office.

As this was the last ordinary meeting before the AGM, the chairman thanked the members of the district and the executives for their work during the year, and thanked the media also.

There was a discussion about the local tradition of having invited the Shannon Town Council mayor to airport and Shannon industrial estate functions. The chairman and members felt that the tradition should be continued in the new local government context, and that the chairman of the Municipal District of Shannon should be invited in the future as acknowledgement of the continuing representational role of the elected members for the people of the district. All the members expressed the view that this tradition would be a valuable thing to continue.

Signed: _____
Cllr Cathal Crowe, Cathaoirleach

Fiona Mooney, Meetings Administrator

Date: _____