

**Minutes of Annual Meeting of West Clare  
Municipal District held on the 13<sup>th</sup> June,  
2014 at 3.00 p.m. in Council Chamber,  
Offices of the Municipal District of West  
Clare, Town Hall, Kilrush**

**I Láthair:**

Cllr. C. Curtin, Cllr. R. Nagle, Cllr. B. Slattery, Cllr. I. Lynch, Cllr. M. Hillery, Cllr. P.J. Kelly, Cllr. B. Chambers, Cllr. G. Keating.

**Officials present:**

Ms. C. Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Water Services, Clare Co Council  
Mr. C. Feeney, A/Senior Executive Engineer, West Clare Municipal District  
Mr. J. Corry, Administrative Officer & Meetings Administrator.

**Apologies**

Ms. A. Haugh, Director of Services & Area Co-Ordinator

C. Greene took up the position of the Chair & welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the West Clare Municipal District.

**1. Election of Cathaoirleach for 12 months**

Cllr. B. Chambers proposed Cllr. P.J. Kelly for the position & this was seconded by Cllr. R. Nagle. As there were no other nominations Cllr. P.J. Kelly was unanimously deemed elected as Cathaoirleach & took over the position of the Chair.

Cllr. Kelly thanked everyone for selecting him for this position & indicated that he was honoured to take up this position & he said he would do his best to respect the values of the members & to co-ordinate their views. He added that the members were moving into unchartered territory with the changes being proposed with the new Local Government Reform Act 2014. He said that he cannot understand the objective of the changes which has resulted in parishes & communities being divided & a “new pale of areas of preferential treatment” being created & the West Clare area was unfortunately outside of this area. He added that this created its own challenge & that the members would have to rise to this challenge. He added that there was uncertainty regarding the reserved functions which could be performed by the members at Municipal District level. He said that it would need to be considered what the Municipal District area can get back from this change. He added that Moneypoint contributes 25% of the rates paid in Co Clare. He added that the West Clare area pays in excess of one third of total revenues to Clare Co Council & for this reason he added that as a Municipal Authority that they would not

settle for less than one third of the Budget for the county being allocated to West Clare. He indicated that this area had 47% of the landmass of the county & half of the local roads network. He added that they were fortunate to have Cllr Nagle as a member of the CPG & he reiterated that there needed to be a reinvestment of at least one third of the Budget of Clare Co Council back into the Municipal District area. He continued that they were faced with the following challenges the most immediate of which was to sort out the mess after the storm damage. Secondly to get a fair slice of the Budget & thirdly to address population decline in West Clare by holding a Special mtg on the matter over the course of the next year & put together a plan to combat same. Cllr. Kelly wished the two Cllrs who had lost their seats in the recent election well & he also welcomed C. Feeney & J. Corry to the mtg. He concluded by saying that West Clare represented tremendous opportunities for tourism and investment.

Cllr. C. Curtin congratulated Cllr Kelly on his election as Cathaoirleach & re-iterated the points raised by Cllr. Kelly. He indicated that clarity needed to be obtained on the overlap of reserved & executive functions & as to how these would impact on services. He said that an Action Plan for the retention of jobs & creating the environment for new jobs was required immediately. The other members congratulated Cllr. Kelly & said his vast experience would be a great help to them & they wished him well in his position. Cllr. Nagle said there was an onus on them all to get the necessary resources to carry out services. He added that last year Clare Co Council got the third lowest Local Government Fund Allocation nationally & that this was not acceptable going forward. He said that they needed to be alert that if they were getting 80% of the LPT as promised next year that this would not result in a reduction of the Local Government Fund of the same amount. He added that there needed to be co-ordination at national level re providing the necessary funding for storm damage. Cllr. Lynch said what has happened in Local Government over last few years has been disgraceful with the abolition of Town Councils etc. He added that the next 5 years will be crucial for West Clare.

## **2. Election of Leas Cathaoirleach for 12 months**

Cllr. B. Slattery proposed Cllr. C. Curtin for the position & this was seconded by Cllr. B. Chambers. As there were no other nominations Cllr. Curtin was unanimously deemed elected as Leas Cathaoirleach.

## **3. Approval to payment of Allowance to Cathaoirleach of Municipal District**

The allowance of €6,000 for the Cathaoirleach for twelve months was proposed by Cllr. R. Nagle & seconded by Cllr. B. Chambers.

## **4. Consideration of Standing Orders**

J. Corry circulated draft standing orders and briefed members on the specific content for consideration. Following an in depth discussion by the members and having considered

the draft standing orders, the adoption of the standing orders was proposed by Cllr B. Slattery & seconded by Cllr. G. Keating. It was suggested that the members would meet every two months at 4pm on the first Monday of each month & that the place of the meeting would be the Municipal District offices in Kilrush unless otherwise agreed by the members at the meeting prior or in the event of an emergency requested by at least 5 of the members on giving 10 days notice. It was suggested over the course of the year that the members would vary the location of the mtg. It was also suggested that Special meetings may be called on occasion.

## **5. Consideration of Part 8 re Cliffs of Moher**

C. Greene indicated that this was a report on a Part 8 for the proposed redevelopment of the car parking facilities at the Cliffs of Moher. She indicated that this item would need to be deferred until further notice as a submission had been received from the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and it needed further consideration. She added that as this was a significant development that when all considerations had been taken into account that it would be brought before both the West Clare Municipal District and the full meeting of Clare Co Council for consideration.

## **6. Fix date of next Meeting**

J. Corry indicated that as the Standing Orders had been adopted that the next meeting was scheduled for Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July at 4pm.

## **7. AoB**

Cllr.C. Curtin asked if an outline of the staffing level for the new Municipal District could be given as the members had a concern re the staffing arrangements. It was indicated that such an update had been provided by the Chief Executive at the full Council meeting. Cllr. B. Slattery said he was concerned that the A/SEE had a very considerable area to cover in the new Municipal District area & that it would make it difficult for some members to meet with him when his base was in Kilrush. He felt that this arrangement would not work. Cllr. P.J. Kelly indicated that it may be necessary to give the new arrangements time to see how they would work over the coming weeks. Cllr. R. Nagle asked the A/SEE if he would like to comment as to how he saw the new staffing structure working. C Feeney indicated that it was a big area & that it was going to be challenging. He added that he would be attending all meetings of the Municipal District where Notices of Motion had relevance to the engineering function or that he was required to attend. He added that he would also be available on the phone at anytime. He added that it remained to be seen how the new arrangements would work out & that there were still issues to be resolved & the next few months would bring some issues to a head & would iron out other issues. Cllr B. Slattery again indicated that outside of the Municipal District meetings would it not be difficult for the A/SEE to meet with Cllrs if there was an issue in a certain part of the District area etc & that it was unfair to expect him to. He again indicated that he felt that there were not sufficient staffing resources allocated to the Municipal District area. C. Feeney indicated that the allocation of staffing was an Executive function exercised by the Chief Executive. He added that there will be potential challenges but he had full faith in the staff that they had on the ground . C. Curtin indicated that the Chief Executive had given a response at the full Council meeting

which he had felt was not adequate & he added that they needed staffing commensurate with their needs & with the area that needed to be managed.

As there was no further business the meeting then concluded.

**Signed :**

**Cllr. P.J. Kelly  
Cathaoirleach**

**Signed :**

**J. Corry  
Meetings Administrator**

**Dated this the 8<sup>th</sup> day of July 2014.**