

**Minutes of West Clare Municipal District Meeting  
Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 at Kilrush Town Hall & Online via MS Teams**

**Cathaoirleach**

Cllr. Shane Talty

**I Lathair**

Cllr. Gabriel Keating

Cllr. Joe Killeen

Cllr. Joe Garrihy (online)

Cllr. PJ Kelly (online)

Cllr. Bill Chambers

Cllr. Ian Lynch

Cllr. Liam Grant (online)

Cllr. Cillian Murphy

**Officials Present**

Mr Leonard Cleary, Director of Service

Ms Siobhán McNulty, Senior Executive Officer, WCMD

Mr John O'Malley, A/Senior Executive Officer, WCMD

Mr Alan Kennelly, Senior Executive Engineer, WCMD (Kilrush)

Mr Steve Lahiffe, Senior Staff Officer, WCMD (online)

Ms Carmel Carey, Staff Officer, WCMD

**Apologies**

Mr Enda MacNamara, Senior Executive Engineer, WCMD (Ennistymon)

The meeting was convened by Cathaoirleach Cllr. Shane Talty.

1. Minutes of the 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 Meeting of the West Clare MD  
The minutes were proposed by Cllr. Gabriel Keating and seconded by Cllr. Bill Chambers
2. Section 183 – Disposal of a piece of land adjacent to 14. St. Patricks Terrace Kilkee  
Proposed by Cllr. Cillian Murphy and seconded by Cllr. Gabriel Keating.

**Rural Development, Planning & Economic Development, Social**

**3. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Cillian Murphy**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

That the regeneration of the old courthouse in Kilkee be considered for inclusion under the next Town & Village Renewal Scheme.

**Response from Rural Development Directorate**

The Rural & Community Development Department will consider available DRCD funding measures which could be applied to support project development i.e., feasibility study, planning etc. The feasibility study would be an important element of the project to consider as regards any chosen or proposed use and how such would be sustainable into the future. As per all DRCD funding schemes this is a national competitive

process, and any such applications will be competing with other projects submitted locally for this measure in addition to competing with similar projects nationally. The project may also be eligible for consideration of other community development funding programmes aimed at businesses and communities such as LEADER which is available to support the purchase of equipment, construction and refurbishment works, feasibility studies and the delivery of training etc.

Cllr Murphy outlined that this was an important historic building in Kilkee and he is seeking commitment for its restoration to be brought back into use as a potential space for local artists in the peninsula. He suggested that this might be done through the Town & Village Scheme by updating the 2021 application.

#### **4. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Gabriel Keating**

##### **The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

To request Clare County Council to establish the feasibility of a maritime museum on the existing site of the old courthouse, Kilkee.

##### **Response from Rural Development Directorate**

The Rural & Community Development Department will consider available DRCD funding measures which could be applied to support project development i.e., feasibility study, planning etc. The feasibility study would be an important element of the project to consider as regards any chosen or proposed use and how such would be sustainable into the future. As per all DRCD funding schemes this is a national competitive process, and any such applications will be competing with other projects submitted locally for this measure in addition to competing with similar projects nationally. The project may also be eligible for consideration of other community development funding programmes aimed at businesses and communities such as LEADER which is available to support the purchase of equipment, construction and refurbishment works, feasibility studies and the delivery of training etc.

Cllr. Keating stated that the Courthouse in Kilkee is a prime location in the centre of Kilkee and a great opportunity for redevelopment.

#### **5. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Cillian Murphy**

##### **The motion was seconded by Cllr. Gabriel Keating**

That a commitment to making improvements at the outside pier in Carrigaholt be included under the next Pier and Harbour fund and/or the Brexit Adjustment : Local Authority Marine infrastructure Scheme.

##### **Reply from Alan Kennelly Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

Clare County Council has been successful with recent funding applications to the DAFM. Funding has been received from either from the Piers and Harbours fund or BALAMI. For example, two projects at the inside pier in Carrigaholt have been completed in recent years. The West Clare MD will apply to the Piers & Harbours fund or BALAMI (*if there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> call for funding*) for improvements to the outside pier in Carrigaholt. Proposed improvements would have to be agreed with the local fishermen and other pier users prior to a funding application.

Following a request from Cllr. Murphy, it was agreed with Senior Officials that a site visit would take place on the 21/22 March at low tide to survey safety works required at the pier.

## **6. Notice of motion from Cllr. Ian Lynch**

### **The motion was seconded by Cllr. Cillian Murphy**

That the WCDM, CCC Tourism Department work with the Irish Whale and Dolphin Watching group to establish Kilrush and The Shannon Estuary as a Dolphin Centre of Excellence for dolphin tourism, educational and research

### **Reply from Deirdre O'Shea A/Head of Tourism & John O'Malley A/Senior Executive Officer West Clare MD**

One of the key strengths that is highlighted in the *Clare Tourism Strategy 2030 – Guiding our Journey to a Vibrant new future in Tourism*, is the biodiversity that is of international significance offering exceptional assets for ecotourism, in particular Ireland's only resident bottle-nosed dolphins in the local waters. For this reason and based on the fact that, both the Senior Executive Officer of West Clare MD as well as the Head of Tourism are on the Working Group for the Fáilte Ireland Cliffs Coast Destination Experience Development Plan (DEDP), there will be a concerted effort to work with the Irish Whale and Dolphin watching group as requested. This specific action is a Strategic Pillar under immersive sustainability of the Cliffs Coast DEDP. Partnering with Fáilte Ireland, Clare County Council is tasked with examining the requirements to develop the international profile of the region for Dolphin and Whale watching to become recognised as the leading destination in Europe for marine life observation experiences. Both CCC representatives on this working group, will keep a focus on this action.

Cllr. Lynch welcomed the positive reply stating that this was an unique tourist attraction and its potential should be maximised.

## **7. Notice of motion from Cllr. Ian Lynch**

### **The motion was seconded by Cllr. Gabriel Keating**

That the WCMD and the economic directorate would relook at the possible opportunities available to Kildysart in relation to a partnership approach with Foynes with regards cruise transfers

### **Reply from Helen Quinn Senior Planner Economic Development**

Clare County Council has collaborated with Shannon Foynes Port Company and adjoining Local Authorities to form Cruise Shannon Estuary. Cruise Shannon Estuary is an initiative to sustainably grow the cruise and sustainable marine tourism industry and establishing the Shannon Estuary and County Clare as one of the top destinations for cruise liners in Europe. It is an initiative led by Shannon Foynes Port Company and supported by Limerick City and County Council, Kerry County Council, Clare County Council, Shannon International Airport and Failte Ireland.

Members of the Economic Directorate met in September 2021 with Shannon Foynes Port Company (SFPC) to discuss the requirements of the Port Authority with respect to the potential tendering of passengers from Cruise ships docked in the Shannon Estuary to the existing pier owned by Clare County Council at Cahiracon. The potential ability of Cahiracon pier to tender passengers to the northern shore of the Shannon Estuary in County Clare would see considerable economic benefit for West and North Clare through the provision of tours, site visits and excursions which would otherwise not be possible if passengers were tendered to the southern shore (and predominately Foynes Port) due to time restrictions

on Cruise calls. The Economic Directorate have undertaken some preliminary investigations into the engineering feasibility in terms of the pier meeting the requirements of the Marine Survey Officer (MSO). The MSO must be satisfied with the infrastructure prior to any cruise calls taking place which will involve both the shore and land-based elements for this industry. In addition, avenues for funding to support any future upgrade to the pier would also need to be explored not only in the context of the Cruise sector but also to facilitate the future use of the pier by the Offshore Renewable Energy sector.

In commencing the marketing of the Shannon Estuary to the Cruise sector, Cruise Shannon Estuary have prepared two videos to promote it's offering. The first one is based on the concept of attractions that are 90mins from the Port in 90seconds. The second one is a longer version which the cruise line companies have looked for. County Clare and the key attractions it has to offer to such an international audience feature heavily within these promotional videos.

90min in 90 sec: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwYMR3N2NS8>

Full Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qC6DHyUaJyM>

Jerry Hallissey Head of Business Development at Shannon Foynes Port Company would welcome the opportunity to present to the West Clare Municipal District on the progress made in terms of Cruise Shannon Estuary.

Please see [Cruise Shannon Estuary - Shannon Foynes Port | Bulk Cargo Handling \(sfpc.ie\)](#) for more details.

The members of WCMD all agreed that an invitation should be issued to Jerry Hallissey to present at the next main meeting of Clare County Council on progress made in terms of Cruise Shannon Estuary.

## **8. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Joe Killeen**

### **The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

With regard to the designation of the Burren as a World Heritage Site, we call a consultation plan for landowners, communities, stakeholders (including Burren IFA) within the North Clare Area.

### **Reply from Congella McGuire Heritage Officer Economic Development**

The Planning Section has made a request to be put on the agenda for the next West Clare Councillors meeting to bring the West Clare councillors up to date and to further discuss the Burren as a World Heritage Site WHS. It is understood that this briefing will take place in March 2023.

Clare County Council have been in communication with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to plan for the next steps in progressing with an application for the Burren to Ireland World Heritage Site Tentative List, while specifying the work to be undertaken and the resources required. Clare County Council are working with Galway County Council in this regard and wish to further engage with all the stakeholders, communities, landowners including the Clare IFA.

Cllr. Killeen was thankful for the reply and requested a consultation take place with people in the local area and any other interested party in the wider North Clare area.

## **9. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Joe Garrihy**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

In light of the major issues around transport in the West and North LEA of our west Clare MD I call on Clare County Council to engage with and partner with Local Link , CLDC and other stakeholders to support and investigate the establishment of a community Bus initiative which would support schools , community groups and societies in their operations.

### **Reply from Siobhán McNulty Senior Executive Officer West Clare MD**

Clare County Council is engaging with stakeholders to establish the feasibility and a mechanism for the establishment of a community bus for North Clare. The process will take time as there are many stakeholders and factors to be addressed to achieve the delivery of a community bus for North Clare.

Cllr. Garrihy outlined the difficult transport issues in Lahinch and welcomed the reply. He suggested if grant aid could be sought to provide Community Bus.

## **10. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Shane Talty**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Ian Lynch**

Can we get a report on the average monthly cost of heating 1 of the new houses in Baile na Mban, Miltown Malbay on the air to water heating systems being ran off electricity? What advise is there for tenants to help reduce their energy costs?

### **Reply from Pdraig MacCormaic A/Senior Executive Officer Social Development**

Monthly costs associated with Heat Pump systems are susceptible to a number of factors, both directly associated with management of the system and indirect, including;

- Level of space heating/water required by the tenant (thermostat setting)
- Level of activity within the house
- Energy tariffs, payment plans and electricity prices
- Weather conditions and time of the year

The Housing section are conscious that the management of new systems is a concern for a few of our tenants. We are happy to continue to work with any tenant to help maximise their use and understand the overall benefits.

Cllr. Talty welcomed the new housing development in Miltown Malbay and is suggesting that the Housing Department provide more awareness to new tenants on the correct use of the heating systems and the energy costs associated with these systems.

## **Physical Development**

### **11. Joint Notice of Motion Cllr. Cillian Murphy, Cllr Ian Lynch and Cllr Shane Talty**

Given the serious negative impact the winter has had on our regional and local roads in the West Clare MD, the resulting very poor condition of many, and the scale of the problem, that a request be made for an allocation of emergency funding to help with repairs.

**Reply from John Leahy Senior Engineer Roads & Transportation**

Clare County Council has highlighted this issue with the Department of Transport. We will continue to engage with our Department inspector over the coming months to seek additional funding if it becomes available.

The members all agreed to write to the Oireachtas Members for the County to request a meeting with them and seek their assistance in securing government funding to maintain the local network of roads in the Clare.

**12. Notice of Motion Cllr. Joe Garrihy**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Cillian Murphy**

I call on the West Clare MD to seek increased resources for front line operations, roads, beaches, and Town & Village maintenance/upkeep.

**Reply from Siobhán McNulty Senior Executive Officer West Clare MD**

The West Clare MD (North) has submitted a business case to Senior Management of the Council seeking additional staff to augment the current staffing resources available. This is in recognition of the significant resource requirement for the upkeep and maintenance of the popular beach destinations in the Ennistymon Electoral Area. That said we are obliged to balance budgets and with the 2023 budget agreed it is not likely additional funding will be available in 2023 to secure additional resources. We will continue to work with Senior Management to address resource deficits within available resources.

Cllr. Garrihy welcomed the reply and a general discussion took place regarding options available to secure additional resources for the Summer season. The Physical Development Directorate are to be asked to brief the WCMD on proposed new byelaws.

**13. Notice of Motion from Cllr. PJ Kelly**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

Essential repair work be carried out to the Slieve Dooley Road at Labasheeda.

**Reply from Alan Kennelly Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

Weather conditions around Christmas and the New Year damaged many otherwise intact road surfaces in the West Clare MD. I have spoken with the Area Engineer and the local roads senior general services supervisor, and the damage caused to this section of the public road has been repaired.

**14. Notice of Motion from Cllr. PJ Kelly**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

That necessary repair work be carried out to the Ballymakea More Road (L6208) at Mullagh.

**Reply from Alan Kennelly Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

Weather conditions around Christmas and the New Year damaged many otherwise intact road surfaces in the West Clare MD. I have spoken with the Area Engineer and the local roads senior general services supervisor, and the damage caused to this section of the public road has been repaired.

**15. Notice of Motion from Cllr. PJ Kelly**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Bill Chambers**

That an Active Travel plan be initiated for the road linking Kilmihil and Cahircannivan Road.

**Reply from Alan Kennelly Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

I am aware that the L-2074 is increasingly used for exercise and leisure as it is a quiet road (*i.e. lightly "traffic"ed*). I will forward the request to our Road Design Office, who deal with Active Travel. They may be able to seek funding from the NTA at the next round of funding in November 2023. A concept design would have to be prepared, and (*possibly*) approval received from affected landowners before the scheme could progress to a request for Active Travel funding from the NTA.

**16. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Ian Lynch**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Bill Chambers**

Notwithstanding the issue around ornamental street lighting I request a street lighting illumination survey to be conducted in Kilrush town to establish if the required illumination has been achieved and where it is not a strategy is developed to ensure appropriate illumination levels.

**Reply from Anne O'Sullivan Senior Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation**

A full lighting survey will be undertaken in Kilrush town under the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project. Currently the indicative start date for survey works to commence in the West Clare MD is September 2023.

**17. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Joe Killeen**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

We call for a speed limit review in the vicinity of Primary Schools in Doolin and Fanore. We welcome the decision to reduce the speed limit at Kilnaboy National School.

**Reply from Enda MacNamara Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

Speed limits can be appealed by members the public via the Department of Transport Speed Limits Appeals Procedure ([www.speedlimits.ie](http://www.speedlimits.ie)). The Speed Limits Appeals Procedure was introduced on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. This is a procedure whereby any interested party may appeal an existing speed limit to the relevant Local Authority. The Local Authority must then review whether the speed limit under appeal (the Special Speed Limit) has been set in accordance with the Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland (The Guidelines).

**18. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Joe Killeen**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

We call on Clare County Council to carry out a review of the Council Salting Units routes in light of the most recent icy conditions.

**Reply from Anne O'Sullivan Senior Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation**

A review of the Winter Maintenance Plan will be carried out in the coming months.

**19. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Joe Garrihy**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

I call on Clare County Council to ensure all hedges and road verges along the Wild Atlantic Way and other main routes are safe and kept in good condition in advance of the Summer Season.

**Reply from Enda MacNamara Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

Clare County Council's adopted hedge cutting policy specifies the following priorities for hedge cutting :

- All regional and national routes,
- Approaches to towns and villages,
- Strategic routes linking towns and villages,
- Bus routes and important school bus routes,
- Roads being strengthened/surface dressed on roadworks programme

Hedge growth along the road network is monitored and addressed if deemed a health & safety concern. Each year, the MD office write out to landowners advising them of the responsibilities, under Section 70 of the Roads Act, 1993, to maintain trees, hedgerows etc. on or inside their boundaries adjacent to public roads.

Section 40 of the Wildlife Act, 1976 as amended by Section 46 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 restricts the cutting of hedges during the growing season i.e. between March 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>. Therefore, unless such hedgecutting has to be carried out during this period to facilitate public health and safety, all works of this nature should be implemented between September 1<sup>st</sup> and the end of February.

**20. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Gabriel Keating**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

That Clare County Council carry out extensive road improvements on the L6070 at Caherleen including drainage and re-surfacing.

**Reply from Alan Kennelly Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

The Schedule of Municipal District Works (*Roadworks programme*) is being finalised at present, following consultation with elected members. In the meantime, I have spoken with the Area Engineer and the local roads senior General Services Supervisor and asked them to ensure that potholes are filled & the road is maintained in a passable condition. If more extensive remediation – including drainage and resurfacing of the entire road – is required, the West Clare MD does not currently have funding for works on this scale.



**21. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Gabriel Keating**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Shane Talty**

To ask Clare County Council to carry out re-surfacing on the L6042-0 (Known as Clancys Rd)

**Reply from Alan Kennelly Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

The Schedule of Municipal District Works (Roadworks programme) is being finalised at present, following consultation with elected members. In the meantime, I have spoken with the Area Engineer and the local roads senior General Services Supervisor and asked them to ensure that potholes are filled & the road is maintained in a passable condition. If more extensive resurfacing works are required, the West Clare MD does not currently have funding for works on this scale.

**22. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Liam Grant**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Joe Killeen**

Call on the West Clare MD to fix and maintain the outdoor showers at Lahinch beach.

**Reply from Enda MacNamara Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

The area office has ordered parts to carry out repairs to the showers at Lahinch beach.

**Cllr. Grant welcomed the reply but expressed disappointed at the slow progress.**

**23. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Liam Grant**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Joe Killeen**

Call on the West Clare MD to replace the broken ladder at the old pier in Doolin.

**Reply from Enda MacNamara Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

The ladders at the old pier in Doolin have been assessed and quotes sought for the replacement of these ladders. The design and costs associated with replacement are currently being finalised.

A number of Councillors supported this motion welcoming improved safer facilities for swimmers in Doolin

**24. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Shane Talty**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Joe Killeen**

Request the minor traffic calming measures be put in place around Cloonanaha National School, in the interest of safety of both the students and motorists exiting the car park at the school.

**Reply from Enda MacNamara Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

The area office will carry out a review of the existing measures in place around Cloonanaha National School and assess if any additional traffic calming measures can be introduced.

**25. Notice of Motion from Cllr. Bill Chambers**

**The motion was seconded by Cllr. Ian Lynch**

Call on Clare County Council to include the R483 through Cooraclare on the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works to be resurfaced, as it is currently in a poor condition.

**Reply from Alan Kennelly Senior Executive Engineer West Clare MD**

The Schedule of MD Works (*Roadworks programme*) is being finalised at present, following consultation with elected members.

Road resurfacing of the R-483 through Cooraclare village (*approx. 1km between the speed limit signs*) would consist of –

1. Site Investigation before works begin,
2. Planning and excavation to remove the existing ungraded surface,
3. This could involve the excavation of soft spots and the lowering of any services encountered,
4. This may also involve realignment of footpath kerbs (*for line &/or level*),
5. Installation of service pipes and ducts at crossings and along footpaths to “future proof” the works – to ensure that the surface will not have to be re-excavated,
6. Resurfacing with (*most likely*) a Stone Mastic Asphalt as surface dressing is not appropriate for a village setting.

All of the above are very expensive works, and funding is not available in the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works. However, the West Clare MD is aware that resurfacing is required in Cooraclare and is trying to source an alternative funding stream.

All members were unanimous in their support of this motion.

**26. Any Other Business**

**Cllr. Lynch raised the following -**

1. The WCMD engage in grass cutting this season
2. Suggested schools in the locality be invited to a WCMD meeting

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: 

Cllr. Shane Talty  
Cathaoirleach

  
John O'Malley  
Meetings Administrator

Date : 3 May, 2023