

**Minutes of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting held at 10.30am on Friday December 2<sup>th</sup>, 2016, in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, Clare County Council, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** P. Daly, C. Colleran Molloy, A. Norton, T. McNamara, J. Breen, P. Murphy, J. Flynn and M. Howard.

**Officials:** Ger Dollard, Director of Services, Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer and Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer.

**Apologies:** Ann Reynolds, Administrative Officer.

**Item No. 1. Minutes of the November Monthly Meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2016**

Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District November 2016 monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr. P. Daly, seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy and adopted by members.

***Matters Arising from Minutes -***

- **Update on Pedestrian Crossing on the Gort Road.**

*E. O'Dea informed members that works are ready to commence on this project. The Council is currently monitoring traffic flow around Ennis with regard to several other projects and will commence this project as soon as it is possible not to interfere further with traffic flow. This is very high on priority to proceed.*

- **Update on Parking Workshop**

*A Parking Workshop is to be held early in the New Year to discuss overall parking issues for Ennis. A date will be decided on next week.*

**Item No. 2. Disposal of Land at ESB, Substation, Gort Road, Ennis.**

This item was proposed by Cllr. J. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by members.

**Item No. 3 Disposal of Land at 24 Clonroadmore, Ennis.**

This item was proposed by Cllr. J. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. J. Breen and agreed by members.

**Item No. 4. Declaration of Roads to be public roads**

- **French Court, Clonroad, Ennis and**
- **Riverside, Clonroadmore, Ennis**

This item was proposed by Cllr. T. McNamara, seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and agreed by members.

### **Item No. 5. Christmas Parking Incentive**

G. Dollard, Director of Services, informed the meeting that no decision had been made to date on a parking initiative for Ennis for Christmas 2016 and the item was on today's Agenda for discussion and decision.

Free parking up to 12 noon had been offered on previous occasions and it was found not to have been successful as employees were using the car park spaces early in the mornings.

For Christmas 2016 it is proposed to offer free parking as follows:-

- **From 3pm on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays in public car parks from Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016, until 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2017, inclusive.**

An agreement has also been reached with Dublin Coach for use of half of the coach car park for public car parking during the Christmas period. This should provide a further 20 car park spaces.

The use of the Council's car park at Drumbiggle Offices can also be considered for parking at weekends.

This item was proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara and agreed by members.

*Members welcomed this Christmas Parking Initiative and agreed that it was important to have this item on the Agenda for the December meeting as many false statements had been aired in relation to this matter. This would now clarify the matter and the parking incentive should be publicised accordingly. It is important to give an incentive to shoppers to shop local and to encourage people to shop in Ennis. Late night opening might be considered by businesses in Ennis in light of this incentive. Members congratulated the Mayor, the Director of Services and the district Engineer on the parking initiative.*

### **Item No. 6. Notices of Motion.**

**No.1. NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.**

That the unit cost of public car parking in Ennis be reduced from €1.30 to €1 in January, 2017.

**John Corry, Administrative Officer replied as follows:**

The budget for 2017 has been adopted based on a similar level of parking income as budgeted in 2016. Any such reduction in the unit price will likely lead to a reduction in the adopted revenue income from parking charges if not compensated for elsewhere or by another means. Members would need to be cognisant of the consequential effect of an effective 23 % reduction of parking income on the delivery of services.

One of the key aspects of any strategy is best use of existing parking capacity as well as the acquisition of additional car parking capacity both on a temporary and permanent basis.

*G. Dollard, Director of Services, informed the meeting that Parking as a whole would be discussed in the Parking Workshop in January, 2017. Pricing is one element of a bigger issue.*

**No.2. NOM submitted by Cllr. M. Howard was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy**

I request that Ennis Municipal District turn on the lights on the N85 from Clareabbey to Claureen in the mornings.

**Patrick Lynch, Executive Engineer, Transport Section replied as follows:**

The public lighting between Clareabbey Roundabout to Claureen Roundabout running from Dusk to Dawn would require removing all the existing photocells and replacing them with new photocells to control the duration that the public lights would run.

The cost of making this change would be in the region of €4,000 Ex.Vat.

The longer running hours for these public lights would also have a impact on the cost of the energy and with the current lights in place this would increase the energy cost by €9,700 per annum.

This is a considerable cost as Clare County Council are having to make every effort to reduce our energy consumption to comply with the 33% reduction by 2020, this would have a negative effect on our efforts to achieve this.

The public lighting on the roundabouts runs from dusk to dawn

**No.3. NOM submitted by Cllr. T. McNamara was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.**

I call on Clare County Council to outline what progress has been made with the taking in charge of Cluain Ard and Cluain Iseal in Kilmaley; who is currently responsible for the maintenance of the green areas and what plans are in place to upgrade these areas.

**Helen Quinn, Senior Executive Planner, replied as follows:-**

Enforcement proceedings concluded on Cluain Ard/Cluain Iseal on 26th February 2016 where the case was struck out on the basis of an agreed Terms of Settlement with the Developer which included a financial contribution together with the proceeds of the available bond to secure the satisfactory completion of the development for Taking in Charge. Clare County Council has commenced the Statutory Process for Taking in Charge of Cluain Ard and Cluain Iseal with the advertisement appearing in the Clare Champion earlier in 2016.

There are issues in relation to how the Group Water Scheme (GWS) can be dealt with as part of the taking in charge process and the respective responsibilities of Irish Water, the Council and the GWS. These issues are currently been worked through and it is hoped to bring the development to a meeting of the Ennis Municipal District as soon as possible for consideration.

Once the development has been passed by resolution of the members of the Ennis Municipal District for Taking in Charge, Clare County Council will be arranging for priority works to be addressed within the development, subject to the funds available. These works will include some drainage works to the green areas to bring them up to a standard to be maintained by the residents.

I wish to advise that when this development is passed by resolution of the Elected Members for Taking in Charge that process has the effect of Taking in Charge Roads, Footpaths, Public Lighting, Water & Waste Water Infrastructure and Open Spaces. However, Clare County Council does not maintain the public open spaces within a development and future responsibility for maintenance of the open spaces rests with the residents.

**No.4. NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Breen was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton**

I am asking what is causing recent flooding outside Anne Brody's house, Magowna Road, Caherbannagh, Kilnamona. What plan is in place to eliminate this problem?

**Eamon O' Dea, Senior Executive Engineer replied as follows:**

The Municipal District Office has inspected the location however further inspections will be required during periods of persistent rainfall. The entrance is located in a local hollow at the base of a hill and there is evidence of water ponding in fields across from the entrance in dry weather conditions. Based on the shape of the adjoining land, the runoff from the fields is accumulating at this location and then crosses into the lower land on the opposite side of the road where the entrance is located.

*Members requested a further report on this item for the January 2017 meeting.*

**No.5. NOM submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen**

Can I get an update on when the works will be done to change the name of Lees Road to O'Sullivan Park.

**Tim Forde, General Manager, Active Ennis, replied as follows:**

Quotes have been sought to replace existing signage in Lees Road. New signage will reflect the new name 'O Sullivan Park' in English and Irish. Contact is being made with Michael McTigue Sculptors in relation to style/size of a relevant plaque.

**No.6. NOM submitted by Cllr. C. Collieran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly (NOM No. 16 submitted by Cllr. Pat Daly was also dealt with under NOM No.6)**

That the numerous & varied concerns of the residents of Páirc na Coille, including, lack of street lighting, need for Speed Ramps and lack of visibility at the bend at

the Rugby Grounds Gate, and inadequate heating in the houses, be addressed by the executive of Ennis Municipal District of Clare County Council as a matter of urgency.

**Robert Burns, A/Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:-**

In December 2015 Clare County Council's Social Development Directorate commenced a 20-year lease for 27 no. two-bedroom houses in the privately owned Pairc na Coille development at Drumbiggle, Ennis. The Pairc na Coille roads and services are not in the charge of Clare County Council. Notwithstanding this the Council is making the necessary arrangements to have the public lighting along the estate access road into development repaired and it is envisaged that this work will be completed in December 2016. The Council will liaise with the property owners within the development with regard to issues raised concerning traffic safety on the access road, which as stated is not a public road.

Recently, representatives of the Council's Housing section met with a number of the Pairc na Coille Residents Association to hear their concerns. The houses leased by the Council are of a very high standard and they have a good energy rating, typical of houses constructed within the last decade. Under the terms of the Lease, the Council is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the properties while the property owners retain responsibility for the building structure and any works that may require capital investment, such as energy efficiency upgrades over the life-time of the lease, etc... In short, the Council is investigating the issues raised, liaising as necessary with the property owners, and is arranging to carry out any necessary maintenance works.

**No.7. NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.**

I am requesting a detailed report on all surveys or reports that have been conducted to date in relation to the continued weight restriction at Latoon Bridge, Clarecastle and to be briefed on the timescale that is anticipated in resolving the outstanding issues and having the bridge re-opened fully.

**Eamon O' Dea, Senior Executive Engineer replied as follows:**

The Council has carried out a thorough inspection of the existing bridge deck. The outcome of this investigation is that it is recommended that the most cost effective method of dealing with the bridge is to replace the existing deck in its entirety. The Council has forwarded the details of the proposal to the Department of Transport and we are awaiting confirmation if they have available funding for the project in 2017. The Council will seek to commence the tendering process for this work as soon as it has confirmation of funding. It is likely that all this process will facilitate commencement of work in late August or early September 2017. The anticipated construction period would be 4 to 6 months. The current weight restriction has to remain in place and the Road Design Office undertakes regular

checks of the structure. Vehicle classification counts will also continue and CCC will follow up if required with An Garda Síochána.

*Members requested that the public be updated via media releases on this item. Communication is key to public awareness.*

**No.8. NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Daly was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton**

I ask the Ennis Municipal District to seek clarification from Clare Comhaltas about the possibility of hosting Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in 2018.

**Gerard Dollard, Director of Service replied as follows:**

The application process and decision making process regarding the hosting of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann entirely rests with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. Clare County Council has consistently supported applications made by the Abbey Branch of Comhaltas to host Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and such applications have been successful for 2016 and 2017.

The Council has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Comhaltas regarding the operation of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2017 and it is hoped to achieve further improvements and enhancements to an event and festival which was very successful in August 2016.

I understand that a decision regarding Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2018 will be made by Comhaltas in March 2017 and at that point applications received from individual Comhaltas branches will be considered. I will relay the sentiments of the Municipal District (in the event that the motion is agreed by the Municipal District Members) to Comhaltas for their consideration.

*Members have already looked at various options for festivals during the Summer months following on from the Fleadh in Ennis.*

**No.9. NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.**

That Ennis Municipal district priorities & progress the development of Ennis District as a cycling & walking Hub through the construction of the 5 cycling/walking routes designed & costed in the Earthroute report to Ennis UDC 2008

**Tom Tiernan, Senior Engineer, replied as follows:**

As is evident in Ennis at present, there has been a significant focus through 2015 and 2016 on the design and development of cycling infrastructure along an array of strategic routes - in response to a funding opportunity which emerged in early 2015. Due to deficiency of resources, we are not in a position to carry out detailed advance design work without commitment to funding to cover the cost of same.

However, as we move towards the completion of the presently ongoing scheme development works, we will be pursuing funding opportunities to enable further development of similar and complimentary infrastructure both in Ennis Town and in other parts of the county including in relation to strategic development of the West Clare Railway Greenway

*An updated Presentation was requested by members on this item.*

**No.10. NOM submitted by Cllr. M. Howard was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy**

I request that the hugely successful mini roundabouts (fried eggs) used at three locations on the Clon Road and Tulla Road be considered for the busy intersection at Shanaway Road and Lahinch Road at Claureen.

**Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:**

The Road Design Section has visited this location on the N85 Lahinch Road from Claureen Roundabout to the speed limits with the TII Road Safety Engineer. It is intended that the Council will submit a proposal to the TII outlining road safety improvement works that can be carried out on this section of road with a cost benefit analysis. This work has not proceeded yet due to level of activity and resources in the Road Design Section, which includes the work on the Active Town Travel Project and the work at Cappahard Roundabout in Ennis.

*Members further queried this item. Eamon O'Dea, SEE, confirmed that this is high on the list of priorities for a review. The TII have already visited the site and have considered options. It is intended to progress works in this area once the Road Design Team are in a position to do so.*

**No.11. NOM submitted by Cllr. T. McNamara was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly.**

I call on Clare County Council to carry out a survey on the stability of mature trees in and around housing estates in the Ennis area, what impact these trees are having in neighbouring houses, businesses and public roads and in particular the trees in front of Avondale estate in the Kilrush Road.

**Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:**

Ennis Town Council carried out a comprehensive inspection of all of the mature trees in the public areas by using a climbing arborist in 2008/2009. This report was then used to remove a number of declining horse chestnut and beech trees and outlined a system of tree maintenance that was carried out each year. The severe storms in February 2014 caused some severe damage to particular redwood trees however the majority of the mature deciduous trees survived due to the previous maintenance regime. Due to the severity of the February 2014 storms the majority of the mature trees in public areas in Ennis were inspected and graded by an experienced arborist. The arborist issued a list of works with a few large branch

cuttings but mainly crown work was identified. This work was completed and funded under storm damage funding from the Department of Environment. Work was carried out on the crowns of some of the trees at Avondale.

*Members congratulated Eamon O'Dea, SEE, on works done to date on trees in the Ennis area.*

**No.12. NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Breen was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton**

What plan is in place to improve the pavement on the footpath from Bank Place to Bindon Street, Ennis.

**Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:**

The Municipal District Office will be carrying out work in the town centre area on footpaths and accessibility of footpaths in Spring 2017. There are areas of paving in Bank Place and Bindon Street that will require input from the Conservation Officer.

**No.13. NOM submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn**

That Clare County Council upgrade the footpaths on the Tulla Road so they can be used for Wheelchair users and buggies.

**Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:**

Inspection of the footpaths on the Tulla Road from Knoxes Bridge to Hillcrest is being carried out by the Municipal District Office. There are a number of locations where access drop kerbs are required and replacement of footpath surfacing is required in certain locations. Work will be subject to available resources.

**(Mayor Cllr. A. Norton excused herself from the meeting as she had another appointment, Cllr. J. Breen, Deputy Mayor, took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.)**

**No.14. NOM submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara**

In light of the substantially heavier traffic travelling from the motorway on the Doora exit (Exit 12), that traffic calming measures be introduced in Doora from the Church to Lynch's Cross, including the construction of the footpath long promised from the Shibeen Pub towards Lynch's Cross to accommodate safe pedestrian travel.

**Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:**

The Municipal District Office recently completed drainage work at Doora that was funded from the D.O.T. Flooding Funding. The Municipal District Office nor the previous Roads Engineers are aware of any undertaking regarding the provision of

footpaths in Doora. I am not aware of a funding stream for such work at present except the Discretionary Funding in the Road Grants. There is a 60kph speed limit from the cross roads to the mine junction and the Municipal District Office will carry out speed survey to determine if vehicles are reducing their speed through the cluster of houses.

**No.15. NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.**

I am requesting that Ennis Municipal District liaise with the planning department of Clare County Council in seeking a resolution to the continued problem and eyesore that is the abandoned development of Cois Fheargais, Clarecastle (formerly Devine's field).

**Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner replied as follows:**

The Planning Authority are acutely aware of the issues that remain on-going with the Cois Fheargais, development in Clarecastle. It is noted that a recommendation has been made for the site to remain on the Department of the Environment's unfinished estates list for 2017. As the planning permission on the site has now expired the Planning Authority has been in contact with the Receiver regarding site maintenance and management with a view to resolving the issues. There is on-going contact and liaison with the local Tidy Towns Committee regarding hoarding maintenance and vegetation. The Planning Authority is committed to working with all interested parties to try to address the unfinished nature of this site and the associated maintenance and management of same.

**No.16. NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Daly - This NOM was dealt with under NOM No. 6**

I request the Municipal District to accommodate the residents of Páirc na Coille by improving the insulation of the houses, also seeking street lighting and speed ramps at the entrance to the estate and improve the bad bend close to the Rugby Club adjacent to their estate.

**Robert Burns, A/Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:-**

Clare County Council's Social Development Directorate (incorporating the Housing section) commenced a 20-year lease in December 2015 for 27 No., two-bedroom houses in the Pairc na Coille development, located off the Drumbiggle Road in Ennis. The houses are located within a private development and the roads and services are not within the charge of Clare County Council. The Council is making the necessary arrangements to have public lighting along the access road into development repaired and it is envisaged that this work will be completed in December 2016. The Council will liaise with the property owners within the development with regard to issues raised concerning traffic safety on the access road, which is not a public road, meaning it is not owned or maintained by the Council, at the present time.

Representatives of the Housing section recently met with a number of members of the Pairc na Coille Residents Association regarding their concerns. The houses leased by the Council are of a very high standard and they have a C3 energy rating, which is a good energy rating and typical of houses constructed within the middle of the last decade. Under the terms of the lease, the Council is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the properties and the owners retain responsibility for the building structure and any works that may require capital investment, such as energy efficiency upgrades over the life-time of the lease. The Council is investigating the issues raised, liaising as necessary with the property owners, and is arranging to carry out any necessary maintenance works.

**Item No. 7. Correspondence**

None

**Item No. 8. Any Other Business**

- *Members referred to the "Limerick and Clare Sports and Physical Recreation Strategy" document which was drafted in 2012 and requested an updated copy of same.*
- *Members requested an update on the proposed footpath on the Kilrush Road, Ennis.  
Eamon O'Dea informed members that works are due to commence in the next couple of weeks.*

*As this is the last meeting before Christmas, the Deputy Mayor, thanked the executive of the Municipal District of Ennis, the Media and fellow Councillors for their co-operation during 2016 and wished everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year.*

*The December meeting then concluded.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meetings Administrator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_