

**Minutes of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting
held at 3.30pm on Tuesday July 5th, 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 and M. Howard.

Officials: Leonard Cleary, A/Director of Services, Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator, Catherine O'Hara, Administrative Officer, Mark Dunphy, Communications Officer, Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer, & Deirdre Ryan, Staff Officer.

Apologies: Cllr. J. Flynn

L. Cleary, A/Director of Services, welcomed Ann Reynolds, Administrative Officer, to the Municipal District of Ennis, and members joined in wishing Ann luck in her new post with Clare County Council and as Meeting's Administrator to the Municipal District of Ennis.

L. Cleary and members of the Municipal District of Ennis congratulated Catherine O'Hara on her new role in the HR Department and thanked her for her work and commitment to her role as Meetings Administrator with the Municipal District of Ennis. Members complimented Catherine on her hard work and dedication to her role and wished her every success in Human Resources.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the June Monthly Meeting held on the 07.06.2016

Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District June 2016 monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr. M. Howard, seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy and adopted by members.

Item No. 2. Minutes of the 2016 AGM held on the 07.06.2016

Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District 2016 AGM were proposed by Cllr. J. Breen, seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and adopted by members.

Item No. 3. Matters Arising from Minutes

Members thanked E. O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, and the staff of the Ennis area Roads office, for works carried out on Mill Road, Ennis.

Item No. 4. Confirm Nomination to Corporate Policy Group

Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy proposed the nomination of the Mayor of Ennis, Cllr. A. Norton, Cllr. T. McNamara seconded this proposal and members agreed that Cllr. A. Norton would be the representative from the Municipal District of Ennis on the Corporate

Policy Group. This will be the case in the event that the Chair is not from the Municipal District of Ennis.

Item No. 5. Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 - Declaration of Public Roads

- Bruach na hAbhainn, Quin Road, Ennis
- Silvergrove, Cahircalla Beg, Ennis.

This item was proposed by Cllr. P. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. C. Collieran Molloy and agreed by members.

Item No. 6. Flood Damage Funding (Tranche 2) Ennis Municipal District area.

This item was noted by members.

Item No. 7. Traffic Management Fleadh 2016.

E. O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, briefed members on Traffic Management of the Fleadh in Ennis, which was held in The Temple Gate Hotel on Monday the 20th of June, 2016. The briefing had been attended by over 200 business people from Ennis and received a very positive response from the business sector. A further briefing will be held by Comhltas on Thursday the 7th of July, 2016, in The West County Hotel.

Item No. 8. Ennis Streetscape Initiative.

L. Cleary, A/Director of Services, gave a summary of the Ennis Streetscape Initiative. 77 Applications were received with 74 being valid applications. 3 were invalid under the terms and conditions of the initiative. The approximate cost of the scheme will be in the region of €45,000.

Members welcomed the initiative and acknowledged the very positive response to same.

Item No. 9. Community & Arts Grants.

F. Whelan outlined 2 applications under the grant schemes from the Municipal District of Ennis.

€400 - Clare Walks Ltd.

€1,000 - Quin Tidy Towns (Cllr. C. Collieran Molloy, Ennis Environs Allocation (Quin area)

This item was proposed by Cllr. T. McNamara, seconded by Cllr. C. Collieran Molloy and agreed by members.

Item No. 10. Update on proposed Pedestrian Crossing - Gort Road, Ennis.

E. O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, informed the meeting that this item is progressing further. A notice will be in the local newspaper shortly to commence public consultation on the process and the closing date for the receipt of submissions is the 12th of August, 2016. Funding is to be arranged and works are expected to be commenced in September, 2016.

Item No. 11 Notices of Motion.

- 1. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr P. Daly was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.**

"I call on Failte Ireland to undertake improvements at the Ennis Tourist office as the present presentation of the office is not satisfactory for a tourist office in a major town and falls short of what would be expected by the many visitors who come to Ennis."

No reply required

Members expressed their disappointment in relation to the current opening hours of the Tourist office. Hours need to be extended, in particular, with the forthcoming Fleadh 2016. Members also felt that the location of the tourist office is "hidden" and felt that new premises should be sought on the main street as well as extending the opening hours.

- 2. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy**

The market area has been undergoing redevelopment for several months at this stage. Business's in the market area and adjoining streets have reported a significant fall in trade and foot fall during this reconstruction. As rates is one of the costs that can be controlled by the Local Authority, I am proposing that any business that can show that sales have been negatively impacted on by the construction work, be entitled to a rates rebate or credit for the affected period. I am proposing that this be addressed in the budget for 2017.

Noleen Fitzgerald, Financial Accountant replied as follows:-

The market area redevelopment and business impact has been raised as the Market Area Rejuvenation Project committee meetings. The impacts raised would have been made to the Council in relation to other major infrastructure projects and road closures/event licences which inevitably give rise to a level of disruption for commercial businesses. In the case in relation to the Market Rejuvenation project, a considerable investment is being made to improve the area and hopefully create a greater level of business for the entire area.

Commercial Rates are the main funding source for the general provision of services by a Local Authority. There is no mechanism for the waiving of this annual charge. The council may enter into an agreement to spread the cost of the commercial rates over the full trading year with monthly payments.

Members discussed this matter further and agreed that this re-development has been on-going for a number of months and has had an impact on the businesses in the Market area of Ennis. The businesses on Barrack Street have also been impacted. Businesses have shown great patience thus far and now wish for a marketing campaign for the whole market area of Ennis to be put in place. A budge of €20,000 has been set aside by the Council, however, members feel that this should be increased further and an offer to spread the cost of the 2016 rates over a 5 year period should also be put in place.

L. Cleary, A/Director of Services, acknowledged the fact that businesses have been disrupted, however, to get a project of this magnitude to flourish, some disruption is inevitable. The Budget for 2016, as adopted by the members, is already in place and cannot be amended at this stage. It is open to the members to consider an increase in the Local Property Tax (LPT) and this could be examined for 2017. The Council has no doubt that the new facility will increase the footfall in the Market area of Ennis and will, therefore, increase the business in the Market area for all involved.

The Market Liaison Committee meets on a fortnightly basis with the Mayor of Ennis chairing the meetings. The Mayor has committed to bring all concerns to the Executive of Clare County Council. The commitment is there from the Council to ensure that the Market area of Ennis as well as the new facility is marketed and open for business going forward.

3. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T. McNamara was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

I call on Clare Co. Co. to purchase the area of land at the entrance to Clonroad business Park from the owner because this site has been sterilised from any form of development for over 20 years as a result of the proposed link road between Clonroad and the Quin road.

Leonard Cleary, A/Director of Services replied as follows:-

There are a number of stakeholders that need to have an engagement to progress this item. From a Planning/Development Plan perspective the strip of land is a) inappropriate for development and b) there is a road reservation through a significant portion of it. The Chief Executive's report on the submission for this site reflected this. Again from a Planning viewpoint, it would seem the prudent thing to purchase the lands to allow junction improvements/roads alignment etc which have been in recent Development Plans.

Secondly the owner of the Clonroad Business Park may have to purchase this site to be able to intensify operations as the present exit is substandard. Whether this is done in conjunction with Clare County Council or by Clare County Council would be based on development on the Quin Road in the future. Additional land would be required between the Railway line and the access road to the Clonroad Business Park also.

There is a case for Clare County Council to look at strategic portions of land when there is a relative down turn in the market. However, this requires a funding stream to be available and a reasonable probability that the work will proceed as public funds are being used. This portion of land was part of the site for Meadow Court Site, which was a combined ownership.

Having regard to the above, a discussion between key stakeholders may be pro-active in progressing this issue and identifying if a number of parties would be in a position to invest in the future of this area.

4. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Collieran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen.

That the entrance and road in Kildrum Cemetery, Quin, be surfaced and a turning area be provided as accessibility is very difficult.

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

The access road to Kildrum Cemetery off the R469 Quin - Knappogue Road is not in charge of the Council. The Municipal District Roads Office is willing to assist the local Graveyard Committee in the provision of materials for the maintenance of the private road to the graveyard.

5. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

With reference to the submission by Clare County Council's road design office to Transport Infrastructure Ireland, of detailed proposed works regarding the Active Town Travel project at Clareabbey Roundabout. I am proposing that Ennis M.D. call on the TII to present at a meeting with the Council to address road safety for all users (Vehicles but particularly pedestrians and cyclists) 1) to discuss and agree the scope of works required, 2) funding and 3) Scheduling of the works. The works on Clareabbey are critical to the " joining up" of the National Cycle Network at this location and the Ennis Active Travel Town Project.

No reply required

Members requested that the Municipal District of Ennis write to the T.I.I. to request their attendance at a monthly meeting to progress this matter.

6. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy.

I request the Ennis Municipal District Council consider introducing by-laws regulating control of the semi-permanent trading on the roadside in the Ennis Municipal District.

Leonard Cleary, A/Director of Services, replied as follows:-

Clare County Council could review Casual Trading By-Laws for Ennis and District. There are a number of stages in the procedure including public consultation. It is envisaged that following the establishment of the covered market at Garraunakilla that in due course a review of Casual Trading By-Laws will occur. This item could be considered as part of that process.

7. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Breen was seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara

I am asking this Council has the embargo on the recruitment of outdoor staff been lifted? Will General Operatives be employed shortly?

Jason Murphy, Senior Executive Officer, Human Resources, replied as follows:-

In August 2013 the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requested that Local Authorities develop a 'Workforce Plan'. Clare County Council has a 'Workforce Plan' in place and the Local Authority has sanctioned since February 2016 to fill the posts outlined in that Plan.

The HR Department is currently in the process of analysing the status of the outdoor workforce in detail: Numbers, grades, panels, status of position (i.e. permanent / acting / temporary etc.)

Panels have been formed in recent weeks for Fitter/Plumber and General Operative positions and a number of existing panels and contracts have been extended across all grades.

Work is underway to fill outdoor positions including General Operatives. It is intended to complete this work over the coming months and the HR Department continues to work with the Unions in this regards.

It must be noted that there is an independent national review currently underway in respect of Water Services staffing levels. It is expected that this review will be complete shortly and the HR Department will be guided by this report in the filling of those positions.

Clare County Council remains committed to the principles of Workforce Planning and acknowledges the need to continually review and revise its plan in terms of staffing levels in order to remain responsive to the needs of its customers and the ever-changing environment.

Members further queried the delay in recruiting since the Workforce Plan was approved. They requested information on who has been employed since February, 2016, how many have been employed and in what newspaper have the jobs been advertised?

L. Cleary, A/Director of Services, acknowledged members comments whilst also acknowledging the continued work of both indoor and outdoor staff on a smaller workforce. While we have approval to employ further staff, there is budget

constraints both for payroll and roads budgets. During the last number of months a number of new staff have been employed under the Gateway Scheme. It is envisaged that, in due course, further staff resources will be made available. Acting up positions have also been ratified and will be filled in the near future. Panels normally expire after 12 months, however, this can be extended to 24 months at the discretion of the Chief Executive of the Council.

- 8. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn. In the absence of Cllr. J. Flynn, Mayor Norton proposed to move this motion, this was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen**

That Ennis Municipal District calls on Roads Section Clare County Council to surface dress the main Corrovorrin road into the housing estate, which is in a poor state of repair.

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

The Council carried out surfacing works on Kevin Barry Avenue-Corrovorrin Avenue in recent weeks as part of this year's road works programme.

- 9. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T. McNamara was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton**

I call on the Senior Executive Engineer to outline how much of the €3.6 million funding allocation to Clare County Council for repair to regional and local roads as a result of the severe flooding of the winter of 2015/2016 will be allocated to the Ennis Municipal District, what roads will have flood relief work and repair work carried out and what time scale is envisaged for complete of these essential works.

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

The allocation to the Municipal District of Ennis was €671,700 of which €225,000 is allocated towards the upgrading of the drainage at Cappahard on the Tulla Road. The remaining funds are allocated to different roads which are being completed with the roadworks programme. Attached list of roads / locations.

- 10. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.**

During bike week numerous adults and children were observed cycling which was very positive. However, of great concern was the obvious lack of knowledge of the rules of the road by many of our younger cyclists, and some older. This poor understanding of the rules and the fact that cars, buses, trucks, cyclists and pedestrians share the road is a concern. With this in mind and the active cycle promotion, I am requesting that the Council work with Clare Cycle Safety initiative by using some of there signs as a pilot program with the council looking at the safety signs as a long term investment.

Also to write to the Chief Superintendent for Clare, requesting that he put a scheme in place where by Community Gardai visit schools and show children how to properly use the public roads and foot paths; how to safely cycle through roundabouts, lights etc. A scheme like this could prevent future accidents and save lives in the future.

Tom Tiernan, Senior Engineer, Transportation, replied as follows:-

"I concur with the spirit and aspiration of this Motion and I believe that agencies should be working together to ensure that the energy used to get as many people out of the car and onto bicycles would be matched in equal measure by a learning and safety agenda. The Councils Road Safety Working Group is an amalgamation of all such agencies including the Gardai, the HSE, the Road Safety Authority (RSA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Local Authority itself. I will ensure that this issue is placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the group with a view to reaching a consensus on the most appropriate way forward. Some initiatives are already being pursued - some of which are spearheaded by the RSA, but I would agree that there is a need for intensification of approach in this regard."

11. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly.

In light of the highly dangerous site lines at the "Cranagher Cross on the Tulla Road, that immediate works be undertaken in light of its hazardous condition posing threat to public safety.

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

The Council carries out verge trimming at this and other specific junction locations along the R352 Tulla-Ennis Road. Verge trimming was carried out in the last week and will be carried out as required. We will raise the safety concerns at this junction with the Road Design Section to examine possibility of a low cost safety scheme submission to the Department of Transport.

Members requested information on the number of enforcement notices served on landowners to trim hedges. There is a hedge cutting scheme in place to encourage landowners to keep hedges trimmed.

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen.

I am proposing that Ennis MD carry out any works that need to be completed in the Lenabeag and Lissaniska estates, Drumcliffe road in order to bring them up to an acceptable standard. Outstanding issues that I am aware of is lack of public lighting, raised manholes and the need for another layer of tarmacadam.

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

The Council are appointing a road surfacing contractor to complete the wearing course at Lenabeag & Lissaniska. This work shall be carried out on or before September

following completion of a small number of adjustments to storm and foul connections on the sewers which should be completed in July-August.

- 13. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy.**

As a matter of urgency can the proposed Monument/Memorial Committee be established for Ennis Municipal District.

No reply required.

L. Cleary, A/Director of Services, informed members that it is a matter for the Council to establish a sub-committee if members wish to proceed with a Monument/Memorial Committee.

Members requested that this item be put on the September agenda in order to progress the matter.

- 14. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Breen was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.**

When can I expect to see the Ballyduff road in Barefield repaired and the speed limit reduced on this road.

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

The Ballyduff Road, Barefield is not in this year's road works programme and the Municipal District Roads Office will review next year's programme for inclusion of the lower section (near Railway Bridge) next year. This section of the road is covered by the patching unit when it is in the Municipal District. The first draft of the speed limit byelaws should be before the Municipal District Councillors in September for your consideration.

- 15. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn. In the absence of Cllr. Flynn this motion was moved by Cllr. J. Breen and seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara.**

That Ennis Municipal District calls on Environmental Section Clare County District to appoint consultants to design for the re-instatement of necessary public Toilet facilities for Ballyalia Lake.

Ann Haugh, Director of Services, Transportation, Environment, Water and Emergency Services Department, replied as follows:-

Ballyalla Lake is a designated bathing area included in the 2016 Beach Byelaws, which were recently adopted by Clare Co Council. The provision of toilet facilities at beaches is a requirement for designation of Blue Flag status and priority is given to the

development of such facilities at those locations. Available capital funding for Beach Development works is currently fully committed towards new toilet facilities at Lahinch, Kilkee and Spanish Point Blue Flag beaches with a view to having these facilities in place for the 2017 season. However, I wish to advise that consideration will be given to this request in the context of the Budget 2017 Capital Programme and subject to identification of a source of funding.

12. Correspondence - none

Any Other Business

A Public Light to be provided in Chapel Lane, directly outside the Community Centre, ahead of the Fleadh 2016. Eamon O'Dea is to examine the location.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Signed: _____
Meetings Administrator

Date: _____