

**Minutes of the May 2022
Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis,
held in Boardroom in Clare Museum, Ennis and on-line
at 10:45am on Tuesday 3rd May 2022**

Councillors: A. Norton, P. Daly, P. Murphy, M. Howard, C. Colleran-Molloy, J. Flynn, M. Nestor

Officials: Carmel Kirby, Director of Service, Leonore O'Neill, Senior Executive Officer, Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Niamh O'Connor, Administrative Officer & Meetings Administrator, Lily McInerney Staff Officer, Mairead Griffin, Assistant Staff Officer.

Apologies: None.

Chair, Cllr. A. Norton opened the meeting welcoming all present.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the April 2022 Meeting of Municipal District of Ennis held on 5th April 2022

This item was proposed by Cllr. M. Howard, seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy and agreed by all Members.

Item No. 2. Matters Arising

(i) Cllr. Flynn referenced A.O.B. item from April Meeting regarding the O'Dea Clan Gathering planned for July 2022, and requested formal approval for this event.

This item was proposed by Cllr C. Colleran-Molloy, seconded by Cllr. A. Norton, and agreed by all Members.

Item No. 3. GMA Funding – Festivals & Events, Community Projects, General

Festivals & Events 2022

Applicant name	Amount Agreed
Christmas in Ennis	€15,000
Ennis Book Club Festival	€4,000
Clare Garden Festival	€1,500
Clarecastle Regatta	€2,000
Ennis International Fantastic Film Festival	€4,000
Clare Food & Drink Fleadh	€6,000
Slow Fashion Festival (Promote Ennis)	€4,000

Community Projects 2022

Applicant name	Amount Agreed
Clare Roots Society	€4,000
Bushy Park Treatment Centre	€1,500
Clarecastle Heritage & Wildlife Group	€1,500
Clarecastle Community Dev Co	€2,000
Ennis Brass Band	€2,500
Clare Crusaders Children's Clinic	€4,000
Relay for Life	€1,000
Kilnamona Development Association	€500
Clarecastle Show Society	€2,000
When it Doubt Pedal it Out	€1,000

This item was proposed by Cllr. P. Daly, seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy and agreed by all Members.

Councillor specific allocations

Project	Amount
Willow Counselling Service	€2,500.00
Ennis Mens Shed	€1,000.00
Clarecastle Show Society	€3,000.00
Soccer Sisters Ennis	€1,500.00
Soroptimists Club - Ukrainian relief project	€ 350.00

This item was proposed by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy, seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and agreed by all Members.

Item No. 4. Notices of Motions

No. 1 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton

Due to the weather getting better and more cyclists and walkers our can the Roads be swept around the Ennis MD and also the Road from Ballyalla lake to Ruan be trimmed and tidied up as there are a lot of branches that could cause serious damage if someone got hit by one.

Ian Chaplin, Executive Engineer, responded as follows

The Ennis MD has examined the section of the Ruan Road in the Ennis MD and generally the hedges are trimmed and safe for cyclists and walkers. As with other local cycling routes we will monitor the condition and only carry out verge trimming where it is necessary for safety reason as per our obligations under the Wildlife Acts. The Ennis MD has forwarded the notice of motion to the West Clare MD whom cover the remaining section of the Ruan Road.

This item was seconded by Cllr. Colleran-Molloy and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. Norton acknowledged the response and the fact that part of the road in question is under the jurisdiction of the West Clare Municipal District.

No. 2 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy

I refer to the local road at Kilbricken that runs from Ballaghboy cross/Quin road to the N85 Dual Carriageway.

According to local residents the volume of traffic using this narrow road continues to increase. This has resulted in increased traffic jams/snarls, incidences of verbal altercations between motorists and games of cat and mouse as to which driver can beat the oncoming car to the next passing point.

Residents living on the road have to endure this on a daily basis and have made me aware that a local man has been struck by a vehicle on two separate occasions. I am proposing that i) a temporary speed limit of 50kph is introduced in advance of the next speed limit review and ii) that a prohibition on all heavy goods vehicles is introduced and enforced by the Traffic Corps (mart days are particularly bad). I am also requesting that funding for the planned relief road from Skehanagh Roundabout to the Quin Road is sought as this is the ideal solution to all of the above and would improve traffic flow across Ennis.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The Ennis MD will raise the request for a temporary construction speed limit and heavy good traffic restriction on the Old Bog Road with the Transportation Section of the Council.

The funding of any new road infrastructure for the Ennis MD area would only be considered following the completion of the Clare Area Based Transport Assessment and the Ennis Mobility Plan-Area Based Transport Assessment by Clare County Council which are funded by the National Transport Authority.

This item was seconded by Cllr M. Howard and agreed by all Members.

This Motion was widely supported by Members commenting on heavy vehicle use and lack of pull-in areas on what was the original east Ennis bypass road. SEE Eamon O'Dea reiterated that solutions would be sought from the Roads Department regarding a temporary speed restriction and prohibition of heavy goods vehicles and that the longer-term plans referred to in his response would provide for a more substantial outcome on these ongoing issues.

No. 3 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn

Quin Road Business Park, Ennis is a very busy and important economic centre in which businesses provide essential retail , services to County Clare customers and significant employment. The businesses in the park generate annual revenue to both Clare County Council and Shannon Group in rates & service charges.

I ask that Ennis Municipal District, Clare County Council and Shannon Group urgently look at upgrading the Business Park in terms of customer, worker and business owner experience , such as

- Creation of a biodiversity/recreational park on vacant sites at left hand side of entrance for people visiting & working in the Business Park and to assist in the use of adjacent Fergus River Walkway.
- Improved pedestrian access & mobility
- Improved cycling access & facilities
- Potential for Ennis or Local Link bus usage
- Integrated, consistent & improved signage

- Improved litter & Environmental control
- Improved public lighting & footpaths.
- Improved traffic control & speed limits

Leonore O'Neill, Senior Executive Officer responded as follows:

Clare County Council are aware of a number of different owners of blocks, in addition to Shannon Commercial properties. Clare County Council will examine the issues raised in this Notice of Motion to examine what can be progressed.

This item was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy and agreed by all Members.

Members voiced support for this Motion commenting on the significance of this business park to the economy of the district, its proximity to the greenway, the need for outdoor seating for workers. Cllr. Flynn recommended that Shannon Commercial properties and Clare County Council come together to work on mutually beneficial solutions. Leonore O'Neill SEO clarified that the business park is not in public ownership, but that Clare County Council, through the Property Unit, would liaise with Shannon Group to see what solutions can be taken forward.

No. 4 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Nestor

I'm asking Clare County Council to write to Irish Water, requesting that they change the manner in which they inform businesses/homeowners of water outages while works are being carried out.

Cyril Feeney, Senior Engineer, responded as follows:

We have forwarded the Notice of Motion to Irish Water for a reply.

Response subsequently received from Irish Water:

Irish Water currently communicates with businesses about planned and unplanned outages where they are signed up to receive notifications. For customers to avail of this service their account has to be matched to a WPRN. We are looking at options to increase the amount of non-domestic customers who receive these notifications.

Business customers who wish to receive notifications can contact our dedicated business team to determine if they are currently eligible.

Contact our Business Team

0818 778 778 / International +353 1 707 2827. Lines open Mon-Fri, 9am-5:30pm.

<https://www.water.ie/contact/business-customers/>

This item was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. Nestor acknowledged the response but voiced strong criticism of what he described as no communication at all from Irish Water to businesses, some of whom have no alternative but to shut up shop for the duration of the water outage, without having had any prior notice. He recommended a body of work be undertaken between Clare County Council and Irish Water to commit to a notification system regarding outages.

No. 5 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy

Spencilhill 1:- To address ongoing safety concerns, that the cost of installing two street lights at Spencil Hill Cross be advised so that GMA allocation can be considered.

Michael O’Grady, Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

Clare County Council will carry out a lighting design to determine what level of lighting is required to safely light up this junction and a costing for same. Once received, the feasibility of installing any required lights at this location will be examined, including environmental screening requirements. A budget for the installation of any lights will need to be identified.

This item was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn and agreed by all Members.

Cllr Colleran-Molloy acknowledged the response and added that she would welcome more detail on timeframes. Eamon O’Dea SEE confirmed that a number of measures can take place in the near future but that the feasibility element involves a more protracted process.

No. 6 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Daly

With the recent anti-social behaviour in Ennis, it is important that this type of behaviour is eliminated for the betterment of the town, and the best way of doing this is for the general public to use the Garda confidential line when they witness such instances.

Leonore O’Neill, Senior Executive Officer, responded as follows:

Ennis Municipal District has written to Ennis Gardai to request that they consider introducing the “See Something, Say Something” scheme, which has been successfully launched in Tralee and Swords.

This item was seconded by Cllr Colleran-Molloy and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. P. Daly recommended that any feasible measures be taken, to facilitate the confidential reporting of this type of behaviour. This Motion was widely supported, and Members await outcome of proposal made to An Garda Siochana regarding the “See Something, Say Something” Scheme.

No. 7 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard

I regularly receive requests from both young people and not so young that we provide a basketball court at Lee’s Rd John O’Sullivan Park.

I request that this request is seriously considered by Ennis MD.

Tim Forde, Head of Sports & Recreation, responded as follows:

Clare County Council Sports & Recreation are not in a position presently to provide a Basketball Court in Active Ennis John O’Sullivan’ Park, Lees Rd, as we do not possess the necessary budget and/or funding.

We too have received requests for a Court, and are going to scope out the possibility of same.

That said, we will in the interim conduct a feasibility study, determining technical requirements and financial costs.

Once complete and if favourable, S&R will investigate available financial support, in-house and from the SCEG funding when next available.

This item was seconded by Cllr. Colleran-Molloy and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. Howard commented that basketball players are limited to indoor courts in Ennis. This motion was well supported. Cllr. Flynn added that he would raise this proposal at the Active Ennis Management Committee.

No. 8 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton

Cahercalla Estate on the Kilrush rd needs maintenance done on the footpaths as they are starting to crack and are very dangerous for people walking, wheelchair users and buggies, can Ennis MD office do a survey and put a maintenance program in place.

Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The Cahercalla Estate footpaths are being examined along with other housing scheme of similar construction dates with the intention of footpath upgrade works being undertaken based on the priority of works. It is anticipated that prioritised works should commence in the Cahercalla Estate this year.

This item was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. Norton welcomed this response. Cllr. Daly added that the footpath upgrade was warranted.

No. 9 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn

Corovorrin Junction .

I ask Ennis Municipal District to consider further improvements to the recent excellent upgrade to Corovorrin Junction as follows

- Improved road signage immediately adjacent to the junction to increase driver awareness
- Road marking of the truck drive over area
- Bollards at the start of the drive over area
- Increased/raised visual emphasis of the centre of the roundabout

Michael O’Grady, Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

Road Design will carry out a review of the current layout to ascertain if further works are required to improve the current use.

This item was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. Flynn acknowledged the response and commended the works completed. He advised that residents are very happy with same and that the additional items requested in the notice would underpin the safety and accessibility for all residents. Eamon O’Dea clarified that there is a proposal for two new pedestrian crossings either side and there is an adjustment to be done on the resin-bond surfacing.

No. 10 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Nestor

This motion is requesting an update from the roads design team on any progress made regarding the exit from Shanaway road onto Lahinch road.

Michael O’Grady, Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The Road Design Office have recently completed a topographical survey of the N85 from Claureen roundabout to the start of the speed limit zone, conceptual design options for Active Travel Measures are being developed for this area, the Shanaway Rd. junction is being incorporated in these designs.

This item was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. Nestor briefed that all seven members have raised this item under Notice of Motions at various stages. He advised that residents are frustrated at the lack of a scheme for emerging and egressing traffic at Shanaway Road. While welcoming the response from the RDO he added that a timeframe for the works is urgent. Members voiced strong support for this Motion.

Eamon O’Dea clarified that all previous designs proposed to TII would not be approved and that therefore the “Active Travel” option was the only alternative left in securing a result at this junction. He clarified that Roads team are now on their 2nd or 3rd machination as to what plan they can get approved through TII. It was agreed that RDO will be asked to provide a briefing to Ennis M.D. Members on the ‘Active Travel’ proposals for Shanaway junction.

No. 11 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy

Spencilhill 2:- To address the ongoing safety concerns due to speeding in Spencilhill and the views expressed by locals that the recent road improvements and markings are insufficient to reduce speeding in the area, that the installation of VMS signals be assessed and costed so that GMA allocation can be considered.

Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The line marking contractor carrying out the sign and lining work at Spencilhill Low-Cost Safety Scheme were unable to complete the line marking work due to salting of the road network. The Ennis MD has an undertaking from the line marking contractor that this work is now prioritised and should be completed in the next two to three weeks. Following the completion of the Low-Cost Safety Scheme, the Road Design Section will carry out a traffic survey to ascertain the mean speeds of the road and review that installation of VMS signals based on survey findings.

This item was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.

Cllr Colleran-Molloy welcomed the response and in particular the prioritisation of the line-marking. She outlined at Minister Eamon Ryan had recently issued a change which would allow for the interim review of a speed limit. Cllrs Norton and Flynn supported the Motion adding that “cluster” or “small village” re-zoning would resolve the issue. Cllr Colleran-Molloy confirmed a submission will be issued in the current County Development Plan consultation process.

No 12 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy

The R473 Ennis/Clarecastle to Kildysart, Labasheeda and Kilrush (Shannon Estuary Way) has become extremely popular as a cycling route and this can be seen on a daily basis but particularly at weekends. There are a number of "pinch points" along the route with the only one in Ennis M.D. being from St. Anthony's Grove through to Hempfield/Claremount Cross. I am requesting i) that road markings are replenished on this stretch of road, ii) that appropriate signage is introduced advising motorists of the prevalence of cyclists at this location, and iii) that this Notice of Motion is forwarded to West Clare M.D. so that additional signage along the route can be considered by their roads department also.

Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The Ennis MD will request the Road Design Office to outline the appropriate cycling signage to be used along this section of the R473 Kildysart Road and the road linings will be examined and replaced where necessary.

John O’Malley, Senior Executive Officer, responded as follows:

The West Clare MD will carry out an updated assessment of the Shannon Estuary route in relation to its use as a cycling route. In recent years signage has been installed in key points along this route as part of the Shannon Estuary Way in partnership with Failte Ireland. Also, Eurovelo route signage was installed along this route in 2021. This has added to its popularity as a cycling route. Road signage and marking along the West Clare MD section of the route will be checked.

This item was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.

Cllr Murphy confirmed he was happy with the response and that the Motion was intended to highlight pinch points along the route that needed some attention.

No 13 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Daly

I ask Ennis M.D to look at the possibility of arranging (if the land is in the ownership of Clare County Council) a car park on the piece of land adjacent to the walk at Doora bridge which continues on to Clareabbey.

Leonore O’Neill, Senior Executive Officer, responded as follows:

The lands at this location are not owned by the Council. There is privately owned car parking in premises adjacent to the walkway and any consideration of public funding being used to provide parking for use of the river walkway from the Quin Rd to Clareabbey should be directed toward the public car parking area adjacent to the Doora Amenity Area & Clare Camogie Grounds.

This item was seconded by Cllr. C. Collieran-Molloy and agreed by all Members.

Cllr P. Daly highlighted the potential for the Council, to purchase the adjacent land for car parking, which would make the walking route more attractive. This Motion was supported by Cllrs Collieran-Molloy, Flynn and Murphy, highlighting that car parking at either end of a walking route being integral to its success. Leonore O’Neill, SEO, clarified again that there is privately owned car parking at the Western Garages end, but that the Clareabbey end, on the main access road, would be a more likely runner in terms of potential public car parking.

No 14 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard

Active Travel.

Over the last number of years we have invested a large amount of money in Active Travel initiatives throughout the town.

I am requesting that these are maintained as your built environment leads your social environment.

- Cycle path markings need to be restored/ repainted as they have faded over the passage of time
- Bollards and armadillos need to be cleaned along the route from Clon Road to College View.

Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The Ennis MD has asked the Road Design Office to clarify the Active Travel funding sought from the National Transport Authority to upgrade the markings on the existing cycle lane networks on the R352 Clareabbey to the Maid Of Eireann Roundabout.

There is routine maintenance of the cycle lanes at College View and the Ennis MD will be proceeding with the cleaning and replacement of bollards at this location. There are a small number of armadillos and kerb bollards that need resetting or replacing between Eire Og and the Kilrush Road. This work is on the Ennis MD Work’s Crew list.

This item was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.

In acknowledging the response, Cllr. Howard noted that even a power wash of some line markings would be welcome and that some of the loose armadillos had gone missing. Cllrs Norton and Flynn supported this motion.

Item No. 6 Correspondence

- (i) A letter had been received from Maria Molloy, Chair of Ennis Mental Health Association, acknowledging and thanking Ennis M.D members, executive and outdoor crews for work undertaken to advance the successful launch of the “friendship seating and plaque” in Abbey Street Car Park.
- (ii) An acknowledgement was received from An Garda Siochana in response to a letter from Ennis M.D. requesting consideration be given to the implementation of the “See Something Say Something” initiative.

Item No. 7 Any Other Business

- (i) Chair A. Norton confirmed that the AGM and ordinary Meeting of Ennis M.D. would take place on Friday 17th June at 2.30pm, in person, in the Council Chamber. The ordinary June meeting will be followed directly by the AGM.
- (ii) Cllr Howard acknowledged the work of Arts Officer Siobhan Mulcahy for the recent impressive Bealtaine Choir performance.
- (iii) Members joined Cllr Howard in extending sympathy to the family of the late Dolores Nevin R.I.P. who passed away on 5 April. Dolores had throughout her life made an enormous contribution to the betterment of Cloughleigh community. May she rest in peace.
- (iv) Cllr Colleran-Molloy requested clarity on whether there would be a central accommodation unit for Ukrainian refugees. Director of Service Carmel Kirby confirmed that Rural Development were working with Mna na Gaire to provide a facility and that notification regarding funding, which was being discussed at national level, was yet to be received. Cllr Howard briefed that the volunteering work is very impressive but what was needed was a single drop-off point for charitable donations.

- (v) Cllr Flynn issued strong condemnation of Minister Eamon Ryan's recent instruction to remove the Northern Distributor Road from the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Strategy and that the strategic development zone will be hugely negatively impacted. Director of Service Carmel Kirby reminded the Meeting that the 6-week public consultation phase was about to commence. DOS Carmel Kirby outlined that she will be making a submission from Clare County Council.
- (vi) Cllr P. Daly welcomed the recommencement of the construction work for the new library in Ennis which is expected to be completed in 18 months.

The Meeting ended at 12.05pm.

Signed: _____
Mayor of Ennis

Signed: _____
Meetings Administrator

Date: _____