

Minutes - July 2023

Ennis Municipal District meeting

2:00p.m. on Thursday 29th June 2023

Council Chamber and on-line

Councillors: C. Colleran-Molloy, P. Daly, P. Murphy, M. Howard, T. O'Callaghan, J. Flynn, A. Norton.

Officials: Carmel Kirby, Director of Service, Leonore O'Neill, Senior Executive Officer, Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Niamh O'Connor, Administrative Officer and Meetings Administrator, Lily McInerney, Staff Officer (minutes).

Apologies: None.

Chair Cllr. Colleran-Molloy opened the meeting welcoming all and acknowledging former Councillor James Breen attending in the Gallery.

Item No. 1. (i) **Minutes of the June 2023 Meeting of Municipal District of Ennis held on 6th June 2023.**

This item was proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by all Members.

(ii) **Minutes of the Special Meeting of Municipal District of Ennis held on Monday 12th June 2023.**

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

Item No. 2. **Matters Arising**

(i) Cllr Flynn referenced Item 2 (iii) of June Minutes whereby clarity was sought as to whether the €2,000 allocation from *Festival & Events 2023* to *Experience Ennis* was appropriate now that that company was in the process of folding. Senior Executive Officer Leonore O'Neill confirmed that notification had just been received from the Board of Directors that the company was currently winding down, and that they will issue a full report to Members afterwards. She also clarified, further to a query from Cllr T. O' Callaghan, that no monies have been paid to the group yet in 2023 and that the festival they had sought funding for would not now go ahead and therefore these monies will be available for reallocation.

(ii) Cllr Flynn raised concern regarding responsibility for tourism promotion for Ennis in the absence of *Experience Ennis* and suggested adding this as an agenda item for next Ennis M.D. Meeting. Leonore O'Neill, SEO, confirmed that the matter would be fully addressed in due course by the Executive.

Item No. 3. Section 38: Tulla Road Cycle Scheme, Tulla Road, Ennis.

Report and maps had been circulated in advance of Meeting.

Conor McDonagh, Executive Engineer, broadly outlined the benefits this first of four schemes will bring, the remaining three being Limerick Road, Lahinch Road and Gort Road. Members voiced positive support for the scheme. Conor McDonagh confirmed that the NTA have committed to funding the project beyond the initial €1.8m secured, adding that the successful implementation of this scheme will safeguard funding for the remaining three schemes.

This item was proposed by Cllr. P Daly, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by all Members.

Item No. 4 GMA for approval

Cllr. Flynn withdrew from the meeting, during discussion around allocation of GMA to Clare County Agricultural Show. Whilst he had no financial benefit, he wished to avoid a potential perception of conflict of interest.

The following items were proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by all Members.

Beneficiary	Amount
Sláinte an Chláir, Kilnamona	1,000.00
Clarecastle Tidy Towns	2,000.00
Clarecastle GAA	2,000.00
Avenue United	950.00
Lifford AFC	2,000.00
Éire Óg GAA	1,500.00
Co Clare Agricultural Show	1,000.00
Kayak le Chéile, Scoil Chríost Rí	1,780.00
Ennis West Mens Shed	367.00
Going Well Program	500.00

The following item was proposed by Cllr. A Norton, seconded by Cllr P. Murphy and agreed by all Members:

Grant Awarded to:	Clare Family Resource Centre
Amount:	€1,300
Original Project:	Purchase of an AED Defibrillator for the centre
Alternative project:	Assisting with purchase and installation of new CCTV equipment (Cost circa €8,000).
Reason:	A local businessman sponsored the purchase of the defibrillator, so Clare Family Resource Centre have asked if they could use the grant money towards the cost of the CCTV equipment purchase & installation instead.

Item No. 5. Notices of Motions

No. 1 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy

Ballybeg

That the road located 2nd on the right down from the Water tower be taken in charge by the Council, so that the lighting and footpath upgrade needs can be finally addressed.

Kieran O'Donnell, Administrative Officer, responded as follows:

The Taking in Charge Department will review the history of this development, including the roadway. This will determine what options are open to the Council, what works are required to be carried out, and whether the Council can progress the taking in charge of the development under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act. An update will be provided to Members when this review is completed.

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

Cllr Colleran-Molloy welcomed the response. Cllrs Howard, Murphy, Daly and O'Callaghan voiced support for this Motion highlighting the benefits of this well-established walking route and popular amenity to the community.

No. 2 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard

The pedestrian crossing that was recently installed in front of the school at Ennis Community College is not working and has not been for some time. There are no flashing lights operating on it. This crossing is located at Harmony Row/St Anthony's Terrace.

Secondly, I believe that there is a need to look at installing pedestrian crossings at the Maid or Erin roundabout. As you are aware this is a very busy roundabout. Each day the vast majority of our students walk to school while some cycle. We currently have in excess of 560 students attending the school. I believe that two crossings would be desirable - one from the school side towards the Mill

and the other towards the Lahinch Road (the later is probably more urgent as this section of the road is relatively 'blind' especially when coming from the Lahinch Road in the direction of the school. Cars often travel at speed also).

I believe that the matters above need to be addressed as soon as possible given the high volume of pedestrians and cyclists, especially given that most are young people of school going age. Added to this our school recently installed a system to monitor traffic at Harmony Row/St Anthony's Terrace as part of a sustainability project. Since January 1st 2023 up until May 5th there has been recorded 460,000 cars and 78,000 heavy goods vehicles as having passed this location.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

This pedestrian crossing was installed as part of the recent Ennis Community College extension project. The installation of this crossing is the responsibility of the applicant for the development. Ennis MD are currently liaising with the applicants representative with a view to resolving this issue as quickly as possible. We have been informed that an application has been lodged to the ESB to provide an electrical connection to the lights.

Ennis MD will separately liaise with the Road Design Office and the Active Travel team to assess the potential for installation of pedestrian crossings at the proposed locations.

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

Cllr Howard stated she would look forward to progress on this and also on a crossing at the Maid of Erin which would be of equal benefit. Cllr Murphy and Colleran-Molloy and O'Callaghan supported this motion.

No. 3 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Daly

I ask Ennis Municipal District to arrange for a white line to be put down across the junction and continue on down the road for about 20 feet, outside the business premises of V.S. Wholesale Ltd at Kilmorane, Edenvale, Ennis, as well as demolishing the wall beside the stop sign at the same junction.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

Ennis MD have assessed this junction and will install both line marking and a Stop sign at this location in the coming weeks. The wall at this location is not in the ownership of Clare County Council and as such we have no remit to demolish it. However we will investigate if this junction warrants an application to the Department of Transport as part of a Low Cost Safety Scheme.

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

Cllr Daly welcomed the response and highlighted the levels of traffic and activity generated by the wholesale company at this location. This Motion was strongly supported by all Members. Paddy Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer confirmed that the line marking is scheduled and that a potential solution for this junction may be a low-cost safety scheme. He added that the wall in question is privately owned which adds a complication to this matter.

No. 4 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T. O’Callaghan

The main entrance road from Clareabbey to Clarecastle needs resurfacing can the council provide any update.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows

The R458 from the Kildysart Cross to Clarecastle forms part of Ennis MDs Road Works Programme for 2023. A contractor has recently been appointed and these resurfacing works will be carried out in the coming months.

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

Cllr T. O’Callaghan welcomed the positive response and highlighted the visual and safety aspects of this work. Cllr Murphy strongly supported this Motion and the importance of road resurfacing following completion of the sewer laying works. Cllrs Howard and Daly also voiced support for this Motion.

No. 5 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn

I ask Ennis Municipal District Executive for a progress report on my previous requests to improve both safety and increase accessibility for the public using the Ballyalia Lake amenity by the installation of public lighting from the Gort Road down to Ballyalia Lake. Such report to include potential cost, number of poles & lights, habitat protection and likely completion date.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

Ennis MD are delighted to report that funding for this project has been obtained as part of the Community Recognition Fund. This Fund is an initiative of the Department of Rural and Community Development and is designed to specifically support communities across the country that are hosting people from Ukraine and other countries. Ennis MD received notification on the 16th May 2023 that our application for the Public Lighting project was successful.

We can further report that a contractor has recently been appointed to install the public lighting along this route. 16 no. lighting columns will be erected at approximately 25m centres. The column height has been restricted to 4m in height in order to reduce the environmental impact of the project including impacts on the local bat species. The estimated cost of the project is €132,500 and we expect the project to be completed by the end of August 2023.

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

Cllr. Flynn welcomed the response.

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

Re Bus Stops and Infrastructure, I am requesting an update in relation to progress on the Manusmore Bus Stop, and also that Ennis Municipal District request provision of a covered Stop for Ennis Bound service users. The frequency of the service is fantastic and is highly used.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The NTA have completed the design of the bus stop and are now progressing a Road Safety Audit as is standard procedure. The process is ongoing and is expected to be finalised in the coming weeks.

Following this the NTA will appoint a contractor to carry out the required civil works associated with the bus stop. We have requested the NTA to provide timelines for the expected completion of the

works. To date this has not been forthcoming. Our current expectation is that it will take a number of months before the bus stop is regularised.

We will continue to request firm timelines from the NTA and will provide and update if and when this is received. We will also request the NTA to consider installing a covered stop at this location.

This item was seconded by Cllr. T. O'Callaghan and agreed by all Members.

Cllr Murphy welcomed the response in relation to the bus stop but voiced disappointment that a bus shelter was not automatically integrated into bus stop planning. He highlighted that this is an inclusivity issue, that the bus stop was hugely valuable for vulnerable persons as their main mode of transport. Cllr Howard strongly supported this Motion and added her support for bus shelters being an important consideration for all bus stops.

**No. 7 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy
Golflinks Road:**

That the Golflinks Road be assessed for the installation of lights and footpath as walking there is not safe either by day or night.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

Ennis MD will commit to liaising with the Active Travel team to put together a proposal that may be submitted under the next call for Active Travel funding likely to be Quarter 4 2023. It is noted that land acquisitions would likely be required to install an uninterrupted footpath along this route.

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

Cllr Colleran-Molloy acknowledged the response and the initiative, in seeking remedy via *Active Travel*. Cllr Howard supported this Motion adding that the density of the trees along this road serve to add to the need for public lighting and footpaths. Cllrs Daly and O'Callaghan also supported this motion.

No. 8 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard

The River Fergus could be the jewel in the crown of activities in the town of Ennis.

Scoil Chríost Rí in association with Clare Sports Partnership have set up Kayak Le Chéile at the school in Cloughleigh.

This initiative has huge potential for both locals and visitors alike.

I propose we the Ennis MD Councillors and the Ennis MD staff go and experience kayaking on the Fergus early in September.

No Response Required

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

Cllr Howard commended the initiative of Scoil Chríost Rí and in particular the drive and foresight of teacher Joe Garry in securing funding to establish a route from the school to the river and the development of the kayaking facility "Kayak le Cheile". She recommended media groups be invited to the excursion, hopefully in early September, to raise community awareness of what she deemed a great untapped outdoor amenity resource. All members voiced support for this Motion, agreeing

that the kayaking facility presents a great opportunity to showcase the river. Former Ennis MD Councillor Mark Nestor was acknowledged for his advocacy in this regard. Cllr Norton commended kayaking as an inclusive and disability-friendly activity and Cllr O'Callaghan highlighted the importance of taking time out to enjoy and promote family-friendly local amenities. Cllr Colleran-Molloy added that this initiative aligned with recommendations in the *Ennis2040* plans.

No. 9 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T.O'Callaghan

To ask the Council adding the slip road off the Clareabbey roundabout to the Ancient Abbey being added to the regular road sweeping schedule.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

This route is already on the sweeping schedule. Going forward Ennis MD will increase the frequency of road sweeping at this location.

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

Cllr O'Callaghan welcomed the positive response and asked if it was possible to have the Greenway walking and cycle route added to the maintenance schedule. Paddy Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, clarified that the sweeping schedule was appropriate only to road routes. Cllr Murphy seconded this Motion and would look forward to the slipway being included in the sweeping schedule. Cllr O'Callaghan stated that a maintenance programme for walking routes and greenways is required.

No. 10 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy

Re Fergus River Greenway and the very high volume of people using this on a daily basis, there is a hunger there to extend the Greenway further to Clarecastle Village. Last Autumn there was an Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme allocation of €50,000 to conduct a feasibility study on the viability or potential of this extension. I am now calling on Ennis M.D. and the Rural Directorate to make sufficient resources available to progress this study as a matter of urgency.

Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

Ennis MD can confirm that we are currently advancing this project. The funding granted for this project will allow for topographical surveys, environmental reports and site investigation works to be completed. Ennis MD together with our colleagues in Rural Development are currently preparing tenders documents to appoint the necessary consultants and contractors. We can confirm sufficient resources are available to progress this project.

This item was seconded by Cllr. T. O'Callaghan

Cllr Murphy welcomed the positive response. He welcomed the news that funding is in place for this project to move onto Stage 2. Cllr O'Callaghan supported this Motion as the area presents a great amenity opportunity. Cllr Daly strongly supported this Motion highlighting the huge tourism potential at this location, similar to the successful Doora Bridge to Clarecastle route.

No. 11 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn

I ask for a report on the need for works to improve river channel below the 20th Century Clarecastle Coastal Barrage.

Background. The Ennis Main Drainage and Flooding Study 2000 was carried out following the 1995 floods and the project team were in place and on the ground during the December 1999 floods . As secretary of the Ennis Flood Action Group I was pleased that Professor Paul Johnston of Trinity College was an invited observer for our Group on the Technical Steering Group for the Study. To date over €80 million has been spent on flood defences as far as the barrage as a result of the Study.

However worryingly the following was included in the Flood study report among “some points regarding the existing defences; However , the inadequacy of the rock channels downstream of the barrage is a significant impediment to flow. “.

The Main Proposals of the Ennis Flood Study included recommendation to “ Improve River Channel below Clarecastle Barrage”.

That has not been done and is urgently needed to improve the upstream River flow through the barrage.

Sean Lenihan, Senior Engineer, responded as follows:

Members will be aware from previous Motions and responses thereto that we are currently in the process of carrying out a structural assessment of the Tidal Barrage at Clarecastle as well as an exercise to identify if improvement works can be carried out to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Barrage as it currently exists. Members will also be aware that following completion of this exercise, I undertook to carry out a further report on the possibility of relocating the Barrage further downstream. To this end, I have raised the matter with Senior OPW officials and also queried whether responsibility for the Barrage, which currently rests with the County Council, should ideally be the responsibility of the OPW given the significant investment incurred in the various Flood Relief Schemes carried out upstream of the Barrage, namely Ennis Upper, Ennis Lower and Ennis South. I have invited said OPW Officials to visit the site and await an early confirmation re same.

The report and studies required in this regard will also deal with the content of this particular motion, namely to carry out a report on the need for works to improve river channel downstream of the Barrage. I will update the Members accordingly when further information is to hand.

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

Cllr Flynn welcomed the response.

No. 12 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton

That the Ennis MD do an analysis of the area around the primary and secondary school roads while the schools are closed. Pot holes and any other works could be done during this time.

Paddy Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:

The areas in question will be monitored and remedial works undertaken as needed.

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

Item No. 6. Correspondence

None.

Item No. 7. Any Other Business

- (i) Members joined Cllr. M. Howard in extending sympathy to the family of the late
- Frank Cahir. R.I.P.
 - Mary Quinlivan, R.I.P.
 - Vivienne Guerin (nee Kelly), R.I.P.
 - Bobby Burke, R.I.P, former Ennis and Clare County Council Member.
 - Peggy Geraghty, R.I.P, Corovorrin.
 - Anthony Meaney, R.I.P.
 - Brother Sean MacNamara, R.I.P.
 - Madeleine McCarthy (nee Moloney), R.I.P., Liscannor.
- (ii) Cllr Howard commended the endeavors of a group of teachers who had recently gone to the rescue of a person who had entered the river. Without any experience of dealing with such a case, those involved looked after the victim until the emergency services arrived.
- (iii) On the recommendation of Cllr. P. Daly, one minute's silence was observed in Council Chamber in honor of the late Bobby Burke, R.I.P, a former Ennis and Clare County Council Member. Bobby had served in Ennis Town Council from 1979 to 1984, and in Clare County Council from 1985 until 1991. He was also a community activist, Chair of Clare VEC and played hurling for County Clare.
- (iv) Members joined Cllr Clare Colleran-Molloy in extending a vote of sympathy for the late Sean Keating R.I.P., Cross, Kilbaha.

The Meeting ended at 3:40 p.m.

Signed: Pat Daly
Mayor of Ennis

Signed: Heave
Meetings Administrator

Date: 5/09/2023

