

Minutes of Meeting of the Killaloe Municipal District
held on Wednesday, 15th of January 2025 at 09:30 a.m.
Meeting held in Meeting Room, Killaloe Municipal District Offices

In attendance: Cllr. Pat Hayes, Cathaoirleach Killaloe MD
Cllr. Pat Burke
Cllr. Alan O’Callaghan
Cllr. Tony O’Brien
Cllr Conor Ryan.

Officials: Mr. Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner & Killaloe MD Meetings Administrator
Ms. Ann Reynolds, A/Director of Services (attended online)
Mr. Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Olive Mulconroy, Staff Officer

Members of the media attended.

The Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pat Hayes chaired the meeting.

Cllr. P. Hayes Leas-Cathaoirleach welcomed and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Cllr. Hayes welcomed and congratulated Cllr. Conor Ryan and congratulated Deputy Joe Cooney on his success in the General Election and election as a TD.

Cllr Hayes also extended a welcome to A/Director of Service - Ann Reynolds who joined the meeting on MS Teams.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of Killaloe MD Meeting held 13th of November 2024.

The minutes of Killaloe Municipal District Meeting held 13th of November 2024 were adopted having been proposed by Cllr. T. O’Brien and seconded by Cllr. P. Burke.

Item 2 Matters Arising

Cllr. T O'Brien informed the meeting that he had contacted the Planning Department in relation to Item 8 - Public Lighting between house no. 37 – 46 in Ard Na Deirge Housing estate and this matter needs to be dealt with. Declan Flanagan A/Senior Executive Engineer advised that the Developer needs to work with ESB Networks and Taking in Charge team.

Cllr. P. Burke requested an update on Item 7 –Woodpark in Mountshannon. Declan Flanagan confirmed that no further correspondence was forthcoming at this time from Coillte.

Item 3 (a) Election of Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District of Killaloe (b) Election of Leas-Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District of Killaloe

Cllr. T. O'Brien proposed Cllr. P. Hayes and this was seconded by Cllr. A. O'Callaghan.

Cllr. C. Ryan proposed Cllr. P. Burke.

The members deliberated and considered the positions and agreed that Cllr. P. Hayes be elected as Cathaoirleach of Killaloe MD.

Cllr. Hayes thanked the Members for the honour of Cathaoirleach of the MD and indicated he would work with everyone for the betterment of the Killaloe Municipal District.

Cllr. C. Ryan nominated Cllr. P Burke for Leas-Cathaoirleach and this was seconded by Cllr. P. Hayes and Cllr. T. O'Brien. Members congratulated Cllr Burke and wished him well.

Item 4 Presentation and launch of *Socio-Economic Profile of Killaloe Municipal District* (January, 2025)

Brian McCarthy – Senior Planner & Killaloe MD Co-Ordinator introduced the background to the study and the People and Place team who prepared the socio-economic report for Killaloe MD. B. McCarthy complimented the Elected Members for having the foresight to support such an initiative which was part funded by the Members from their General Municipal Allocation. He added that this is an evidence-based approach based on the Census, which will provide detailed analysis of the MD, critical for the future decision-making of the Municipal District at strategy and project level and will also be invaluable to local communities.

People and Place consultant Justin Gleeson presented the members with highlights from the Socio-Economic Profile of Killaloe Municipal District. He indicated that Killaloe MD is the first Municipal District in the Country to undertake such an appraisal. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the demographic, economic and social characteristics of the East Clare region compiled from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Censes 2022 and other statistics reports.

The profile compares the MD's performance with national and regional planning areas as well as the county. It also compares the MD with all other MDs within the county and provides a profile of the main settlements in the MD

Population growth between 2016-2022 within the Killaloe MD was recorded at +8.8%, higher than both the county (+7.7%) and the national rate (+8.1%). Across the four MDs, only the Ennis MD had a higher growth rate. Over the five year period (2016-2022), the population in the Killaloe MD has increased by over +1,700 persons.

With 17% of the population in the County at 27,871 in 2022, Killaloe MD has been growing since 1991 at a much higher rate than both the State and the county. Much of this growth has been driven primarily by net migration; Children and Youth (0-24 years): a total of 7,135 or 32.6% of the population which is above the national average

Cllr. P Hayes remarked that the Socio-Economic Profile was a most important document reliving some startling information, in relation to the separation within the region of decline and growth. The members had agreed to support this initiative, the first of its kind to be conducted for a Municipal District as it provided a most valuable template for local communities to source funding.

Cllr. P. Burke, commented on how the villages of Tulla, Quin & Crusheen are doing well in contrast with Whitegate, Feakle and Kilkishen which are ranked as the most economically disadvantaged. Cllr. A. O'Callaghan added that there is a growth of housing developments in these villages, while Kilkishen had a development of 60 houses rejected.

Cllr. Hayes thanked Justin Gleeson and his colleagues for providing the members with the overview and complying a report. Cllr. T. O'Brien and Cllr. C. Ryan concurred, reiterating the value of this information for communities.

Item 5 Consideration, and adoption of *Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District - Strategy and Workplan 2025-2029*

Proposed by Cllr. T. O'Brien & Seconded by Cllr. A. O'Callaghan

Brian McCarthy – Senior Planner, Killaloe MD Co-ordinator provide an overview of Strategy and Workplan 2025-2029, the second strategic plan to be adopted by the members of the Killaloe Municipal District. Following the success of the previous strategy plan, this plan focuses on the regeneration of towns and villages, such as Tulla and Killaloe while supporting the growth of tourism in the area's. The Strategy also seeks to be proactive in the provision of alternative and innovative approaches to the delivery of housing in our villages across the MD

Cllr. P. Hayes thanked Brian McCarthy for working with the members in putting forward a

second Strategic Plan for Municipal District. Cllr Hayes notes that This Strategic Plan gives consideration to sustainable housing both social and private developments for our aging population, investment in infrastructure and connectivity.

Cllr. A. O’Callaghan spoke of expanding our Tourism offering, for example Quin Abbey currently under OPW which is underutilised. Cllr. T. O’Brien commented the Brian Boru site.

Cllr. P. Burke remarked on the lack of infrastructure or infrastructure such as water plants located in the wrong place, leading to a poor economic growth opportunities.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Pat Burke:-

6 “Calling on Clare County Council to upgrade the footpath from the Scarriff GAA grounds to the RC Church”.

Proposed by: Cllr P. Burke

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

Arising from this Notice of Motion Killaloe MD will carry out a condition survey on this section of footpath. Pending the condition of this section of footpath, a funding stream may be required to carry out repairs as necessary.

From an overall perspective of this location, any design of an upgrade will be required to take into consideration road widths, footpath widths and the possibility for the provision of a cycle path to tie into the existing paths completed from Scarriff National School to Fossabeg housing estate.

As with all schemes of this nature, a budget allocation will be required. This proposed scheme could be considered to come under the scope of an Active Travel Scheme providing a safe designed path from the National School to the GAA ground, of which is in line with current national policy to promote walking and cycling. Killaloe MD await new applications for 2025 from the the Department of Transport through the National Transport Authority's Active Travel Programme.

Cllr. Burke highlighted that this is a serious problem particularly in winter evenings. This path is not up to standard. He gave an example of a pedestrian bridge in Hospital, Co. Limerick which should be considered in this case.

In seconding the motion Cllr. Hayes, expressed his concerns in relation the lack of funding available for the Killaloe MD under Action Travel allocation of €2.75 million.

In response Declan Flanagan – A/Senior Executive Engineer, advised that there wasn’t any call from the Department of Transport in relation to Active Travel projects and funding was being allocated on the 2023 applications.

Cllr. A. O’Callaghan agreed and suggested that the Department was pulling from previous applications.

Cllr. T. O’Brien advised that this issue needs to be raised at the CPG. Cllr. Hayes concurred.

7 “Calling on Clare County Council to provide an update on the status of Mountshannon House, Mountshannon. Who are the legal owners, what are the plans for this property etc. ?”.

Proposed by: Cllr P. Burke

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Response from Mairead Corbett, Administrative Officer, Housing Section:

The legal transfer of this property from Respond to Clare County Council is being examined. When this process is complete the Council will examine all options for its future use, including sale if no alternative need is identified.

Cllr. Burke expressed his disappointment on the short response from Housing on this matter and will follow up directly with Mairead Corbett. Cllr. Hayes in seconding the motion directed Anne Reynolds a/DoS to raise this issue with Housing Department.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Conor Ryan:-

8 “Calling on Clare County Council to replace and upgrade all Junction Definition Posts (green bollards) along all Regional roads in Killaloe Municipal District, in the interest of road safety”.

Proposed by: Cllr C. Ryan

Seconded by: Cllr. T. O’Brien

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

Arising from this Notice of Motion, a detailed survey will be carried out on all our Regional road Junctions over the coming weeks to review the condition of our existing Junction Definition Posts. It should be noted that our maintenance budget is limited and no Department allocation is available to procure Junction definition posts. Killaloe MD will however commit to allocating a section of our budget towards the replacement of these posts as necessary and any replacements will be carried over a phased basis in line with our annual maintenance budget.

Cllr. Ryan thanked Declan Flanagan for his response and commented on the volume of calls he received in relation to R352, drivers can miss the junctions and agreed that a review is needed.

In supporting the motion, Cllr. T. O'Brien remarked that these posts are important to drivers who are unfamiliar with the road and it is a safety issue. Cllr. A. O'Callaghan noted that there are no green bollards at R469 junction and its important for the line of sight. Cllr. P. Burke highlighted the issues with road signage and more funding is needed to improve it.

Cllr. P. Hayes noted that some bollards are damaged and the importance of them in particular at night and in foggy conditions.

9 "Calling on Clare County Council to clarify when works will commence on the footpath from Hillcrest Grove housing estate to the junction by the GAA grounds in Kilkishen and the raising of a speed ramp located at the church in Kilkishen. Both are required urgently in the interest of road safety".

Proposed by: Cllr C. Ryan

Seconded by: Cllr. A. O'Callaghan

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

A budget allocation has been approved for the footpath improvement project between Hillcrest Grove towards the GAA Grounds in Kilkishen. Killaloe MD have procured a contractor for these works with work due to commence in the forthcoming weeks. Advanced notice will be provided to residents in the area prior to work commencing on site.

With regards to the raised pedestrian crossing in Kilkishen Village adjacent to the Church, this raised crossing was completed 2 years ago in compliance with designs prepared by our Clare County Council's Road Design team with the height and lead in tapers completed as per construction drawings. The design of this installed raised crossing has 1-in-15 tapers.

Traffic Management Design guidelines demonstrate that Entry/exit slopes steeper than 1-in-10 are little used as they are generally considered to be too severe. Slopes of 1-in-20 and shallower tend to be ineffective in terms of reducing speeds. In terms of the existing ramp, it is installed in accordance with Department of Transport Guidelines and the designs of the Clare County Council's Roads Design section. The R-462 Kilkishen to Sixmilebridge road is a busy commuter road and a balance between driver comfort and functionality is required.

Cllr. C. Ryan thanked Declan Flanagan – A/Senior Executive Engineer for his response and confirmation that works will commence. Cllr. Ryan commented on the speed ramp in Bodyke and Cllr. P Burke sought further clarification on the difference between the ramp in Bodyke and Killishen. In response, Declan Flanagan explained the installation is constructed to the required standards and will revert to Road Design to clarify.

In seconding the motion, Cllr. A O'Callaghan commented that pedestrian crossing lights are not effective enough. Cllr. T. O'Brien concurred and noted that at some pedestrian crossing, there are lights installed along the poles.

Cllr. Ryan concluded that the design should be looked at as its currently not fit for purpose.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Tony O'Brien:-

- 10 “That welcome signs be erected on the approach new roundabouts on the Scariff road and the Limerick Road into Killaloe and that the signs would incorporate our twinning arrangement with New London Wisconsin”.

Proposed by: Cllr T. O'Brian

Seconded by: Cllr. A. O'Callaghan

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

With regards to the 'Welcome to Killaloe' signage and the recent opening of the Killaloe Bypass section of the Killaloe Bypass Scheme, it's of significant importance to promote Killaloe as a place to visit, recreate and stay from a tourism and economic development perspective. In common with other towns and villages which received updated signage advising of the services, tourist attractions, leisure activities and facilities available, we will be reviewing all approaches to the town of Killaloe.

On the twinning arrangement with New London, Wisconsin, it is important to acknowledge this and Killaloe MD will liaise with our Technical team in the Roads Department to work on appropriate signage with graphics and design layouts to comply with our Traffic Signs Manual.

Cllr. T. O'Brien noted the importance of signage in promoting our towns and villages. Cllr. P. Hayes added that a review of signage should be undertaken, updating twinning arrangements and agrees with reinstating this signage for Killaloe.

- 11 “That a pedestrian crossing be installed on the Killaloe bypass between the Creevroe and Hill Road junctions”.

Proposed by: Cllr T. O'Brian

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Burke

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

The Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing & R494 Improvement Scheme is now at an advanced stage following many years in the making. The scheme has gone through all the relevant stages such as Constraints Study, Route Selection, Environmental Impact Assessments and Public Consultations prior to approval by An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for planning consent for the detail designs. It is noted that the design as approved by ABP did not provide for any pedestrian crossing on the Killaloe Bypass section of the scheme which has an 80kph speed limit.

The Killaloe Bypass section of the project was opened to the public within the last month. Arising from this Notice of Motion, we consulted with Clare County Council's Roads Department and Project Management Office who are overseeing the construction and completion of the Bypass and was advised that from an initial review of the Killaloe bypass, it's unlikely provisions for new pedestrian crossings will be completed as part of the bypass works. It is highlighted that the design speed for the sections of bypass is 80km/hr, which exceeds design standards for the provision of pedestrian crossings

Cllr. T. O'Brien stated speed needs to be reduced before the pedestrian crossings are installed, and that the proposals of 80 KM for a very busy road are a safety concern. Cllr. O'Brien previously raised this issue during the planning stage of the bypass.

In seconding the motion, Cllr. P. Burke commented that two roads close to each other, ideally pedestrian overhead walkway would be installed but this is a big ask, a big mistake that people cannot walk to the town.

Cllr. P Hayes supported the motion.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Pat Hayes:-

- 12** "I propose that Clare Council acknowledges the serious concerns of local residents and road users regarding the section of road between Keoghs cross to Ballnahinch on the R352 Ennis Scariff Regional Road, which has a number dangerous bends that have been the site of a recent fatality and numerous accidents in recent years.

And in light of the ongoing risk to public safety, that Clare Co Council puts in place a plan to resolve this ongoing issue.

- (1) Carry out a road safety audit to assess the hazards posed by the current road layout and to recommend suitable improvement measures.
- (2) Implement Road Improvements: Prioritize the design and implementation of necessary road safety improvements, which may include realignment of bends, installation of crash barriers, improved road markings, adequate signage, and other associated works where required.
- (3) Work with the Department of Transport and other relevant bodies to secure the necessary funding for the proposed works.
- (4) Engage with local residents and stakeholders to gather feedback and keep them informed throughout the process.
- (5) Establish a clear timeline for the completion of these works to ensure that this dangerous road section is addressed as a matter of urgency.

The safety and wellbeing of all road users must be a top priority for this Council. Addressing this hazardous section of road will prevent further tragedies and improve the quality of life for residents and commuters alike. Immediate action is necessary to mitigate the risks and ensure a safer transportation network for all.

Proposed by: Cllr P. Hayes

Seconded by: Cllr. C. Ryan

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

The section of road on the R-352 between Keogh's cross and Ballynahinch received significant investment through our restoration improvement grant allocation in 2019. The current condition of the road surface has a pavement condition rating of 8 out of 10, which is of a high level for our Regional road network. In addition, advanced warning signage is in place advising of the bend ahead. Line markings and road studs are all in good order. The condition of this road is appropriate for the speed limit at this location of road which is 80km/hr.

Arising from this Notice of Motion and to further reduce risk of any future incidents at this location, Killaloe MD are currently working on a plan to introduce addition "SLOW" line marking text, chevrons and larger warning signage on approach to bends. Repeater 80km/hr signage will also be in place in advance of the bends to advise motorists of the speed limit. These measures will be in place in the coming months of 2025.

With regards to realignment of bends and land-take on the R-352, this will require a Specific Improvement Grant allocation and design.

Reiterating a reply to a previous notice of motion, due to the strategic importance of the R352, it's location across 2 Municipal Districts, the volume of traffic it currently take and the strategic employment, tourism and social centers in East Clare it serves, a comprehensive strategy and programme for improvements of the total route from Ennis to Whitegate undertaken by the Roads Authority supported by National funding would be optimal.

In line with the strategic objectives in the Killaloe Municipal District - Strategy and Workplan, the upgrading of the R352 in a comprehensive plan led manner is a key priority and Killaloe MD will be highlighting the issue under this Notice of Motion to our Road Design team who work closely with the Department on such schemes.

Cllr. P Hayes welcomed Declan Flanagan's response, stating that land needs to be acquired to remove the bends to slow down traffic and installed crash barriers, road marking and signage, to prevent a fatalities or serious accidents on this regional road. In seconding the motion, Cllr. C. Ryan agreed that entire R352 Regional Road needs to be addressed including improved road marking, signage and chevron barriers.

Cllr. P Burke also concurred. He highlighted the dangers on the road, emphasising that Driver behaviour needs to be addressed. Adding, that sections of the R352 from Whitegate - Portumna is in poor condition for a regional road, which links Ennis to the midlands.

Cllr. P Hayes requested that Landowners be engaged with.

Brian McCarthy endorsed this motion and reiterated the R352's strategic importance to the county as a key access route, more so in particular when the full Killaloe Bypass and bridge crossing will open which he considered will likely increase traffic volumes on the R352.

- 13** "I propose that Clare Co Council undertake a comprehensive review of existing directional signage across the Killaloe municipal district, identifying areas where improvements are required to enhance and improve accessibility for residents and visitors. That funding be sought for the installation of replacement directional signage and also look at locations where none currently exist, particularly in areas of high traffic routes and tourism sites. Also to ensure that all new and updated signage complies with relevant accessibility standards."

Proposed by: Cllr P. Hayes

Seconded by: Cllr. T. O'Brien

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

We can confirm a comprehensive survey has been conducted on the R-352 in the Killaloe Municipal District on our existing directional and warning signage in July 2024. We have been liaising with our General Design team and the Department of Transport to source funding for these signs. The Department at this present time have no funding stream to replace existing directional signage.

In November 2024, the Killaloe MD procured directional signs for the R-352 through our limited maintenance funds. Killaloe MD's outdoor crews are currently erecting these signs with all signs to be installed before the end of January 2025. We will be carrying out a separate audit on our directional signs on our remaining Regional roads across the Killaloe MD this year.

Cllr. P Hayes commented on the importance of this signage to villages and the need for standardisation of signage across the district.

In seconding the motion, Cllr. T O'Brien recommended a separate audit on all regional roads, directional and welcoming signage which would help Tidy Towns within our towns. Cllr. A. O'Callaghan in agreement, added that signage can be damaged or hit by hedge cutting.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Alan O’Callaghan

- 14 “ Ask this MD that works be carried out on the Broadford-Sixmilebridge road at location of Carroll’s Hill, where water regularly crosses the road at a few points . “

Proposed by: Cllr A. O’Callaghan

Seconded by: Cllr. T. O’Brien

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

On foot of this Notice of Motion, the L-3016 Broadford to Sixmilebridge road will be reviewed for potential drainage works. The road in its nature at Carroll’s Hill is in cut section of road with high raised banks to the south. Surface water run-off from adjacent lands will need to be inspected along with reviewing potential outlets or discharge points for surface water. Our Killaloe MD Senior Services General Supervisor will be reviewing this section of road with our team to resolve this issue.

Cllr. A. O’Callaghan added that drains get close and areas shaded by trees.

In seconding the motion, Cllr. T O’Brien complimented the team in gritting / salting, main roads. Cllr. P Burke, indicated there is a duty to cut trees, get light into these area’s.

- 15 “Plan to be drawn up for works to be carried out in Kilmurry village near the new pedestrian crossing

Proposed by: Cllr A. O’Callaghan

Seconded by: Cllr. T. O’Brien

Response from Declan Flanagan, A/Senior Executive Engineer:

A detailed site survey and draft design will be completed by Killaloe MD to link the existing Zebra crossing to Ballymulcashel estate. This draft will be brought before the local residents and elected members before a funding stream is sought. The surveying and design element of works will be planned for the 2nd Quarter of 2025. These proposed improvements will enhance the village of Kilmurry from a visual appearance and sense of arrival to the village.

Cllr. A. Callaghan in thanking Declan Flanagan for response he advised that we need Active Travel to provide safe walking route, especially for the elderly off the predestination crossing.

16 Correspondence

Cllr. Pat Hayes thanked Brian McCarthy for writing to the Minister for Transport advocating for the reopening Crusheen Railway Station and further discussing the project with him.

17 Confirm date for next meeting.

12th of March

A.O.B

Cllr. T. O'Brien – Uisce Ireland Public Consultation, Killaloe MD and or Clare County Council should make a submission as it has a significant impact on our water services along the R. Shannon and Lough Derg. Cllr. O'Brien expressed its importance to this region as one of the greatest natural resources. Cllr. P. Hayes concurred with Cllr. O'Brien and proposed to have a special meeting in relation to it.

Cllr. P. Burke requested an update on the closure of the L8096. In response Declan Flanagan – A/Senior Executive Engineer advised that significant investment is required, a re-design required, site investigation and funding scheme. Cllr. Burke, advised that he will be looking for an update.

Cllr. P. Hayes raised the issue of gritting on the Tulla – Gort road and the Bodyke to Feakle road, these roads have overhanging trees, this needs to be addressed with Coillte.

Votes of Sympathy

Cllr. P. Hayes and the Members extended a vote of sympathy to the Bleach Family, on the passing of Tommy Bleach RIP – Retired Foreman, Killaloe MD, Clare County Council.

END.