



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ashbourne Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

9:30 a.m., 16th April, 2018, Blackwater Suite, Pillo Hotel, Ashbourne

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Seán Smith**, presided.

Councillors Present: Joe Bonner, Suzanne Jamal, Claire O'Driscoll, Darren O'Rourke, Alan Tobin.

Officials in Attendance:

Head of Finance: Fiona Lawless

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Executive Engineer: Mel Cronin

Staff Officer: Triona Keating

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 12th March, 2018. (See below)

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 12th February 2018 were adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O'Rourke**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- Kathleen Kelly, School Warden on the death of her husband, Hugh.



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Congratulations were extended to:

- The family of John McGinley, who was posthumously presented the Benemerenti Medal on behalf of Pope Francis by the Papal Nuncio to Ireland in recognition of the stained glass windows he created for churches around the world.

4 Statutory Business

4.1 Transportation

4.1.1 To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Ashbourne Municipal District.

The report had been circulated in advance and matters raised by Councillors included:

- The number of pothole repair requests and the timeframe for dealing with these – it was confirmed that an update would be circulated during the week, with three crews working on these, bearing in mind the weather and its impacts.
- The device used to de-ice/grit around schools in Wexford.
- The timeframe for the temporary lights on the R125 – it was pointed out that, due to damage caused by the weather, the lights were in place for safety reasons and that the process was underway to undertake drainage works and initial repairs with the longer solution being a possible road realignment in conjunction with Fingal County Council.
- The possibility of including the cycle lanes in the road sweeping programme and the introduction of a rota system – it was confirmed that a schedule would be brought to the municipal district for agreement.
- The plans for hanging baskets – it was confirmed that the tender for supply was due back in 3 weeks.



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- The possible contribution to be made towards the works on the R125 at the Swords end.

4.1.2 To receive an update on Brindley Park/Milltown Road.

Nicholas Whyatt, Senior Engineer, Transportation provided an update as follows:

Milltown Road – it was confirmed that the Part VIII was on public display from 28th March to 27th April with submissions to be made by 11th May, following which there would be 8 weeks for the preparation of the Chief Executive's report with a summary of the submissions and recommendations. It is intended to bring this report to the June municipal district meeting, with a decision to be taken at the July meeting, i.e. to accept, modify or reject it. Two submissions have been received to date. If accepted, the detailed design and tender documentation would be prepared, with the aim of appointing a contractor by the end of the year. The scheme elements will need to be prioritised based on the funding available.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The need to secure the required funding and begin to identify the priority elements of the scheme as soon as possible – it was confirmed that the scheme was prepared on a phased basis.
- Welcomed the level of consultation and engagement that had taken place.
- Funding available in the event that the project cost increases significantly – it was agreed that contract costs were likely to be higher than that estimated in December 2017 but that development levies were also increasing. It was pointed out that the capital programme review would be presented to the May full Council meeting.
- The need to ensure that developers contribute the maximum amount to the provision of infrastructure and amenities through development levies.



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Brindley Park/Johnswood – The tender assessment is almost complete but no NTA allocation has been made. The tender included junction upgrades and traffic management measures but the available funding will not be adequate to cover the tender. The next steps were outlined, including discussions with the successful tenderer to agree a reduction in the scope of the scheme. This process will take time but it is hope to be on site by approximately July.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The expectations of receiving central funding to undertake such schemes and the lack of funding for local government – the current NTA funding was outlined.
- The need for central funding to complete multiple projects required in Ashbourne.
- The need for a ramp on Johnswood Road to facilitate wheelchair access.
- The contribution from the Department of Education & Skills for pedestrian lights at Lidl and the reduction of the speed limit on Castle Street to 30km - it was confirmed that funding was available under the Schools Safety Programme.
- Update on the crossing at the R135/Ballybin Road junction – it was confirmed that this had been tendered and that NTA may allocate funding for the junction upgrade and public transport links.
- The need to resubmit the Council funding report to the Department – it was confirmed that a revised report was being prepared based on the 2016 Census data.
- The progress of projects in Ashbourne and the need to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to ensure the delivery of these projects as quickly as possible – it was agreed that a meeting would be arranged for Councillors to meet with officials from the Finance Department prior to the capital programme review being finalised and presented to the May full Council meeting to discuss the progress of



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projects in Ashbourne and the need to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to ensure the delivery of these projects as quickly as possible.

- It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Bonner** that two meetings would be sought with the NTA to discuss infrastructure and public transport.

4.1.3 To discuss Primatestown/Kilmoon Cross Junctions.

A Project Appraisal Plan is currently being prepared for the N2 Rath-Kilmoon Scheme for the consideration of Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. It is intended that the plan, which will set out the issues, the case, the approach, the objectives and the appraisal, will be submitted before the end of May with talks ongoing with the Strategic Planning Unit in the TII. If given approval, the formal design process can commence. It was underlined that this represented a major scheme and that the delivery of a scheme of this scale would take years to complete. It was noted the N2 Finglas- Ashbourne Scheme took approximately 8 years to complete.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The possibility of introducing interim measures to alleviate the issues – reference was made to the Arups report. It was pointed out that the road is operating at over capacity and a different approach is needed, being careful not to undermine the case for a larger scheme. The timing of the lights had been adjusted as much as possible, with the other possible option being the rerouting of traffic from the L5008 and amending the lights accordingly. This could be done under the Roads Act to assist with traffic management and could be trialled to see if it makes a difference.
- It was suggested that the planning process be initiated now so the project can commence immediately if funding is allocated.

4.2 Environment



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4.2.1 To receive an update on the Ashbourne Flood Alleviation Scheme.

David Keyes, Senior Executive Engineer, Environment outlined the design and works details and confirmed that meetings with landowners would commence next week. The OPW is due to complete works in Bettystown in May and would move to Ashbourne at the end of May/beginning of June. Works will take approximately a year to complete, including reinstatement works on private property, with the structural elements to be undertaken as soon as possible, i.e. before the end of the year. Funding is being made available through the OPW's Minor Works Scheme.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- Queries around particular elements of the scheme.
- The impact on lands previously deemed unsuitable for development due to being on a flood plain.
- The omission of Archerstown from Ashwood to the golf club – it was agreed to check this.
- The problems caused by dumping of material into open channels – it was confirmed that it was the responsibility of the owner to maintain these.
- The impact on obtaining home flood insurance – it was pointed out that letters can issue confirming the works undertaken.

4.3 Planning/Heritage

4.3.1 To receive an update on the Hill of Tara Conservation Management Plan.

An update had been circulated in advance of the meeting and it was agreed to seek a further update on the progress of plans for the provision of facilities at the site, including a car park and toilet facilities.



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4.4 Community

- 4.4.1 To receive a presentation on the current LEADER programme & updates to the scheme.

Michael Ludlow, CEO and Colin Ludlow, Senior Project Officer, Meath Partnership delivered a presentation on the LEADER 2020 programme, including an overview of the programme, the thematic framework 2014-2020, eligible project areas, ineligible activities, available grant rates, benefits of changes to programme delivery, progress 2017 – 2018 including progression of applications in 2018 and applications approved 2017 – 2018.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The possibility of hosting an information workshop locally, promoted through the PPN and to which Councillors would be invited – it was agreed that this would be coordinated with the Community Department.
- The requirements around lease arrangements for a premises – the requirements were outlined.

- 4.4.2 To receive an update on the Ashbourne Linear Park.

Fiona Fallon, Senior Executive Officer, Community Department attended the meeting with James O'Neill, Fehily Timoney & Co. and Thomas Burns, Brady Shipman Martin. It was confirmed that the consultants brief included the design and construction in Zones 6 & 7 and a feasibility study for the riverside walkway, with a preliminary issues paper having identified a number of issues.

A presentation was delivered on the issues arising from a review of the project in Zone 6 and, in particular, Zone 7 which contains the Irish Water pumping station and riverbank and the constraints and challenges to be considered.

Matters raised by Councillors included:



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- The surface proposed for the pathway and the possibility of providing a woodland walkway to compliment the surroundings – it was pointed out that the walkway would have to meet Part M Regulations and be accessible for all and the safety issues due to the trees were also highlighted. It was suggested that a lesser quality footpath would necessitate an alternative arrangement for the priority path but that works would still be needed to deliver a basic footpath surface.
- The safety concerns regarding the trees – it was confirmed that the trees would continue to fail and stability was a concern as time progresses. If the trees were to remain, it would be necessary to either fence them off and let them expire or, if a footpath were to be provided, this would require certain steps. The provision of a softer path and tree retention would be considered. A number of options would be reviewed with cost estimates.
- The next steps – a detailed topographical and individual survey would be carried out which would highlight the issues and then a decision could be taken around the scale of the scheme to be undertaken.
- The potential for the green area on the Irish Water site.
- Illegal dumping from both sides of the river.
- The need for an options paper, detailing the approach, challenges and opportunities that exist.
- Concerns were expressed at the cost of dealing with this section, which was small in the context of the overall project.
- The need to scope and cost the provision of the boardwalk to determine if it was feasible.
- The need to install the gate to the rear of Deerpark.



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With regard to the update provided in relation to the rest of the Linear Park, matters raised by Councillors included:

- The transfer of the Department of Education & Skills land to the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government, the lands to incorporate approximately 50 houses and the Linear Park, with the Department of Education & Skills to retain some of the land, and the means by which the land acquisition is to be funded – it was pointed out that the arrangements would be looked at as this progresses, that Council approval would be required to raise any loan funding and that the Planning Department is aware of the Linear Park and the need for open space. It was also pointed out that the Department of Education & Skills was arranging the valuation, which should be available by the end of April.
- The elements of the Linear Park that can be delivered immediately – in relation to Zone 4, it was pointed out that a revised landscaping plan, taking into account the archaeological layout, would go to tender in early to mid-June, subject to agreement with the National Monuments Service. Zone 6 is relatively straightforward. The gate to the rear of Deerpark is linked to the tender package for Zones 6 & 7 but will be prioritised.
- The section of walkway at Kiernan's that is closed off for health and safety reasons, leaving no access for pedestrians or maintenance – it was agreed to meet with Councillors to identify the issues and possible solutions.
- The need for a walkway in Zones 1 & 2 – it was pointed out that the Department of Education & Skills still own the land, with the OPW having an arrangement for maintenance access. Due to the machinery used by the OPW for maintenance, any walkway surface or planting would be damaged and it was agreed to request that riparian strips be kept free and accessible.

It was agreed that a site visit would proceed following the meeting.



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4.5 Corporate Services

4.5.1 To discuss the 2018 Arts, Festive Decoration & MD Renewal Budget.

It was confirmed that the budget of €8,000 was to be allocated, with a previous suggestion made that €2,000 be allocated to TradAsh – this was agreed. Councillors requested confirmation that no balance remained from 2017 and it was agreed to defer further decisions until the May meeting.

4.5.2 To note Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Ashbourne Municipal District.

The list of allocations, circulated in advance, was noted subject to one additional allocation outlined.

5 Notice of Question

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“With regard to Alien species specific to Japanese Knotweed:

- What is the extent of the Japanese Knotweed problem in Meath?
- Is there a progress update on how measures taken have been effective?
- Has the noxious weed been eliminated in many areas in the county?
- Is there a countywide map available showing locations of the weed?
- Has this Council plans to ask, through newspaper advertisement, the public to report suspected locations of the weed?
- What funding is available in 2018 to fight against the spread of the weed?”

Response:



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The known locations of Japanese Knotweed are generally recorded on a national basis on the Biodiversity Ireland web site: This currently shows 5038 locations of Japanese Knotweed in Ireland (note Giant Knotweed and some other sub species are recorded separately).

The Transportation Infrastructure Ireland (TII) who have published a Protocol Guidance Document on Knotweed are carrying out a programme of surveying and treating invasive species (knotweeds, Gunnera and Giant Hogweed) on the national road network and following on from a preliminary survey carried out ourselves in 2016. They also had a trial survey of 2 regional roads carried out with the possibility of beginning a treatment programme on the regional road network. A presentation given in 2016 by TII on Invasive Alien Plant species is attached. .

The Council have treated some on the N51 between Navan and Slane over the last few years and last year treatment was applied on part of the N52 at Grange. Both of these locations were treated specifically in relation to potential road realignment projects in the area. Signage has been put in place by the Council at known locations of Japanese Knotweed on regional and local roads, and recorded on a TII GEO App – a limited amount of spraying was also undertaken in late September/early October in 2017.

There is no separate funding provided in 2018 in respect of dealing with the invasive species.

The response was noted.

5.2 Submitted by Councillor Darren O'Rourke

“To ask the Chief Executive how many enquiries have been made to the Council regarding the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan scheme in the first two months since its introduction; and the number of applications for the loan that have been processed or are currently in process by the Council.”

Response:

Meath County Council does not record all enquiries regarding home loans. There has been a noticeably large increase in queries regarding Home Loans since January 2018. Please see below a breakdown of activity regarding actual loan applications and other



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related issues from 1st January to 23rd March 2018. These figures will also be included in the Chief Executive's report for Council Meetings.

Loans Data 1st January 2018 to 23/03/2018

Applications Received	37
Applications Returned not Submitted to Housing Agency	2
Applications Submitted to Housing Agency for Assessment/Recommendation	35
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Applications Awaiting Assessment Assessment/Recommendation by Housing Agency	16
Applications Awaiting Decision by Meath County Council Credit Committee	0
Applications Approved by the Meath County Council Credit Committee	9
Applications Refused by the Meath County Council Credit Committee	10
	35
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Approvals Drawdown by Customer for House Purchase	3
Drawdowns for Restructuring Loans	1
No of customers in MARP	34

The response was noted.

5.3 Submitted by Councillor Sean Smith

“Céard atá pleanálta ag Comhairle Chontae na Mí chun Blian na Gaeilge a cheiliúreadh?”

“What are Meath County Council's plans for celebrating Blian na Gaeilge in the County?”



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Response:

Tá clár leathan bliana d'imeachtaí á eagrú chun ceiliúradh a dhéanamh ar an teanga agus chun labhairt na teanga a spreagadh.

I measc na n-imeachtaí agus tionscnamh a bheidh ar an gclár do Bhliain na Gaeilge 2018, beidh reimhse leathan imeachtaí a reachtáil againn a mbeidh ag diriú ar deis a thabhairt do dhaoine an teanga a labhairt. Tá chuid obair curtha le chéile cheana féin agus moltaí eile fós a phlé maidir leis na gaelscoileanna agus an gaeltacht. Seo blás don bhliain

- *Scoláireachtaí*
- *Ranganna do foghlaimeoirí*
- *Ciorcal Comhrá*
- *Léachtanna le aoichainteoirí*
- *Díospóireachtaí*
- *Taispeántais faoi stair Conradh na Gaeilge*
- *Ceiliúradh a dheanamh ar dhaoine a thug tacaíocht don teanga*
- *Stair, saol agus saothar An tAthar O'Gramhnaigh*

A wide-ranging programme of activities has been organised to celebrate the heritage and history and of the Irish language. The programme is also designed to encourage people to speak the language and every effort will be made to promote opportunities for people to use their Irish through classes or conversation circles. Some events are ongoing and other proposals are still under consideration. Every effort will be made to link in with other proposals and projects being developed by the Gaelscoil and Gaeltacht communities. Irish will also be highlighted in our existing programmes.

- *Post-primary scholarships*



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- *Classes for beginners*
- *Conversation Circles*
- *Guest lectures*
- *Debates*
- *Travelling Exhibition on the history of the Gaelic League*
- *Awards evening in conjunction with C.C.E to celebrate those individuals who championed the language in their communities.*
- *A committee to examine the life and legacy of Fr. Eoghan o’ Growney in preparation for events celebrating O’Growney in 2019.*

The response was noted. Councillor Seán Smith requested that Gaelscoil na Cille and Gaelscoil na Mí be invited to present at a meeting, in acknowledgement of Bliain na Gaeilge, with the theme “What Gaeilge means to us” – this was agreed.

6 Notice of Motion

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“As part of a commitment to help residents in the Gormanston area, I call on the Transportation Department to engage with residents on an existing plan for a car park adjacent to Gormanston beach along the Delvin River on Council owned land. If this plan is brought to Part 8 planning, the local authority can apply for funding for the project through the Town & Village Renewal Scheme. It will also form part of a broader future beach management plan.”

Supporting information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered:



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From a Community perspective, any expression of interest submitted by a group under the town & village renewal scheme could be considered for submission for funding at application stage. However the project would require all planning permissions etc to be in place to ensure any approved grant is spent within the allowed timeframe. The Community section will work with all groups in order to progress their project if approved for funding.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O'Rourke**.

The motion was adopted.

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“To cost a footpath section from Glasheen to the footpath linking Kilbreck to Grace Meadows to allow access to school. Currently school pupils are walking across a large green area to access the pathway.”

Supporting information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered:

While all costs would be dictated through a complete tender, to construct a footpath as requested in this Notice of Motion, would cost approximately €10,000. It is worth noting that this footpath was not included in the Schedule of Municipal District Works and there is no budget available to undertake this work.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O'Rourke**.

The motion was adopted.

7 Strategic Policy Committee Reports – For Information Purposes

7.1 To note the report from the Environment SPC meeting of 29th March, 2018.

The report was noted.



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8 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 Fiona Lawless raised the following issue:

- 9.1.1 Outlined the works being undertaken in the civic offices, including the installation of video conferencing facilities and refurbishment works, and confirmed that the building would be available for the planned civic reception.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach