



## ***Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes***

### ***Ashbourne Municipal District***

#### ***Ordinary Meeting***

***9:30 a.m., 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016, Ashbourne Civic Offices***

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Claire O'Driscoll**, presided.

**Councillors Present:** Suzanne Jamal, Darren O'Rourke, Seán Smith, Alan Tobin.

**Apologies:** Councillor Joe Bonner

**Officials in Attendance:**

**Director of Service:** Kevin Stewart

**Meetings Administrator:** Claire King

**Senior Executive Engineer:** Jim Colwell

**Staff Officer:** Triona Keating

**Apologies:** Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance; Janet Murphy, Executive Engineer.

#### **1 Confirmation of Minutes**

##### **1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2016.**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016 were adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Seán Smith** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O'Rourke**.

#### **2 Matters arising from the Minutes**

Councillor Darren O'Rourke referred to the attendance of Adrian O'Loughlin, Services Manager, Bus Éireann and the important issues surrounding the proposed route changes. It was agreed that a joint meeting between Ashbourne and Ratoath Municipal District Councillors with Bus Éireann would be arranged.

Councillor Seán Smith asked for a progress update in relation to landscape maintenance and the tenders for hanging baskets – it was agreed to check this with the Executive Engineer.



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### **3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations**

Sympathy was extended to:

- Councillor Joe Bonner on the death of his aunt, Bridie Bonner.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Ashbourne Historical Society and the Battle of Ashbourne Centenary Commemoration Re-enactment Group on 'The Battle of Ashbourne Easter 1916' exhibition in the Toradh Gallery. It was agreed to issue a letter to the groups congratulating them on the success of the exhibition.

### **4 To receive a presentation on Solstice Arts Centre activities.**

Belinda Quirke, Artistic Director/CEO, Solstice Arts Centre attended the meeting and delivered a presentation which covered the background to Solstice Arts Centre, objectives, culture and the arts, activities, artists, productions, collaboration and linkages to Ashbourne Municipal District.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The marketing and promotion of events in Ashbourne Municipal District – it was confirmed that a new Marketing Manager had recently been appointed and that the new marketing strategy would ensure the venue and events were widely promoted.
- The hosting of inter-county competitions – it was confirmed that the 2017 programme included an inter-theatre group performance.
- The cost of renting the venue – the commercial and lower community rates were outlined.
- The advantages of Solstice membership – it was confirmed that this would be reviewed as part of the new marketing strategy but included discounts, advance notifications, priority ticket sales, etc.



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- The issuing of invitations to Councillors for events – it was confirmed that invitations would issue by email to Councillors.
- The need to encourage engagement with and improve inclusiveness of the arts and the facility to all parts of the community – it was confirmed that a wide variety of programmes and events take place in Solstice and, whilst communications would improve, the facility was always open to meeting with groups, etc.
- The importance of the café and the need to ensure that it represents value for money – it was agreed to bring the feedback back to the café operators.
- The engagement with schools – it was confirmed that there was a good engagement with schools.

### **5 To receive an update on the Ashbourne Linear Park Project**

Following Friday's site visit, Councillors agreed that, whilst it was important to set long-term objectives, it was also essential to advance as many elements of the project as possible and that funding should not prevent the project from progressing.

### **6 To receive an update on the Ashbourne Urban Design Statement/Public Realm Plan**

Wendy Bagnall, Senior Executive Planner confirmed that the project brief, focusing on public spaces and hard landscaping, is being finalized and would go to tender in the next week and that, once consultants were appointed, it was intended to bring them to a Municipal District meeting to get feedback from Councillors. The intention was to appoint consultants with expertise in all relevant areas. As this was a non-statutory process, it may be subject to a longer timeframe, for example a five year plan, with annual objectives set. It was intended to have a draft plan ready in approximately two months.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- Examples of other towns with similar plans in place – a number of examples were cited.
- The funding available for the project plan – it was confirmed that funding was in place.



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- The scope of the plan – it was confirmed that the consultants would give their perspective having looked at various aspects of the town and its functions and activities.
- The implementation of the plan and its cost – it was confirmed that a gradual implementation programme would be incorporated, allowing for early wins to secure community support, and would include projects of varying sizes. The plan will include estimated costings, which may be subject to change over five years
- The inclusion of specific approaches – it was confirmed that the plan would consider all options and would inform the development of the Local Area Plan.
- The progress being made regarding connecting Killeland Street and Frederick Street.
- The need to link to the Linear Park.

Kevin Stewart highlighted how the Local Enterprise Office intended to prepare a Retail Marketing Plan for both Navan and Ashbourne, in conjunction with Retail Excellence Ireland, and with the support and input of the chambers of commerce and local retailers. Joe English, Head of Enterprise will be attending Municipal District meetings in the coming months and can expand on this further.

## **7 Statutory Business**

### **7.1 Corporate Services**

#### **7.1.1 To receive a presentation on Event Management Guidelines.**

Dara McGowan, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services delivered a presentation on the event management guidelines, which included information on procedures, event categories, pre-planning, risk management and requirements.

Matters raised by Councillors included:



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- The availability of assistance to groups by Meath County Council – it was confirmed that assistance had been and would continue to be provided by Meath County Council.
- The dissemination of the information – it was confirmed that the guidelines were available on meath.ie and had been circulated to relevant groups.

A short discussion followed on the plans for the Battle of Ashbourne Commemorative Event taking place on 28<sup>th</sup> March and it was confirmed that approximately 1,700 expressions of interest had been received as of 13<sup>th</sup> March. A total of 5,000 people could be accommodated, 2,000 of which to attend the commemorative event and a further 3,000 for the community concert. Due to the numbers that had expressed an interest, the road through the field would not now be required. Councillors indicated that the attendance could be higher and enquired as to how the event had been promoted. It was confirmed that the event had been widely promoted through a variety of media both in Meath, Dublin and nationally.

### **7.2 Transportation**

- 7.2.1 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 additional funding allocated to each Municipal District as outlined at the March meeting of Meath County Council – it was confirmed that an additional €140,000 would be available for Ashbourne Municipal District for roads and maintenance works, including footpaths, and an additional €35,000 for public lighting improvements. Councillors were asked to submit suggested projects and these would be considered for inclusion.
- The funding available for the footpath from Gormanston College – it was agreed to refer this to Transportation Planning & Design.



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- The protocol being developed and funding available for reflective speed monitors – it was pointed out that a policy was being developed, these were more effective if mobile and no specific funding allocation had been made.
- Road safety measures at schools – it was confirmed that minimum standards in respect of road markings and speed limits already exist at all schools but that speed monitoring was not standard. The issues with installing speed bumps in rural locations were outlined. It was agreed to ask Transportation Planning & Design for ideas in relation to safety measures at schools in rural locations.
- The contributions made by the Department of Education and Skills to footpaths and road safety measures at schools - it was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Seán Smith** to write to the Department of Education and Skills requesting that the Department agree to contribute towards low cost road safety measures and reflective speed monitors at schools.
- The provision of hi-vis equipment to the school warden at Curragha – it was agreed to check this.

### **8 Notice of Question**

#### **8.1 Submitted by Councillor Seán Smith**

“Can Meath County Council provide a progress update on the enforcement of bye-laws for parking on double yellow lines in Ashbourne?”

**Response:**

*Bye-laws are not required for the enforcement of parking on double yellow lines.*

The response was noted.

#### **8.2 Submitted by Councillor Darren O’Rourke**



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“Can I ask for the number of HAP applications from the Ashbourne Municipal District to date and the number of those which have reached a successful conclusion?”

**Response:**

*To date, there have been four HAP applications submitted from applicants within the Ashbourne Municipal District, which have all proceeded to signed tenancies with landlords under the scheme.*

*Countywide there has been 50 signed HAP tenancies to date since the scheme become operational on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015, with a further 14 applications currently being processed.*

The response was noted.

### **9 Notice of Motion**

There were no Notices of Motion.

### **10 Correspondence**

10.1 Correspondence received from Mr. Gary Turley, Halcrow Barry in response to the Notice of Item 5.1.2 of October monthly meeting re the Proposed M3 Motorway Service Area.

The correspondence was noted.

10.2 Correspondence received from Anne Graham, National Transport Authority in response to the Notice of Item 4 of February monthly meeting re proposed changes to bus routes within Ratoath/Ashbourne area.

The correspondence was noted. Reference was made to the issues raised in relation to the changes being proposed to the Bus Éireann routes affecting the District and it was agreed to raise these issues at the meeting to be arranged.

### **11 Any Other Business**



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11.1 Councillor Alan Tobin raised the following issues:

11.1.1 The ongoing traffic delays at Primatestown junction.

11.1.2 Illegal parking in Ashbourne and the need for parking bye-laws/restrictions.

11.1.3 The need for a taxi rank/space beside the bus stop.

11.1.4 The need for adequate car parking and an interpretive centre at the Hill of Tara and the improvement of the approach roads – it was pointed out that the provision of the interpretive centre and car parking was within the remit of the OPW and not Meath County Council, which is responsible for the approach roads. It was agreed that Loreto Guinan should be invited back for an update, following her presentation in December.

11.1.5 Car parking at Gormanston beach and the space available for the provision of parking on the right between the old N1 and the bridge – it was agreed to refer this to Transportation Planning & Design.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Signed:**

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**Cathaoirleach**