



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ashbourne Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

9:30 a.m., 16th May 2016, Ashbourne Civic Offices

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

Councillors Present: Joe Bonner, Suzanne Jamal, Darren O’Rourke, Seán Smith, Alan Tobin.

Officials in Attendance:

Head of Finance: Fiona Lawless

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Executive Engineer: Janet Murphy

Staff Officer: Triona Keating

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 11th April 2016.

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 11th April 2016 were adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Seán Smith** and seconded by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Seán Smith thanked the Corporate Services staff for organising the recent civic event for those involved in the Battle of Ashbourne Commemorative Event.

Councillor Darren O’Rourke requested an update from the meeting between the Council, the OPW and the consultants on the Ashbourne Flood Prevention Works – it was agreed to provide an update at the June meeting.

Councillor Darren O’Rourke requested an update on the Town Twinning proposal that was agreed at the April meeting – it was confirmed that the motion would be considered following



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the adoption of a Protocol on Town Twinning, a draft of which is to be considered by the Protocol Committee at their June meeting.

Councillor Claire O'Driscoll requested an update on the draft speed monitors policy that was to be presented to the Transport SPC – it was agreed to refer this to Transportation for update.

Councillor Claire O'Driscoll requested an update on the rumble strips in Skryne – it was agreed to check this.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

There were no expressions of sympathy or congratulations.

4 To receive a presentation on Meath Laterlife Network.

Jim Matthews, Chair and Fiona Larkin, Meath Laterlife Network delivered a presentation on the Age Friendly Alliance and Strategy, the background to the Meath Laterlife Network, it's aims, actions and achievements, and future plans.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The key role played by older citizens in communities such as the Tidy Towns.
- Meath's performance in catering for older citizens – it was confirmed that Meath does reasonably well, although it is about changing attitudes and systems, which can take time, and the role of politicians in raising awareness and implementing policy was underlined.
- The promotion of the groups' activities – it was confirmed that both traditional media and online promotion was used but that internet access remained problematic, particularly in rural areas, and that agencies need to understand that not all service users can access information online.



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- The need to provide suitable street furniture (including seating), taxi ranks, accessible footpaths, outdoor exercise equipment, rural broadband and for the public to consider wheelchair users, and others, e.g. with regard to dog fouling.

The Cathaoirleach and Councillors thanked Jim and Fiona for their presentation and commended them on their work.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Heritage

- 5.1.1 To receive an update on the conservation and management plan for the Hill of Tara.

Loreto Guinan, Heritage Officer, delivered a verbal update to the meeting, which included:

- The meeting, scheduled to take place in February to discuss the conservation and management plan for Tara, has been rescheduled to this week and an update will be provided subsequently;
- The Discovery Programme has appointed a Post-Doctoral Scholar to look at Tara and publish the recent research undertaken, for which new funding is to be sought;
- A Summer Festival, being organised by community groups, is taking place over the June Bank Holiday weekend;
- A new guidebook, telling the story of Tara, is to be published at the end of August;
- An event took place on 15th May with over 40 people participating as part of the Boyne Valley Natural History Field Club.



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Matters raised by Councillors included:

- Issues with access to Tara and the need for a protocol for events planned for the site.
- The visitor numbers to Tara and the limited parking available – it was confirmed that the visitor numbers were estimated to be c. 100,000 per annum, including repeat visitors, and that access/parking was being considered as part of the conservation and management plan.
- The need to record all sites of interest within Ashbourne Municipal District.
- The presentation of other sites of interest in other jurisdictions and the visitor experience as a result.
- The possibility of linking with Fingal County Council to improve access to the Four Knocks.
- The need to catalogue and preserve the roadside water pumps – it was confirmed that these would be included as part of an industrial heritage survey, to be undertaken during the summer subject to funding being available.

5.2 Transportation

5.2.1 To receive an update on the current Speed Limit Review.

Paul Phelan, Executive Engineer, Transportation attended the meeting and outlined the report that had been circulated in advance, which dealt with both the countywide speed limit review and the proposed speed limit bye-laws for housing estates. He confirmed that 39 locations had been identified for review in the Ashbourne Municipal District, of which 11 related to Housing Estates. The bye-laws could only apply to Council estates or appropriate estates that are taken in charge. It was confirmed that the draft bye-laws would come to the June Municipal District meetings, following which it would go on public display, with submissions to be considered by the Municipal Districts in September and



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presentation to Meath County Council for adoption in October. The speed limit bye-law would then, if accepted by the councillors, become effective from November 2016.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The phased approach being adopted and the advantages of consistency from the outset – it was confirmed that the number of estates in the county, and the amount of work involved, required a phased approach and that the legal issues relating to how estates are defined prevented a default speed limit of 30kmph in all estates and that the guidelines indicated how different types of access roads were to be treated but that signage will be erected as appropriate.
- The benefits of introducing a speed limit in specific areas – it was confirmed that the guidelines indicated a preference for driver awareness rather than enforcement with engineering solutions to be introduced to reduce speed where appropriate.
- The types of speed ramps being used – it was confirmed that any proposed measures should be site specific.
- The automatic inclusion of estates when they are taken in charge – it was pointed out that eligible estates are reviewed once issues with speed are highlighted.
- The enforcement of bye-laws – it was confirmed that signage and engineering solutions would be used to aid enforcement of the bye-laws.
- The delays associated with the publication of the guidelines.
- The possibility of including a planning condition in a planning permission granted to a development indicating the speed limit to be applied – it was pointed out that this would not be legally enforceable in the absence of appropriate bye-laws but that traffic calming measures could be included.



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It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Darren O'Rourke** and seconded by **Councillor Seán Smith** that a letter should issue to the Minister of Transport, Tourism & Sport on behalf of Ashbourne Municipal District pointing out that the process involved in the speed limit review and implementation is cumbersome, time consuming and resource intensive and should be simplified with a 30kmph limit in estates as standard and that the legislation should be amended to allow planning authorities to include planning conditions indicating a particular speed limit within developments.

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Bonner** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** that a motion would be submitted to the next meeting of Meath County Council on behalf of Ashbourne Municipal District that all housing estates that are taken in charge by the local authority are immediately subject to a speed limit of 30kmph.

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

The report, which had been circulated in advance, was noted and the works undertaken commended.

5.3 Planning

5.3.1 Matters Arising

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The planned development at Churchfields had stalled and that this would have an impact on the development of the Ashbourne Linear Park.
- Queried why two social/affordable houses in Churchfields remained vacant after a number of years – it was agreed to refer this to the Housing Section.
- A number of houses and a site vacant at Ashewood, which although may have pyrite issues, could be remediated and made available -



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Councillors were requested to submit information on any such units and these would be referred to the Housing Section for response.

- The need for vacant units to be properly secured and maintained to prevent problems for adjacent homes – it was pointed out that the local authority does secure vacant properties and that the owners of private properties can be requested to do so.
- The lack of social housing in Ashbourne Municipal District and the lack of land to provide same – it was pointed out that the Part V required 10% of housing stock to be made available for social housing.
- Queried as to whether the planning conditions imposed on the planning permission granted at Gormanstown Park addressed the issue of the roadway and bus stop – it was agreed to refer this to the Planning Department.

5.4 Corporate Services

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

The list of allocations, circulated in advance, was noted and two amendments were highlighted by Councillors Claire O’Driscoll and Suzanne Jamal.

6 Notice of Question

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Darren O’Rourke

“To ask what effort Meath County Council have made to engage with third parties, particularly Housing Associations, NAMA and private developers in order to help secure the delivery of much needed social and affordable housing units in Ashbourne?”

Response:



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Meath County Council's Housing Department has established a forum for all Approved/Voluntary Housing bodies that are active in County Meath. This forum meets quarterly and its sole purpose is to focus on the maximum delivery of social housing units within County Meath. The Council is aware of several ongoing negotiations in South Meath including Ashbourne between Approved/Voluntary Housing bodies and Developers. The Council's role is to support applications when finalised which are viable and address social housing need when lodged with the Department of the Environment Community and Local Government under the SHCEP programme.

NAMA liaises through the National Housing Agency with Housing Authorities on all suitable lands and individual housing units which it has under its control which may be considered for social housing. The Council has not been made aware of any such properties to date in Ashbourne.

The Council also liaise with Developers in Ashbourne as is the case throughout the county with regard to their obligations under Part V of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000 as amended.

Unfortunately, the Council does not have any land bank within the Ashbourne Municipal District that would allow for direct delivery of social housing through the Housing Authority itself or through a Voluntary Housing Body. The Council also seek suitable opportunities to acquire houses in Ashbourne subject to price ceilings set by the DoECLG.

The response was noted.

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“Will a bond be released when Killelland Street and Declan Street are taken in charge and are there plans available for those streets which will include improvements which are needed immediately, for example disabled parking spaces, at least 2 are needed at the library and the Prosper centre for adults with special needs and proper pedestrian crossings, at least 4 crossings are needed with correct lighting and signals?”

Response:

I refer to the notice of question from Cllr Alan Tobin in respect of additional works sought for Killelland Street and Declan Street.



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At the outset a developer is required to complete his development in accordance with the plans and particulars submitted when he sought planning permission. In turn the obligation that rests on the developer is no more and no less than the particulars of his development and the design standards and specifications applicable at that time.

In this case, the Developer / receiver has completed the development in accordance with his planning permission and Meath Co Council is satisfied that the appropriate standards have been met In accordance with its taking in charge protocol. The details of the development are being examined by Irish Water and a recommendation to take the development in charge will shortly be presented to the members for determination.

75% of the bond has been released and the remaining 25% shall be released on completion of the formal taking in charge function of the Council.

Meath Co Council may decide in due course to provide the additional infrastructure depending on the availability of funding as suggested by Cllr Tobin.

The Council cannot require these additional works to be undertaken by the developer and the developer has no legal obligations to undertake such additional works.

The liability by the surety under the terms of the bond is limited to the plans and particulars as approved by the Council under the terms of the relevant planning permissions.

The response was noted.

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Claire O'Driscoll** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Bonner** to extend the meeting by thirty minutes.

7 Notice of Motion

7.1 Submitted by Councillor Seán Smith

“That Meath County Council proceeds with engaging with the Department of Education and Skills to purchase the lands at Killelland, on approach to the GAA club, for a large Community Park for Ashbourne.”



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

The valuation report was circulated to Councillors on 27th April and can be discussed further at the Municipal District meeting.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Seán Smith** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**.

A lengthy discussion followed on the funding available, and possible alternative funding sources, for land acquisition, and the land options available, including those currently owned by the Department of Education & Skills.

It was agreed that the issue would be considered further by the Management Team, that negotiations would continue with the Department of Education & Skills, and that an update on the project would be provided at the June meeting.

The motion was adopted.

7.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“I call on all Ashbourne Municipal District Councillors to support the writing of a letter to Bus Eireann, the NTA (Now TII and specifically Michael Warnock) and the Minister for Transport) on behalf of all customers of Bus Eireann from Duleek, Kilmoon X, Ashbourne, Ratoath and The Ward, to immediately revert back to the old timetable due to serious failings in the service promised, untold distress to people with disabilities and special needs and the very real danger of a fatality due to lack of safe bus stops, drop off points at junctions with speed limits of 100km/h and the illumination of pick up/drop off points in rural areas.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal**.

An amended motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal**, as follows:



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“I call on all Ashbourne Municipal District Councillors to support the writing of a letter to Michael Warnock-Smith, Head of Public Transport Regulation Division, National Transport Authority, inviting him to a meeting of Ashbourne Municipal District to raise issues on behalf of all customers of Bus Éireann from Duleek, Kilmoon Cross, Ashbourne, Ratoath and The Ward, and requesting that Bus Éireann immediately revert back to the old timetable due to serious failings in the service promised, untold distress to people with disabilities and special needs and the very real danger of a fatality due to lack of safe bus stops, drop off points at junctions with speed limits of 100km/h and the illumination of pick up/drop off points in rural areas.”

The amended motion was adopted.

7.3 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“Can I ask Meath County Council to look into and report back on the purchasing of part of Folio MH2645 as part of the Linear Park and as a new works depot for the Ashbourne District .“

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

Meath County Council will look into this.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Seán Smith**.

The earlier discussion was referred to and it was confirmed that the location of a depot was a matter for Transportation.

The motion was noted.

8 Correspondence

- 8.1 Correspondence received from the Office of the Minister for Education and Skills in response to Item 7.2.1 of March monthly meeting re contribution towards low cost road safety measures and reflective speed monitors at schools.



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The correspondence was noted.

8.2 Valuation Report received from the Department of Education.

The report was noted.

9 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach