



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Navan Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

22nd October 2014, Navan Civic Offices

An Meára, **Councillor Sinéad Burke**, presided.

Councillors Present: Shane Cassells, Francis Deane, Wayne Forde, Joe Reilly, Tommy Reilly.

Apologies: Councillor Jim Holloway

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Tadhg McDonnell

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Administrative Officer: Alan Rogers

Senior Executive Engineer: Maurice Kelly

Senior Executive Officer: David Jones

Administrative Officer: Brian Murphy

Clerical Officer: Fiona Casserly

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 17th September 2014.

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 17th September 2014 were adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Reilly**.

1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Special Finance meeting held on 9th October 2014.

The Minutes of the Special Finance Meeting held on 9th October 2014 were adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.



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2 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- Ciara Smith, Navan Municipal District, on the death of her father, Donal Gorman.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Navan O'Mahonys on winning the County Final.

4 Statutory Business

4.1 Housing

- 4.1.1** To receive a presentation from the Housing Department on the current Housing Programme.

Brian Murphy, Administrative Officer, Housing Department, delivered a presentation to Councillors on the current Housing Programme, which included the Housing Department staff structure, functions and services provided under the main headings of Capital/Grants, Social Housing, Technical Services and Homelessness/Housing Investigations. Information specific to Navan Municipal District was also provided.

Matters raised by Councillors included the following:

- Acknowledgement of the difficult work undertaken by Housing Department staff and the progress achieved. Councillors also welcomed David Jones to Meath County Council and the Housing Section.
- The proportion of those on the social housing waiting list from the Navan Municipal District.
- The landbank at Farganstown, the plans for the provision of social housing on this land should funding be made available and the need to be clear about the future of this land.



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- The difficulties in qualifying for the Rental Accommodation Scheme and in finding suitable properties. Those who avail of the scheme are removed from the waiting list but may have to rejoin if the property is withdrawn from the scheme.
- Anti-social behaviour in public and private housing estates, the latter as a result of the provision of emergency accommodation. The impact on communities and the action taken against those who breach their tenancy agreements.
- Engagement with the voluntary housing sector and developers to build social housing.
- The potential to provide land to facilitate the provision of housing under a cooperative scheme.
- The energy efficiency upgrades were welcomed.
- The need for properties to be vacant in excess of 6 months in order to avail of funding from the Department and the perception that this creates.
- The standards of accommodation used for emergency purposes and the need for regular spot checks.
- The need to reintroduce the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- The need for staff contact details to be provided to Councillors when issues raised are referred within the Housing Section.
- The impact of homelessness and the unfair funding allocation being made to Meath as part of the Mid East Region Homeless Management Committee.
- The need to formally request the appointment of a Tenancy Sustainment Officer to support tenants in remaining in their accommodation.
- The need to acknowledge the inadequate rent allowance rates in Meath.

Responses were provided by the Senior Executive Officer and Administrative Officer, as follows:



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- The need for a framework plan for Farganstown – this is to be referred to the Planning Section - and ongoing consultation with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to same.
- The assessment of landbanks is underway alongside plans to be ready in the event of funding being allocated. A report is being prepared on the landbanks available and will be used to prioritise the expenditure of any funding provided. This report will be presented to Councillors.
- The role of landlords in the Rental Accommodation Scheme and the need to meet certain criteria.
- The policy and process involved in dealing with anti-social behaviour; sections within the new Housing Act dealing with this issue are to be enacted and the need to liaise with other agencies around enforcement.
- The role of Meath County Council in dealing with the voluntary housing agencies.
- A list of 77 vacant properties was submitted to the Department for funding for repairs; of these, 58 were approved and should be available within 6 months. Significant works are required in the remainder and these will be reviewed in 2015.
- Annual inspections are carried out on emergency accommodation based on the existing tender criteria. A new tender is to issue in early 2015, which will include increased minimum standards.
- The new Housing Strategy may introduce a new form of Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- A new system to manage repairs and maintenance will be prioritised in 2015.
- The responsibility of the tenant in undertaking basic maintenance of properties, including windows, doors, etc. No routine repairs will be undertaken if a tenant is in breach of their tenancy agreement, e.g. in rent arrears. A Service Level Agreement with the tenant will clearly outline responsibilities, etc.
- That it would be more appropriate for Meath to be in the North East Region with regard to homeless services.



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- The liaison with the HSE in dealing with homelessness and reviewing best practice.
- The need for Councillor assistance in highlighting how the rent supplement rates in Navan and South Meath are inappropriate. A letter previously prepared is to be sent to Councillors so that they can assist in dealing with this.

Councillor Sinéad Burke thanked Brian and David for attending the meeting and for their presentation.

4.2 Transportation

- 4.2.1** To inform the Members of the commencement of the process of the Extinguishment of Public Rights of Way on the R161 Navan –Trim road.

David Muldoon, Transportation Section, attended the meeting and outlined the process to be followed, as included in the report that had been circulated. Councillors were being informed of this process at this stage and the matter will be before the Municipal District again in January 2015.

- 4.2.2** To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Navan Municipal District.

Councillors welcomed the progress made in relation to the playground in Blackwater Park, which should open in February 2015 and will be secured in the interim. Councillor Shane Cassells suggested that small annual allocations should be made in the park, that applications should be made for larger projects under the Sports Capital Grant Scheme and that the goalposts should be erected by Spring 2015.

4.3 Corporate Services

- 4.3.1** To receive an update on Navan's Christmas Campaign.

Alan Rogers outlined the key elements of the planned 2014 Christmas Campaign for Navan, including the Live Crib (12th to 24th December), the trees at the shopping centre and in front of the Civic Offices, the Shop Local Campaign (involving weekly in-store draws and an overall draw for a trip to Navan,



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Ontario, Canada, sponsored by Meath County Council) and a Christmas Market at Kennedy Place.

Councillor Sinéad Burke provided a background as to how the campaign was developed, the support of local business, social media promotion and added that the campaign would be launched on 7th November in the Central Bar & Restaurant.

Councillors welcomed this initiative, congratulated Councillor Burke, Alan Rogers and other Municipal District staff on the progress made and acknowledged the increased role of local business in the Christmas campaign.

5 Notice of Question

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

“Can Navan Municipal District undertake an assessment of the traffic light sequence at the bottom of Watergate Street and at Timmons Hill as the current sequence is creating traffic problems and could lead to an accident?”

A response was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

All traffic lights in Navan Town are serviced and assessed as part of our annual maintenance contract; in addition the traffic lights located at Watergate Street/R147 & Kentstown Road/R147 are monitored in real time by Dublin City Council SCAT system. It is envisaged that Meath County Council transportation section will be taking over the monitoring of these junctions in Q1, 2015. The sequencing of this junction is currently working.

Maurice Kelly confirmed that the Transportation Section had met with Dublin City Council with a view to taking over the SCAT system. There had been a communications error in recent days but this had now been rectified and it will be monitored over the coming days. Councillor Forde welcomed this development. Councillor Joe Reilly highlighted the need for a ring road for Navan as traffic congestion had increased.

5.2 Submitted by Councillor Sinead Burke

“Can the Executive please provide an update on the progress made by the council in regularizing the tenancy agreements in St Patrick’s Park Halting Site in Navan to include the following:



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- The legal update on the eviction notices served on families in the Park that do not currently have legal tenancies;
- The timeframe for the assessment of those families that have left on foot of eviction notices and therefore rejoined the housing list with a view to possibly accommodating them back into the park;
- The number of bays and chalets requiring inspection for works to be done;
- The number that have been inspected to date and whether a costing has been done on any necessary work;
- Whether there is money set aside out of council funds to complete these works;
- The timescale for the completion of the renovations and tenancy agreements.”

A response was provided by David Jones, Senior Executive Officer, Housing Section, as follows:

There were four notices served on illegal occupants of Council Bays at St Patricks Park, only one illegal occupant complied with the notice and vacated the Bay which is now back in the Council's possession. All others who have not complied with the notice will be subject to legal proceedings to ensure that the illegal occupants are removed and the Council obtains vacant possession of its Bays.

The Council's Scheme of letting priorities states, under section 7.3 Illegal Occupation of Housing Authority Dwellings,

'The Housing Authority will take appropriate steps to prevent illegal occupation of housing authority dwellings. In the event of illegal occupation, the housing authority will take all necessary measures to ensure the removal of illegal occupants. Where an illegal occupant has made an application for housing, the date of application will be adjusted by the period of illegal occupation, and the housing application will not be considered for that period. Any person who breaks this rule on a second occasion will be permanently removed from the Housing List'

It is the Council's intention not to carry out any repairs until such a time as all of the Bays are vacated at which point a Tender Document will be prepared on a value for money basis to have the bays restored for occupation by eligible applicants only.

5.3 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

“When will the Arborologist carry out a report on Navan housing estates?”



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A response was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

An Arborologist has been appointed and it is expected that this report will be finalised in the next couple of days.

Maurice Kelly confirmed that the Arborologist report was now complete, and the Tree Surgeon Contractor appointment would be made by the end of next week and that the works would take approximately one month to complete.

5.4 Submitted by Councillor Shane Cassells

“Can the Executive please update members as to the exact steps taken by Meath County Council to acquire emergency funding specifically for the preservation of the Old Kilcarn bridge in Navan, which is one of the most historical structures in Navan and a protected structure under the development plan, and when was the last communication with the OPW on this important matter?”

A response was provided by Paul Monahan, Administrative Officer, Transportation Section, as follows:

Old Kilcarn Bridge has not been used by vehicular traffic since it was closed in the mid 1970s. It continued to provide pedestrian connectivity between the R147 and Johnstown up until spring this year when it was closed following an inspection of damage to the piers as a result of flooding events over the winter 2013 / 2014. However there is an alternative route via the R147 and new Kilcarn Bridge.

Existing services such as Bord Gais, Eircom, and Broadband are in the bridge deck of Old Kilcarn Bridge. The service providers have been notified of the situation regarding the current state of repair of the bridge. Given the role the bridge plays in the transportation network the Council's priorities are heritage protection and safeguarding services in the structure.

Repairs to the bridge are not a matter for the OPW. Meath County Council carried out emergency repairs in the aftermath of the storm damage and appointed consultants to carry out a design of various possible remedial works options. The preliminary inspection report estimates the total cost of repairs to be in the region of €400k. The Council has submitted an application to the Department of the Environment for funding in this regard. To date this application remains under consideration by the Dept. Transportation are in a position to manage any remedial works required for the bridge but this is of course contingent on securing the necessary funding.

The Council will continue to press the Department. to try and ensure that this application is successful.



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In addition in the context of its heritage value the Council is exploring other possible avenues of funding with the Department for these remedial works.

Councillor Cassells sought clarification as to whether an application had been made specifically for Kilcarn Bridge as funding applications for bridge repairs would normally be assessed based on criteria such as traffic volumes, etc. whilst this bridge was a landmark site of historical significance and also carried essential services infrastructure. Therefore it should be subject to a separate funding application. Concerns were raised about the effects of winter weather on Kilcarn Bridge.

Tadhg McDonnell confirmed that the Department of Transport did prioritise transport networks and other funding sources therefore were being assessed, e.g. Historic Buildings Fund. He agreed to check with Transportation as to whether funding from the Department of Transport for bridges could be matched with other funding sources for Kilcarn Bridge.

Councillor Joe Reilly also highlighted how trees were growing out of the bridge at Flower Hill and how this requires attention.

6 Notice of Motion

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Sinéad Burke

“That Meath County Council examine the current traffic, parking and line of sight situation at Flowerhill Crescent, Flower Hill, Navan including an assessment of the need for traffic calming measures at the entrance to Flowerhill Crescent, the impact on visibility for those exiting No. 2 Flowerhill Crescent as a result of the wall erected by the Council at the front of the property and the need to provide yellow lines on Flowerhill Crescent as existed prior to the resurfacing works carried out a number of years ago.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sinéad Burke** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Forde**.

Supporting information was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

Navan Municipal District will carry out an assessment at this location to all the items raised in this Notice of Motion.

Councillor Burke pointed out that residents had indicated that a mirror, signage and/or a speed ramp would be adequate. Maurice Kelly agreed to visit the site with Councillor Burke and confirmed that the issue regarding the wall had been referred to Housing.



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The motion was carried.

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

"That Navan Municipal District Council includes the construction of a footpath from Mullaghboy to St. Finian's Cemetary, Athboy road in the capital works programme for 2015."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Forde** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**.

Supporting information was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

Navan Municipal District have carried out a costing for this length of footpath and it is approx €240,000 so it would be unlikely to be considered as part of next year's works programme for 2015.

Maurice Kelly pointed out the estimated cost of €240,000 included in the information provided included the construction, material disposal and lighting costs only and did not include land acquisition if required. The annual works programme usually covered a number of smaller schemes and if this footpath were to proceed, it would leave no funding for any other projects. An application could be made to the NTA but this footpath would be unlikely to attract funding due to its location and insufficient footfall.

The motion was carried.

6.3 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

"That Navan Municipal District upgrade the speed ramps in St. Mary's Park, Navan in the interests of public safety, and that this be included in the 2015 capital works programme."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Forde** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

Supporting information was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

Navan Municipal District will carry out an assessment of the existing traffic management measures within St Marys Park and consider these upgrading works as part of next year's works programme for 2015.



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Councillor Shane Cassells pointed out that the issue of speeding in estates had been recently highlighted by the Department of Transport with speed limits, ramps and signage identified as a key priority. However, if schemes are to be implemented, local authorities must be given the proper resources to implement these.

Tadhg McDonnell highlighted the role of the Planning SPC in developing policy guidelines for new estates that would consider the issues raised.

The motion was carried.

6.4 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

“That Navan Municipal District carries out repair works on footpaths on Ratholdron Road on entrance to Blackwater Drive and Abbeygrove estate.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**.

Supporting information was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

Navan Municipal District will carry out an assessment of the existing footpaths at the entrance to Blackwater Drive and Abbeygrove and consider these repair works as part of next year's works programme for 2015.

The motion was carried.

6.5 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

“That bye laws passed two years ago by Navan Town Council outlawing drinking alcohol in public spaces now be enforced as a matter of urgency. Several housing estates are experiencing major issues with anti social behaviour particularly where there are open green spaces which were designed for the enjoyment of all residents.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Forde**.

Supporting information was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

Navan Town Council (Regulation and control of the use, consumption & possession of Intoxication substances in Public Places) Bye Laws were adopted in 2011.



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Navan Municipal District has sent a reminder letter to the Superintendent requesting the Gardaí assistance in enforcing the Bye Laws.

Councillor Deane highlighted the role of the former Navan JPC in being able to highlight these issues with the Gardaí and acknowledged that Meath County Council was limited in what it could do and the Gardaí were needed to enforce the bye-laws.

The motion was carried.

6.6 Submitted by Councillor Shane Cassells

“That Navan Municipal District prepares a submission for the renovation of the old St Patrick's Classical School for use as a County Museum and Tourism facility and make an application to access funding from the European Regional Development Fund through the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly's new Regional Operational Programme for Urban Regeneration. This application to be lodged before the end of this year with a view to accessing funding under the 2015 schemes.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

Supporting information was provided by Alan Rogers, Administrative Officer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

The Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly have submitted a new Draft Regional Operational Programme for 2014-2020 to the European Commission for assessment and approval. It is likely to be early 2015 before approval is obtained and only after such approval will any application process begin.

Councillor Cassells highlighted the importance of this building and its prominent location within the town. He pointed out the ongoing costs relating to loan repayments and security and underlined that a plan was needed to get it open and accessible to the public. He also stated that the funding referred to in the motion was significant and that preparation needed to commence now in order to submit an early application when the funding was announced. He pointed out that Navan & District Historical Society had a particular interest in the building and would be able to assist with any funding application.

Tadhg McDonnell welcomed the motion and committed to progressing this.

The motion was carried.



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6.7 Submitted by Councillor Shane Cassells

“That Navan Municipal District members resolve to include the small section of road and footpaths in front of the Proudstown Road bungalows, that were not resurfaced when the majority of main stretch was completed, in the 2015 road works programme.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**.

Supporting information was provided by Maurice Kelly, Senior Executive Engineer, Navan Municipal District, as follows:

Navan Municipal District will carry out an assessment of the existing road surface and footpath at this location and consider these works as part of next year’s works programme for 2015.

The motion was carried.

7 Correspondence

7.1.1 Acknowledgement received from Minister Richard Bruton’s office to correspondence of 14th October 2014 – Re: A request to attend a meeting of Navan Municipal District.

Councillor Wayne Forde welcomed this correspondence and expressed his dissatisfaction at the absence of jobs announcements for Navan and Meath. Councillor Joe Reilly highlighted how the recent job losses in Navan had received little attention. Councillor Shane Cassells stated that the senior agencies / government involved in job creation had ignored Meath.

8 Any Other Business

8.1 Councillor Shane Cassells raised the following issues:

- An update is required on the taking in charge of Leighsbridge Estate, which had recently won an award in the Pride of Place competition;
- The need to tackle the vandalism in Kennedy Road, to completely remove the graffiti and to avoid parking in undesignated areas – Maurice Kelly confirmed that further planting was planned to prevent parking in undesignated areas.



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- 8.2** Councillor Wayne Forde expressed his disappointment at the failure of the local media to provide coverage of the ongoing campaign to maintain services in Our Lady's Hospital, Navan.

- 8.3** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Francis Deane and seconded by Councillor Joe Reilly to move the start of the meetings to 10.00am, to conclude by 12.30pm, and to amend the Standing Orders for Navan Municipal District accordingly.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

An Meára