



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Navan Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

10:00 a.m., 18th October 2017, Navan Civic Offices

An Meára, **Councillor Tommy Reilly**, presided.

Councillors Present: Sinéad Burke, Francis Deane, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Wayne Forde, Jim Holloway, Joe Reilly.

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Kevin Stewart

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Executive Engineer: Paul O'Brien

Clerical Officer: Edita Zolotuchina

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 20th September, 2017.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 20th September, 2017 were adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Sinéad Burke** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

There were no expressions of sympathy or congratulations.

4 Statutory Business

4.1 Transportation



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

The report had been circulated in advance and a further update was provided. Matters raised by Councillors included:

- The timeframe for the provision of water cuts – it was confirmed that these would commence following completion of town works and would run into early next year.
- Concerns regarding trees weakened during the recent storm – the procedure to determine tree safety was outlined and Councillors were requested to submit location details.
- A large pothole on the Ratholdren Road.
- Safety concerns regarding the Loreto boundary wall on the Kentstown Road – it was agreed to check ownership.

Paul O'Brien, Executive Engineer, referred to the progress made in previous Schedules of Municipal District Works and circulated a list of possible additional road works that could be undertaken in 2018 and outlined the background to their selection. The final list would be decided early in the new year.

- 4.1.2 To receive a report on the Footway Condition Survey of Navan Town.

Paul O'Brien, Executive Engineer, presented the report to the meeting and matters raised by Councillors included:

- Welcomed the comprehensive report.
- The need to identify a suitable response to the issues raised, including the development of a multi-annual work programme.
- The availability of information on possible funding options prior to the 2018 Municipal District budget meeting – it was confirmed that a further report was being prepared and would be provided as soon as

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possible. Potential funding sources were mentioned in addition to the annual estate allocation.

- The need to consider the road infrastructure also.
- The works to be undertaken by direct crews and contractors – this was outlined.
- The most appropriate footpath materials – it was pointed out that concrete was preferable and the cost difference with macadam was negligible.
- The cost of footpath works – the cost is approximately €70 per linear metre for a 2 metre wide footpath plus ancillary costs such as kerbing, etc.
- The provision of dished kerbing on new footpaths – it was confirmed that these would be provided at junctions, etc.

- 4.1.3 To receive the planning report on planning application P8/17006 in respect of the proposed Cantilevered Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge immediately to the south of and contiguous with the existing "New Bridge" - Protected Structure, NIAH Register No. 14010086 in the townlands of Townparks and Athlumney.

Billy Joe Padden, Executive Planner provided an overview of the report circulated and Kevin Stewart outlined the procedure, i.e. that, whilst there was no requirement to formally adopt the Part VIII, Councillors had six weeks to consider the report, during which the Part VIII could be amended or rejected or otherwise the development will be carried out.

The proposed development was welcomed and it was requested that planting be kept to a minimum to ensure that the park was as visible as possible and to encourage its use.

4.2 Corporate Services

- 4.2.1 To discuss the 2017 Christmas Market.



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Dara McGowan, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services provided the background to the 2017 Christmas Market to date, including the decision taken by Councillors to proceed with the extended proposal on Trimgate Street, the actions taken on foot of this decision and the associated financial commitment, for which there remains a funding shortfall. The benefits of the event to the business community, based on the experience in 2016 and also in Trim, were outlined.

Matters raised by Councillors included:

- Queried the traffic management plan to be implemented – this was outlined.
- Reference was made to a recent public meeting, where concerns had been raised and four representatives had been elected to represent the views of the wider trading community - it was confirmed that, despite meetings held earlier this year with traders, no concerns have been raised directly with Meath County Council.
- The possibility of moving the event to Cornmarket or the Fairgreen – it was confirmed that it was not possible to move the event at this stage due to the physical constraints of the locations suggested and progress already made, in terms of stalls sold, etc.
- The challenges in dealing with the traders/retail sector due to the lack of a single representative organisation in the town.
- The need for a decision to be taken given the timeframe and financial commitment involved – it was pointed out that the only decision at this stage was that the event either proceeds as agreed or not proceed.

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane** that a meeting take place between the executive, the four trader representatives and Councillors at 6pm, tomorrow Thursday 19th October in Buvinda House. It was pointed out that the purpose of this meeting would be to allow concerns to be raised and to attempt to address these concerns. A Special Meeting of Navan Municipal District would be held following this meeting, where the final decision would be taken.



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- 4.2.2 To note Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Navan Municipal District.

The list of allocations, circulated in advance, was noted.

4.3 Planning

- 4.3.1 To consider taking in charge of the following and the making of a declaration that the roads within these developments shall be public roads in accordance with Section 11 Roads Act 1993 and the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2017

- De Verdon Place, Robinstown.

This was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Jim Holloway** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

- Bailis Downs, Navan.

This was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Jim Holloway** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**.

- Ros na Ri, Navan.

This was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Jim Holloway** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Forde**.

5 Notice of Question

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

“What future plans have Meath County Council for Innovation House, County Hall, Cash Desk and Motor Tax when these services are moved to Buvinda House in Johnstown,



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Navan? I certainly hope MCC will not allow these buildings to become derelict sites as I believe half our town is full of derelict sites and this is increasing at a high rate.”

Response:

Innovation House is now the headquarters for the Meath County Council Libraries and Arts staff.

With regard to County Hall, please note that the final move of staff from County Hall to Buvinda House, i.e. Housing, Motor Tax and ICT Sections, will take place on the 20th October. Council meetings will continue to be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall and these arrangements will be kept under review by the Corporate Policy Group. Please note that the Council now intends to prepare a framework plan to establish possible future uses of the County Hall site and this plan will be brought before the Council in due course.

The response was noted.

5.2 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

“Would Meath County Council be willing to liaise with some representatives from Navan retailers in relation to the Navan Town Enhancement Scheme advanced plans which are presently at design stage?”

Response:

Meath County Council have engaged with various stakeholder groups during the initial phases of this project and are also intending to continue this engagement going forward. As there is a new Retail Representative Group established, Meath County Council will engage with representatives of this group during the design process of this Project.

The response was noted.

5.3 Submitted by Councillor Padraig Fitzsimons

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“Can Navan District Council start the process of taking Beechmount Vale under its control?”

Response:

The Planning Department has carried out its initial inspection of the development known as Beechmount Vale, Navan and can confirm its intention to carry out the remedial works required to bring the development up to the standard for TIC as part of its 2018 work programme.

The response was noted.

6 Notice of Motion

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Joe Reilly (*Deferred from September meeting*)

“That Navan Municipal District recognises that 95 vacant retail units in Navan is an unacceptably high number, with the amount of vacancies curtailing business, employment, customer choice and aesthetically portrays the town in a poor image and that Navan Municipal District Councillors call on Meath County Council’s Planning and Economic Development Department to initiate discussions with relevant stakeholders to look at ways in which Navan could be marketed better with a view to reducing the number of commercial vacancies.”

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

Retail Excellence Ireland, who represents in excess of 3,000 retailers nationally, has carried out useful research on the issue of town centre vacancy rates. They launched “A Strategy for Rural Retailing” in September 2014 and this document provides some insights as to the causes of what they describe as “distressed” Town Centres and also suggests strategies for towns experiencing such issues. The study concluded that the problem is “not as a result of the economic cycle..” and that it will “probably remain long after market growth returns..”

This, they conclude, can be attributed to a number of factors including (but not limited to) the following:

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- **The Out of Town Retail Preference** – most retailers and in particular international fashion brands prefer to open new stores in shopping centre locations. These centres offer a modern, controlled retail environment, larger, clean, retail spaces and a better mix of neighbouring tenants.
- **Weakening Town Centre Retail Mix** – many traditional town centre anchors have ceased trading. The remaining mix, while of value, generally trades off footfall rather than creating it. The number of “destination” retailers in town centres has fallen.
- **Greater Consumer Mobility** – consumers are now willing to travel longer distances to visit primary destination shopping centres. Some centres now claim to have a shopper catchment in excess of 100 square kilometres.
- **Accessibility** – many out of town centres have excellent motorway access. Town centres, in general, have road systems designed for a bygone age. Many are choked with traffic. While in some eyes, traffic equates to shoppers, this usually isn't the case and car dominated towns are not regarded as attractive places to shop or for new retailers to invest and set up.
- **Car Parking** – many out of town centres offer free or cheaper car parking and this, taken together with other issues such as retail mix and associated leisure amenities, can be a factor. However it is often the quality and accessibility of the public car parking spaces compared to shopping centre spaces that makes a difference. Being able to drive in, park the car and go straight to the shops and back to the car without having to go outside in inclement weather is an attractive proposition regardless of whether it is paid or free parking. If in doubt about this issue then consider why people queue up at weekends to pay €3.60 per hour (or more) in Dublin City Centre car parks. And remember also that without income from paid parking there would be upward pressure on rates to make up the shortfall.
- **The Retail Experience/Consumer Behaviour** – midweek shopping is now for convenience, weekend shopping is now as much about “experience” and a “day out” involving leisure activities such as cinema, dining out etc.
- **The Dramatic Rise in Online Shopping** – a Virgin Digital Media report (September 2016) predicted that by the end of 2020, Irish consumers will be

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spending in excess of €14 billion per annum on line with more than half of this spent outside of Ireland. Most small retailers are totally unprepared, some unfortunately don't even see this coming. And this trend, which up until recently was more a feature of "comparison" shopping is now becoming prevalent in "convenience" shopping (the weekly groceries).

Other factors are:

- *The unsuitability of these, mostly small, units for a modern retail environment, many don't have the kind of facilities that shoppers now expect and regard as the norm.*
- *Building regulation issues including disability access etc., many of these old buildings are not to standard and are incapable of being brought up to standard without considerable cost. Unfortunately many of them will never again function as retail spaces in their current form.*
- *The number of family owned small businesses where there is no family successor to take over.*
- *General competition in the retail sector from the shopping centre and from the multiples which offer a convenient range of choices in one store and under one roof.*
- *A shortage of modern marketing and presentation skills, how to differentiate yourself from your competitors, what makes your shop attractive, why would I go in there in the first place?*

It is clear from the work done by R.E.I. and others that the reasons for the decline in retailing in traditional town centres are many and varied and are complex.

This Council has a number of initiatives that should assist the Navan retail sector:

- *The planned €12 million investment in the town centre will result in an environment that is modern and attractive and will make the traditional town centre streets more accessible. Ease of access and the ability to walk safely around the town will be a key factor in attracting shoppers back into this area.*



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- *The Council has and will continue to work with R.E.I. to develop programmes to support small retailers. This process started very successfully in 2016 and Navan won the REI award for “Friendliest Retail Town”*
- *The Council will facilitate Navan businesses to retain Purple Flag status.*
- *The Rates Incentive Scheme has been a great success and almost 2,100 small businesses availed of rate discounts in 2016. This has been continued for 2017.*
- *The Development Contribution Scheme provides a range of discounts and incentives to encourage redevelopment of disused units in town centres and in particular derelict sites.*

In summary this is a complex issue with no single cause and no easy solutions. This Council is willing to work with any group to examine what initiatives could be put in place to assist in bringing some of these vacant units back into everyday use.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Joe Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**.

During a short discussion, it was acknowledged that some progress had been made since this motion was submitted, for example the new businesses in Navan Retail Park, but that landowners, particularly in the town centre, needed to be encouraged to deal with derelict and vacant units.

The motion was adopted.

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Joe Reilly (*Deferred from September meeting*)

“That Navan Municipal District Councillors call on the HSE to utilise the old council grounds adjacent to Our Lady's Hospital for the construction of a Primary Care Unit for Navan as committed to by the HSE under the original plans for the development of the Primary Care Network.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Joe Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**.



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During a short discussion, it was highlighted that, despite being earmarked for a Primary Care Unit, none had yet been provided in Navan and that there was an urgent need for the HSE to deal with the site adjacent to the hospital, which had been allowed to become derelict.

The motion was adopted.

6.3 Submitted by Councillor Sinéad Burke (*Deferred from September meeting*)

“That, in memory of his brave and unyielding work serving the people of Meath and in particular in attempting to expose the harsh and abusive treatment of secondary students in Navan schools, this Municipal District consider commemorating the memory of the late Dr Randles.”

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

If this motion is adopted, the proposal will be brought to the next meeting of the Protocol Committee for consideration. Following this, if this proposal is approved, a commemoration will be organised for a date and time to be decided in consultation with the Members of Navan Municipal District.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sinéad Burke** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Reilly**.

An amended motion was proposed by **Councillor Sinéad Burke** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Reilly** as follows:

“That, in memory of his brave and unyielding work serving the people of Meath and in particular in attempting to expose the harsh and abusive treatment of children in Navan schools, this Municipal District consider commemorating the memory of the late Dr. Randles.”

During a short discussion, the roles played by the late Dr. Randles, and his wife, in protecting children were acknowledged and it was suggested that a plaque on Watergate Street, the location of the family home, or a memorial bench at the playground in Blackwater Park would be appropriate.



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The amended motion was adopted.

6.4 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

“Can I call on the Executive to write to Bus Éireann requesting an immediate meeting to discuss the local town bus services within Navan and surrounding area as winter is approaching very fast and we need a full reliable local bus town service running at least 5 days a week with a view to hopefully increasing this local bus service to 7 days a week and also to discuss the provision of a readymade bus station in Navan on Railway Street when all Meath County Council services are sent out to Buvinda House in Johnstown.”

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

In conjunction with the National Transport Authority it is intended to introduce an expanded Navan Town Service Network in late 2017. This will include two Routes N1 & N2, and will provide greater connectivity within the town with enhanced frequency including operating seven days per week.

With regard to County Hall, please note that the final move of staff from County Hall to Buvinda House i.e. Housing, Motor Tax and ICT Sections will take place on the 20th October. Council meetings will continue to be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall and these arrangements will be kept under review by the Corporate Policy Group. Please note that the Council now intends to prepare a framework plan to establish possible future uses of the County Hall site and this plan will be brought before the Council in due course.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Forde** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Reilly**.

Councillor Wayne Forde referred to a meeting held with representatives from Bus Éireann and summarised the outcome of that meeting, which included reference to the planned improvements to the town bus service referred to in the supporting information provided. During a short discussion, reference was made to the issues experienced following the introduction of the new 109 services and the inclusion of the town service in the context of the Navan Town Enhancement Plan.

The motion was noted.

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6.5 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

"Can I call on the Executive to immediately suspend road resurfacing around the town, as our town is being destroyed with all the road works going on around Navan at the same time. We are losing local businesses left right and centre, and these local shops are paying huge rates as it is already."

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

The resurfacing works on the N51 are now complete and the works at the roundabout at the Solstice are at an advanced stage. It is not feasible to suspend these roundabout upgrade works without causing greater disruption to the traffic in the area.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Forde** and as it was not seconded, the motion did not proceed.

6.6 Submitted by Councillor Jim Holloway

"That Navan Municipal District proposes the extension of the footpath in Robinstown to connect with the existing footpath on the Robinstown-Trim Road."

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

The mentioned works are not included on the Navan Municipal District Schedule of Works 2016 – 2018. The subject location is rural and is subject to very low levels of foot traffic. The requested works would not be classified as priority but they shall be included on the Municipal District 'Request for Works' record and shall be considered for action should finance be made available.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Jim Holloway** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

The motion was adopted.

6.7 Submitted by Councillor Jim Holloway



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"That Meath County Council will examine the problem of flooding at Broadboyne Bridge (North side at Ardmulchan) and will carry out remedial work as appropriate."

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

Navan Municipal District Transportation Operations Section shall monitor the mentioned location to establish the cause of the reported problem and execute any such required remedial works at the earliest opportunity when they are identified.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Jim Holloway** and seconded by **Councillor Pdraig Fitzsimons**.

The motion was adopted.

6.8 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

"That Meath County Council will install amber lights and tabletop speed ramps on the three approach roads to old Johnstown Village."

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

As these requested works are not in the schedule of works for 2017, funding is currently not available to undertake these works. This request will be considered in addition to other requested works in the future as funding opportunities become available.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Pdraig Fitzsimons**.

The motion was adopted.

6.9 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

"I call on Meath County Council to finish the remaining remedial works to include tree pruning, sewage upgrade and repairs to footpaths in Ferndale and Blackwater Drive so as the taking in charge process may be completed."



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

The Council can confirm that both Ferndale and Blackwater Drive estates are in the Charge of the Council and that all remedial works within Blackwater Drive have now been complete. The Planning Department will be carrying out additional works on the wastewater pipelines within Ferndale Estate and these works may include additional footpath works. These pipe repair works are currently advertised for tender with a closing date for receipt of tenders of the 24th of October 2017. Any Tree pruning queries relating to these developments should now be referred to the Navan Municipal District Engineer.

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

The motion was adopted.

6.10 Submitted by Councillor Tommy Reilly

“Calling on Navan Municipal District to have a full review of the Christmas Market in Navan.”

The motion was withdrawn, following the discussion that took place under Item 4.2.1.

6.11 Submitted by Councillor Pádraig Fitzsimons

“I propose the motion to seek funding to extend the CCTV network in Navan, and that we discuss where it is most needed.”

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

The Community CCTV scheme is being administered by the Department of Justice and is currently open for applications. The scheme is not intended to provide funding to upgrade or replace existing schemes although consideration may be given to applications to extend such schemes.



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All applications must involve the community interests at large and the support of the local authority and the local Joint Policing Committee is required. The Lead Group for all applications must be an existing, legally registered body. The Scheme is intended to support community-based organisations and, accordingly, applicant organisations could include:

- existing community-based not-for-profit organisations that are broadly representative of the community e.g. Area Partnerships, Community Development Projects, Family Resource Centres, the Local Authority, Community Enterprise, etc.; and*
- community-based, not-for-profit, consortium of private and community interests under the aegis of an existing lead organisation.*

The maximum grant awardable by the Department, in any circumstances, is €40,000. Within this limit, grants of up to 60% of the total capital costs of the system may be awarded. The balance of the project costs will have to be funded locally.

The Joint Policing Committee are to discuss CCTV requirements in the County with a view to agreeing a policy on same.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Pdraig Fitzsimons** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Forde**.

A number of locations were identified that would benefit from CCTV, including Flower Hill, Johnstown, the Ramparts and football pitches. Following a short discussion, Councillors requested that the local authority take on the role of lead agency in applying for funding and get community support to progress the project. Issues with CCTV were raised including their physical location, data protection and use of coverage as evidence.

The motion was adopted.

6.12 Submitted by Councillor Pdraig Fitzsimons

“Bearing Brexit in mind, I propose the motion that this Council discuss the point at which tenders will not be accepted from companies/ firms from outside the 26 counties, especially those projects that may run on into 2019.”



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

All public tendering rules have been set by directives from both Ireland and Europe. DPER Circular 10/14 states that all goods and services with a value greater than €25,000 and works greater than €50,000 must be advertised on E-Tenders. Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement is the relevant EU directive.

Legally Meath County Council is obliged to advertise all tenders on E-Tenders and the OJEU if they are above the thresholds. Any supplier can register for these websites and therefore can view and respond to tenders regardless of where they are located.

To not advertise in this manner or to discriminate against any qualifying supplier would leave Meath County Council acting illegally and could lead to a legal challenge.

Until such time as there are formal changes to European Directives pertaining to how the UK are to be treated post Brexit, there will be no alteration to how Public Procurement is conducted at a local level.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Padraig Fitzsimons** and seconded by **Councillor Jim Holloway**.

A short discussion followed, where it was noted that Irish companies still do considerable trade with Northern Ireland/UK and that efforts should be made to strengthen these links. The legal position with regard to tendering was also outlined.

The motion was noted.

7 Strategic Policy Committee Reports – For Information Purposes

- 7.1 To note the report from the Environment and Emergency SPC meeting of 27th September 2017.

The report was noted.

- 7.2 To note the report from the Planning, Economic Development and Enterprise SPC



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meeting of 27th September 2017.

The report was noted.

8 Correspondence

- 8.1 Correspondence received from Irish Rail in response to the Notice of Item 8.1 from September meeting re vegetation on the railway embankment at the Glenveigh housing estate.

The correspondence was noted.

9 Any Other Business

- 9.1 Councillor Joe Reilly raised the following issues:

- 9.1.1 The planned works on the roundabout at the top of Flower Hill – it was confirmed that these would take place following the completion of the current works.
- 9.1.2 The need to replace the dead trees at the entrance to Blackwater Park – it was confirmed that these would be replaced in the new year.
- 9.1.3 Responsibility for providing an alternative power supply to vulnerable people, for example those using electrical medical equipment, during a power cut – it was agreed to ask the Civil Defence Officer to raise this with the HSE.

- 9.2 Councillor Francis Deane raised the following issues:

- 9.2.1 The commencement date for watermain works on the R153 – it was confirmed that these were due to start in the coming weeks but would be suspended for December.
- 9.2.2 The closure of the alleyway in Ferndale – it was pointed out that a decision had already been taken to commence the statutory process and that the outcome of this would determine the final decision.



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- 9.3 Councillor Jim Holloway raised the following issue:
- 9.3.1 The derelict house on the Windtown Road and its impact on local residents.
 - 9.3.2 The need to remove the burnt out tree at the entrance to St. Francis Park.
 - 9.3.3 The need for local businesses to engage with the Purple Flag initiative, given its potential for the town.
- 9.4 Councillor Padraig Fitzsimons raised the following issues:
- 9.4.1 Requested clarification on the legal situation with regard to the transfer of ownership to residents of common ground at the rear of Abbeylands Crescent.
 - 9.4.2 The possibility of introducing a lower speed limit at Kennedy Plaza to improve pedestrian safety.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

An Meára