



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ratoath Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

9: 30 a.m., 10th July, 2019, Dunshaughlin Civic Offices

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**, presided.

Councillors Present: Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, Nick Killian, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Damien O'Reilly, Gillian Toole.

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Des Foley

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Executive Engineer: Philip Traynor

Staff Officer: Triona Keating

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 15th May, 2019.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 15th May, 2019 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**.

1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Annual Meeting held on 12th June, 2019.

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 12th June, 2019 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Nick Killian sought an update on the timeframe for the proposed Part 8 for the L-1007 Kilbride Road / R125 Ashbourne Road Junction Improvement Scheme, with concerns having been expressed in relation to the traffic lights at the junction – it was confirmed that it was intended to bring this to the September meeting.



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3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of the late Councillor Oliver Tully, Louth County Council with tributes paid to his work on behalf of the community and education sectors;
- Brian Reilly, Overseer, Ratoath Municipal District, on the death of his mother-in-law;
- The family of the late Cormach Murrihy, formerly of Ratoath, who died in the US.

4 Disposal of Land pursuant to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001

4.1 Agreement in principle to disposal of Land at Johnstown, Dunshaughlin Co. Meath

Dara McGowan, Senior Executive Officer, Asset Management outlined the background to the proposed disposal, which would involve a land swap and a new boundary wall for the council depot. A discussion followed on the condition of the access road and the possible implications for the road and local residents. The purpose of the proposal were underlined, in providing alternative agricultural access to the lands behind the depot, with the improvement of the access road to adjacent lands to be addressed as part of any future planning application.

The disposal was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.

5 To consider the election, appointment or nomination of Councillors to Local Bodies & Committees

5.1 Appointment of one Councillor from Ratoath Municipal District to the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

Councillor Nick Killian was appointed on the proposal of Councillor Nick Killian and seconded by Councillor Maria Murphy.



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6 Statutory Business

6.1 Transportation

6.1.1 To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Ratoath Municipal District.

The report had been circulated in advance and matters raised by councillors included the possibility of moving the bus stop from opposite Donnelly's in Ratoath due to the narrow road width, the impact on vehicles accessing and exiting the car park and limited wheelchair accessibility and the need to review the traffic light sequence at Meadowbank Hill onto the Fairyhouse Road.

Paul Phelan, Senior Executive Engineer, Transportation was in attendance and matters raised by councillors included:

- Requested on update on the LIHAF – it was confirmed that construction had commenced and was due to finish in April 2020.
- Queried the submissions made for Batterstown – it was confirmed that 9 submissions had been received and would be reviewed with concerns addressed at a public meeting.
- The need to submit data on speeding to the Gardaí – it was confirmed that collision prevention meetings are held with the Gardaí 3 to 4 times a year and, if a particular issue arises, relevant information is submitted.
- Welcomed the relocation of the solar speed sign to the other side of the Glascarn Road junction.
- Concerns expressed by residents with regard to the proposed works on the Kilbride Road and the synchronising of lights with the Molden Bridge junction.
- The need to start planning for the provision of a LIHAF road beside Dunboyne train station.

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- The possibility of moving the speed limit signs on the approach to Dunshaughlin to take account of the new residential developments – it was confirmed that the national guidelines allowed for a speed limit review every five years and that other options could be considered in the interim.

John McGrath, Senior Engineer, Transportation and Michael Finnegan, Road Safety Officer was in attendance to discuss two issues, as follows:

- Traffic lights at Barrack Cross, Ratoath – it was confirmed that the lights are to be replaced at this location in September, following completion of works on the N2 with talks ongoing with Irish Water regarding their works schedule and road resurfacing.
- School Crossing Patrols – the current situation in relation to the school wardens in Ratoath and Dunboyne was outlined, including the impact on outdoor staffing where cover is required. Reference was made to the policy adopted at both SPC and full council levels with regard to requests made for new sites and the consideration of works in lieu of school warden replacement/provision, with duplication of resources to be avoided. A discussion followed on the issues that impact on both locations and the possible solutions that might address these issues. It was agreed that the issues raised would be considered, that any engineering solutions to be implemented would follow consultation with schools and parents and that the impact of these would be monitored.

Other matters raised included:

- The signage removed on the R125 relating to Tayto Park access – it was pointed out that these had been temporary and would be replaced by permanent signage.
- The need to provide advance notification to businesses on Main Street, Ratoath with regard to resurfacing works.

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy** to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes.



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- 6.1.2 To receive an update on the proposed Safety Improvement Scheme at the R154 / L-2207 Batterjohn junction.

Paul Phelan, Senior Executive Engineer, Transportation confirmed that, following the non-statutory public display period, no submissions had been received and that, if agreed, the scheme would proceed in the autumn, subject to funding.

It was agreed that the scheme should proceed, as outlined.

- 6.1.3 To receive an update on the proposed Traffic Calming Scheme on the R154 at Kiltale.

Paul Phelan, Senior Executive Engineer, Transportation confirmed that, following the non-statutory public display period, one submission in support of the scheme had been received and that, if agreed, the scheme would proceed in the autumn, subject to funding.

It was agreed that the scheme should proceed, as outlined.

7 Notice of Question

7.1 Submitted by Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith

“To ask the Chief Executive to provide a list of the measures being undertaken to improve road safety and reduce speeding on the major routes in and out of Ratoath village, including, but not limited to, the Fairyhouse Road, the Dunshaughlin Road and towards the Nine Milestone; and on the Trim Road from Fairyhouse Cross to Batterstown.”

Response:

The Ratoath Outer Relief Road LIHAF scheme is currently under construction. This scheme links the R125 (Ratoath to Nine Milestone roundabout road) to Ratoath College and includes proposed cyclepath, footpath and junction upgrades to the section of the R125 at the eastern side of Ratoath village.



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There is also currently a Part 8 on public display for a proposed upgrade to the R125/L1007 Ashbourne Road / Kilbride Road junction east of the village.

Proposals for traffic calming and junction improvements on the R154 at Batterstown village are also on public display.

The response was noted. Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith pointed out that her question related primarily to issues relating to speeding. It was confirmed that the speed limit on the Skryne Road had been changed in April 2019 and a speed activation sign erected, with the impact to be monitored and the results compared with the situation prior to the limit being changed. Councillor Geraghty-Smith requested that the results of the monitoring be provided, with a list of further changes planned and a timeframe for same. It was also suggested that a raised table be installed at the entrance to Ratoath Harps and the speed signs be moved further towards the village on the Skryne Road.

7.2 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

“Can Meath County Council provide progress report on graveyard for Dunboyne?”

Response:

The matter of a replacement burial ground for Dunboyne was discussed at the Ratoath June Municipal District meeting and, arising from which, it was agreed that the Environment Department would set out the current position and particularly that as it relates to the existing burial grounds on the Rooske Road and potential suitable lands on the Maynooth Road.

As the Members will be aware, a series of trial pitting on Council owned lands on the Rooske Road formed part of an invasive site investigation carried out by an eminent Consultant Geologist appointed by the Council and which entailed the carrying out of geological and hydrogeological characteristics assessments of the site and including an examination of soils and subsoils.

The results of this detailed assessment clearly showed the lands as being unsuitable for burials. Such conclusions are clearly supported by the high water table, which was witnessed by a number of elected members when visiting the site during the excavation process. The assessment also concluded that the digging of trial holes in different



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weather conditions or during a different time of the year would make no material difference and that bringing in infill material to the lands would not represent a sustainable solution – the assessment also rejected any suggestion that the cleaning out of adjoining ditches would in any way impact on the ground water levels.

As the Members will also be aware, a number of other potential burial ground sites were examined around Dunboyne for suitability including Hilltown, Bracetown and Salestown and while only the latter was deemed suitable and an offer was made to purchase, the vendor subsequently reneged on the offer.

In more recent times, the Council's attention was brought to a possible site on the Dunboyne to Maynooth Road and officials met with the owner who undertook to come back to the Council with further details as he had to engage in discussions with other parties who may have an interest or be impacted by developments on the land—such details to also include likely locations where a burial garden might be located within the circa 30 acres land holding and the financial consideration in respect of any sale to the Council if the lands were deemed suitable.

While there has been a delay since the initial discussions, officials were aware that the suitability of the lands for a burial ground, and primarily based on ground conditions, could only be determined through the digging of trial holes over multiple areas of the lands and these could not be done until winter barley had been harvested in July and arrangements have now been made to have the trial holes dug in early August under the supervision of the aforementioned Geologist. The Council still await a valuation from the landowner who indicated during the most recent discussions that he was having an Auctioneer prepare same.

It is submitted that the above clearly demonstrates the Council's absolute commitment to finding a replacement burial ground for Dunboyne and it should be pointed out that more resources and time have been assigned to this goal than all the other Municipal Districts put together but the extreme difficulties in procuring suitable land, due in many instances to unsuitable soil conditions, has to date prevented this becoming a reality.

While not-pre-empting an outcome on the Maynooth Road site, the Environment Department will include Dunboyne in an expression of interest advertisement to be placed shortly for landowners for land in that is fit for purpose and located in close proximity to towns in the County where burial ground capacity is or will in the future become an issue.

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In the interim, and following the completion of a drone fly, an exercise is being undertaken to carry out a full plot count and identify vacant plots in the existing burial ground - this will involve comparing drone images of the burial ground against the church burial ground records and we will engage with the Church Authorities in this regard.

The response was noted.

8 Notice of Motion

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith

“That this Municipal District agrees to assess the potential for the installation of footpaths at the school in Mulhussey to facilitate children walking to and from school, in the interest of public and road safety.”

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

Meath County Council does not have any funding for the provision of a footpath at this location allowed for in the Council’s Budget for 2019 and does not have any plans to construct a footpath, at the moment.

The Transportation Department has written to the school representatives to suggest that they make an application under the Community Involvement Scheme. Funding for this scheme comes from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, to the extent of 85% of the overall costs of any successful scheme. DTT&S has issued correspondence recently to confirm that requests for the provision of new footpaths, along public roads, can be considered under the terms of the scheme.

If an application is received, it can be assessed by the Transportation Department and placed on the waiting list.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

It was agreed to visit the location to discuss the available options.



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The motion was adopted.

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith

“That this Municipal District agrees to work with An Garda Síochána to prioritise the installation of CCTV as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour in key areas such as in playgrounds, town centres and public parks.”

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

The provision of CCTV within County Meath has been discussed at recent meetings of the Joint Policing Committee. Further discussions, in the context of the JPC annual work programme, will take place with An Garda Síochána to agree criteria for prioritising towns/village for CCTV installation.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**.

It was agreed to circulate supporting information provided at the May full council meeting in response to a similar request made. Reference was made to the issues that impact on the provision of CCTV, including funding, data protection, monitoring, maintenance, etc. in addition to the many requests received for different locations. This matter will be considered further by the JPC when it meets next in September/October.

The motion, in light of the supporting information provided, was noted.

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

“I call on Meath County Council, to ring-fence development levies from the recently granted housing planning application at Station Road, Dunboyne to cover the costs of a footpath and cycleway from Newtown Roundabout, Dunboyne to Dunboyne AFC Soccer Club.”

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



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Development Levies are collected and spent on a county level on projects identified and approved as part of the 3 year Capital Investment Programme. Therefore it is not possible to ring-fence levies unless they are contained in the Capital Investment Programme.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

A short discussion followed on the issues that impact on those living in south Meath arising from population increases, traffic volumes, economic development, etc. Whilst it was pointed out that the allocation of levies is undertaken to ensure equity across the county, it was agreed that individual projects could be considered against available funding.

The motion, in light of the supporting information provided, was noted.

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy** to extend the meeting by ten minutes.

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"I'm calling on Meath County Council to write to the Minister of Housing, Planning and Local Government and the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the National Transport Authority requesting they develop a mechanism to permit public transport operators serving Ashbourne, Dunshaughlin and Ratoath to provide ticket prices at a similar rate to the towns within the Dublin Metropolitan area."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**.

The motion was adopted.

9 Correspondence

- 9.1 Correspondence received from Minister Shane Ross in response to the Notice of Item 5.1.2 from January meeting re transport issues affecting the R147 and M3.



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The correspondence was noted. It was requested an update be sought on the meeting between the Chief Executive, NTA and the full council.

9.2 Correspondence received from Ms Catherine Behan.

The correspondence was noted. It was agreed that a response would issue and be circulated to councillors for information. It was also pointed out that notification would issue to those who had made submissions.

10 Any Other Business

10.1 Dara McGowan raised the following issue:

10.1.1 St. Johns' Well - Confirmed that discussions had taken place with the landowner, with an arrangement now agreed regarding access. Discussions had also taken place with the local community group and residents. Due to the scale of the proposed works, a Part 8 is required, a drawing has been agreed and the related reports will be prepared. It is intended to advance the Part 8 towards the end of August. The proposals will include a new entrance, fencing and a handpump or similar, thereby facilitating public access to the water. The estimated cost is €100,000 with funding applied for under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme. Whilst the old well has been dismantled, the heads are a national monument and are currently being restored with agreement to be reached regarding their future.

10.2 Councillor Nick Killian raised the following issue:

10.2.1 Requested that David Jones, Housing Department be invited to the September meeting to discuss housing related issues, including the LIHAF units in Ratoath that are unoccupied.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach