



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

Kells Municipal District

4.00pm, 16th December 2019, Kells Civic Offices

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Seán Drew**, presided.

Councillors Present: Mike Bray, Eugene Cassidy, David Gilroy, Johnny Guirke, Paul McCabe, Sarah Reilly.

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Kevin Stewart

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Executive Engineer: Michael Murphy, Technician

Staff Officer: Triona Keating

Apologies: Aaron Smith, Executive Engineer

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 18th November 2019.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 18th November 2019 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor Johnny Guirke**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Congratulations were extended to:

- Keane Barry, Duleek on his achievements in darts and wished him luck in the World Darts Championship.



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The Cathaoirleach and councillors also expressed their best wishes to Robbie McCormack, New York Meath Association, and his family and acknowledged his contribution to Meath and Kells, in particular.

4 Statutory Business

4.1 Transportation

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

The report, circulated in advance, was noted.

Councillor Seán Drew referred to the update provided in respect of the N52 at Balrath, which indicated the average speed at 71.3km/h in a 60km/h zone and which supports the concerns expressed by residents.

A further update was provided, with a case having been made to TII regarding funding for survey work and this was successful. A contractor has commenced this survey work and it is due to be completed in January, following which a design for the footpath and junction improvements can be prepared. This can then be submitted to TII for consideration regarding funding and it is on the 2020 work programme. In response to a question it was confirmed that Transportation would be asked to consider whether there were some interim short term measures that could be implemented to alleviate the current situation.

The councillors welcomed the progress made, particularly in light of the traffic volumes and speeds recorded, but underlined the need to consider the implementation of interim measures until such time as the more permanent works can be undertaken. It was requested that a further update be provided to the January meeting and specifically in relation to what, if any, interim measures could be implemented.

- 4.1.2 To discuss issues regarding road safety at schools.

Michael Finnegan, Road Safety Officer attended the meeting and provided the following updates on road safety at schools:



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- Rathmore N.S. – It was agreed to deal with Item 6.1 – Notice of Motion at this point. The school principal and Board of Management has agreed to provide off-road car parking in the school grounds, facilitating a drop-off/collection area and limited parking spaces. The area to the front of the school will be altered to improve the sightlines. It is anticipated that this will resolve the current situation, in terms of negating the need to park on the opposite side of the road. Councillors welcomed this progress but still expressed some concerns and noted the need to improve safety in the immediate term, e.g. the provision of a pedestrian crossing and raised table. It was suggested that the parking spaces on the opposite side of the road would ideally be removed altogether and that, when the new off-road parking is available, this will need to be actively policed from the outset to avoid congestion. A funding application has been made under the Department of Education & Skill's Summer Works Scheme. The Gardaí have been requested to undertake speed detection in the area to deter speeding.
- Cortown N.S. – a suitable location is to be selected, in conjunction with the school principal, for a disabled parking bay and this will be provided as part of the road lining programme.
- Kilmainhamwood N.S. – bollards are to be erected to prevent cars from parking on the footpath.
- Ballinacree N.S. – bollards have been requested by the local community to prevent cars parking on the footpath and also a continuous white line on the bend outside the church, with all other measures such as signage, road markings, etc. already in place. It was agreed to discuss this with the district engineer.
- Carnaross N.S. – the Gardaí have been requested to undertake speed detection in the area to deter speeding.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Child safety issues in the Kells school campus arising from the practice of private school bus operators parking opposite the schools and forcing children to cross the road to the buses, for which an escort is being provided. It was conceded that the issues in the area are not



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solely due to the buses but that the schools and parents also have a role to play. It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Seán Drew** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe** to write to the school principals and invite them to submit their views on the issues and proposed solutions to address these.

- It was requested that some form of barrier be provided on the Headfort Road to prevent school children from running directly from the path onto the road in front of the Heritage Centre and guide them towards the pedestrian lights.
- Reference was made to issues at Gibbstown N.S. at school pick-up times – discussions have taken place with the school principal with a view to providing an off-road car park and a location for same is being considered.
- Queried whether there were any best practice examples in Meath with regard to traffic management, driver behaviour, etc. – Wilkinstown N.S. works well due largely to the monitoring and policing by the school principal of the measures provided.

It was pointed out that the Gardaí no longer operate the speed detection vehicles and any requests for these to be deployed must now go to GoSafe vans, operated by the RSA, which is independent from the Gardaí and the local authority. They are deployed to 38 locations in Meath, selected based on fatality and accident statistics. However, this list of locations has not been reviewed in some time and requires review in conjunction with the Gardaí, local authority, etc. and based on more recent statistics. It was agreed to refer this request to the Transportation SPC and relevant sub-committee of the JPC.

5 Notice of Question

There were no Notices of Question.

6 Notice of Motion



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6.1 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

“That Meath County Council works with the relevant road authorities and An Garda Síochána to address the serious road safety concerns at Rathmore N.S. and that urgent measures be put in place to protect the safety of children at the school.”

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

The Council has provided speed limits and warning signage on the approaches to the school. The Road Safety Officer is liaising with the school to explore the possibility of providing a drop off facility at the school.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray** and seconded by **Councillor Eugene Cassidy**.

In light of the discussion under Item 4.1.2, the motion was noted.

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

“That further measures be put in place in the Kells Municipal District to address the ongoing issue of dog fouling in public areas especially at locations such as parks, walkways and green areas.”

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

The issue of dog fouling in public places is something that the Environment Department of the Council receive quite a number of complaints about every year.

While the primary legislation in relation to the control of dogs is the Control of Dogs Act 1986 as amended, offences in relation to dog fouling are contained in the Litter Pollution Acts 1997- 2003 and specifically under Section 22 which makes it an offence to allow a dog under your control to foul a public place

This means the owner/person in charge of the dog is required to remove dog faeces and dispose of them in a suitable, sanitary manner and failing which an on the spot fine of



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€150 may be imposed or a €3000 maximum fine if not paid and a conviction is secured in the District Court. Any person can make a complaint to the District Court under the litter laws against an owner or someone in charge of a dog who allows that dog to foul public places and who fails to act responsibly.

While the legislation is in place in respect of dog fouling and members of the public regularly report dog fouling incidents getting such persons to give evidence in Court proves extremely difficult. The Councils Community / Dog Wardens where they witness such incidences do issue fines and follow up with proceedings where it is practicable and reasonable to do so where the fine is not paid.

In recent times there has been a major emphasis placed on the need to educate people in relation to the public health issues associated with dog fouling, as serious infections can spread from dogs to humans via infected faeces and with young children being particularly at risk through contact with contaminated ground while playing and putting their hands in their mouths.

Amongst the particular initiatives undertaken by the Council in respect of dog fouling and including a combination of education/awareness and enforcement include:

- The provision of reusable stencils and paint to local groups and including to Kells Local Heroes for on-going use in appropriate areas such as parks, etc.*
- As part of engagement with local communities, the provision of “Clean up after your Dog” signs to Residents Associations, Community Groups, etc., as well as distributing appropriate dog litter bags at strategic locations.*
- Signing up to the Green Dog Walkers Programme (GWD) with other Local Authorities - this is a community-based scheme adopted and promoted by local community volunteers and aiming to change attitudes towards the issue of dog fouling.*
- The erection of signage at appropriate locations as well as Audio Clips which remind dog owners of their responsibility in cleaning up after their dog.*
- Support to Tidy Towns and other groups who hold dog awareness days.*



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In addition to the above the Council will consider all reasonable measures and suggestions that will help in tackling this ongoing problem.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe**.

A discussion followed, with reference to the variation in the numbers of fines issued in other counties, e.g. Louth. It was requested that the stencils on footpaths in Kells be refreshed, that consideration be given to the provision of dog bags in Kells, Athboy and Oldcastle, that a media campaign be initiated to remind people that this is litter and potentially harmful, and to liaise with Louth County Council to see if anything can be learned in relation to their high level of fines issued.

The motion was adopted.

7 Strategic Policy Committee & Corporate Policy Group Reports – For Information Purposes

- 7.1 To note the report from the Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC meeting of 11th November 2019.

The report was noted.

8 Correspondence

- 8.1 Correspondence received from Mr Ronnie McGrane, Kells 2020 Traders.

The correspondence was noted and it was agreed to invite two representatives from Kells 2020 Traders to make a presentation at the January meeting.

9 Any Other Business

- 9.1 Councillor Johnny Guirke raised the following issues:

9.1.1 Queried whether any response had been received in relation to the request to include incomplete roads sections in the 2020 works programme – this will be considered as part of the 2020 Schedule of Municipal District Works, due to be



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presented in February.

9.1.2 Referred to the 135 roads in Kells Municipal District that have not been included on the roadworks programme. It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Johnny Guirke** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe** to request a meeting with the Transportation executive prior to the presentation of the 2020 Schedule of Municipal District Works to discuss putting a plan in place to deal with these roads. It was agreed that this meeting would take place prior to the January meeting.

9.2 Councillor Paul McCabe raised the following issues:

9.2.1 Referred to the lack of response to the request made by the Transportation SPC to the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to overturn the decision regarding the source of funding contributions for CIS.

9.2.2 Requested an update on the proposed amendment to the HGV ban byelaws – no statutory process has yet commenced. The options in terms of using the byelaws or the Road Traffic Acts were outlined.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach