



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Kells Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

4.00pm, 17th February 2020, Kells Civic Offices

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

Councillors Present: Mike Bray, David Gilroy, Paul McCabe and Sarah Reilly.

Apologies: Councillor Eugene Cassidy.

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Kevin Stewart

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Executive Engineer: Aaron Smith

Staff Officer: Triona Keating

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 20th January 2020.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 20th January 2020 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor Mike Bray**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- David Jones, Housing Department, on the death of his father, Gerry;



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- John Lynch, SGSS, on the death of his father, John.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Former councillors Johnny Guirke and Darren O'Rourke on being elected to represent Meath West and Meath East respectively – it was agreed that a letter of congratulations would issue on behalf of Kells Municipal District.
- Councillor Sarah Reilly on her campaign.

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

- 4.1** This was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor Mike Bray**.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Transportation

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

The report, circulated in advance, was noted.

In relation to the N52 at Balrath, Kevin Stewart provided an update from the Transportation Department, confirming that works had commenced on design options for the footpath and Balrath junction improvements. It is anticipated that these will be completed in March, following which reports will be prepared and submitted to TII for consideration.

A F401 Speed Limit Ahead sign for east bound traffic approaching the 60kph speed limit zone will be erected and consideration is also being given as to whether it is appropriate for additional 'gateway' signage to be added on the approaches to the houses in the Balrath/Calliaghstown area. A 'Gateway' is simply a concentration of elements which simulates an entrance to a village within a reduced speed environment.



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The signage above can be preceded by other pairs of signs such as 'road narrows' and 'no overtaking', and the cumulative effect is to alert drivers for the upcoming change in environment from rural to urban fringe and allow them to adjust their speed accordingly. In addition, physical islands can be constructed at the gateway locations to reinforce the need to slow down at the entrance to the area. The gateway design option will be included with the footpath options in the design report that will be prepared for the TII.

Meath County Council's road safety officer has had further contact with the Gardaí in relation to the need for a greater level of enforcement on this stretch of the N52. It is understood that the request for increased Garda presence in the area will be looked on favourably and this should be evident in the weeks ahead.

The update was noted.

5.2 Corporate Services

- 5.2.1 To note Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Kells Municipal District.

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

5.3 To consider and adopt the 2020 Schedule of Municipal District Works.

David Jones, Senior Executive Officer, Housing Section outlined the schedule of works as they relate to housing, including the service categories, funding allocations per municipal district, the centralised budgets and updates on the previous year.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Referred to the waiting lists for the carrying out of minor adaptation works on council housing stock for eligible applicants – the central funding available to carry out works on local authority houses is significantly less than that available for private grants, primarily due to the comparatively limited local authority housing stock. Whilst this requires grants to be prioritised, there are generally no overdue delays and details of any examples should be submitted for review.



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- Referred to the relatively small allocation for energy upgrades in the context of climate action – the budget allocation reflects the energy upgrade works remaining under the Phase I programme, the majority of which have already been completed in previous years. Phase II, representing deeper retrofitting works, primarily on older stock, will follow once Phase I is completed.
- Referred to the expenditure on pre-let repairs and the reasons for this, e.g. units not being maintained by tenants, more stringent building regulations, etc. – the cost of undertaking pre-let repairs can vary depending on the extent of works required. The intention is to move to improving the planned maintenance works programme to reduce the spend on pre-let repairs.
- Reference was made to both local authority and private houses boarded up for some time in local authority estates and enquired as to what action can be taken where units, bought under the Tenant Purchase Scheme, have since been repossessed and remain vacant - councillors were requested to submit information on such vacant properties. A number of initiatives, including the Vacant Homes Action Plan, are being implemented to address such issues.
- Queried the effectiveness of the Repair & Lease Scheme – to date, one property has been completed under the scheme.
- Queried whether the energy upgrade works can benefit from SEAI grants – there are some opportunities to avail of certain schemes.

Des Foley, Director of Service, Transportation outlined the key elements of the proposed roadworks programme. Overall funding had increased for 2020, with the NTA funding having recently been confirmed. A contingency fund is in place to counter tender price increases. It was pointed out that the information presented today refers to the revenue programme, with the capital programme, being separate, dealing with works such as footpaths, public lighting, etc. Reference was also made to a number of additional schemes completed, underway or to be undertaken in the municipal district, including roads, footpaths and bus stops.

John McGrath, Senior Engineer, Transportation Section outlined the proposed programme of works at 46 different locations. Specific reference was made to the progress on the pavement scheme on the N51 and confirmed that, if the contingency



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fund is not fully used, this can be re-allocated to complete the 6/7 road sections omitted from previous programmes.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Queried the percentage fund increase on 2019 – the restoration and improvement grant had increased by 12%. The other funding increases were also outlined, including that from the department and from the NTA.
- Referred to the expectation that, when a road is being improved, that it will apply to the whole road, from junction to junction and requested that, in future, whole roads be completed and no sections be omitted – it was pointed out that, ideally, whole roads from junction to junction would be done but funding constraints require that the worst parts of the network be prioritised, based on the PCSI. Each road is assessed to determine the most suitable treatment and it is not possible to generalise the approach to be adopted. It was accepted that information on this approach would assist in managing expectations, e.g. the maps circulated indicated the road sections that will be done.
- Queried the location of the proposed works on R154 Athboy to Trim and suggested that the section closer to Athboy would be more appropriate given its condition and also whether the works planned for the bridge would be completed by St. Patrick's Day – it was agreed to review the section to be undertaken on the R154 and it was agreed to reconfirm that the bridge works would be completed by 17th March.
- Referred to a number of locations where works are required, e.g. Fordstown to Cortown and Springville/Bolton L68351 leaving Kilskyre.
- Welcomed the funding increases but underlined the need for additional funding to deal with the significant works required.
- Requested further information on the capital programme works.
- Requested clarification on the location of the proposed junction works at Athgaine Little – it was agreed to clarify this and consider alternative funding, e.g. the Low Cost Safety Scheme, for the second junction referred to.



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- Requested clarification on the CIS projects to be undertaken – it was pointed out that the programme in place was based on applications previously submitted and these required re-costing. Reference was also made to the changes made by the department with regard to how the community contribution can be funded, with the local authority no longer able to make a contribution. The Transportation SPC has contacted the Minister in that regard. New applications are no longer being accepted.
- Queried the timeframe for extending the winter gritting programme, the criteria for inclusion and whether non-regional roads, where schools are located, can be included – the intention is to cover 100% of regional roads within two years. Extra capacity may allow for other routes to be included but it will not always be possible to include routes where schools are located.
- Queried the plans to improve accessibility, e.g. gullies, etc. – this will be done.
- Queried the provision of the footpath from the Oldcastle to Moynalty Road – this is to commence at the top of the flyover on the Oldcastle Road to the Cavan Road roundabout to the Moynalty Road roundabout.

The Schedule of Municipal District Works was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor David Gilroy** and seconded by **Councillor Sarah Reilly**.

6 Notice of Question

There were no Notices of Question.

7 Notice of Motion

7.1 Submitted by Councillor Paul McCabe

“That Meath County Council install traffic calming measures on the N52 in Carlanstown village.”

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



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With regard to the Notice of Motion relating to the provision of Traffic Calming Measures on the N52 national secondary road at Carlanstown:

The Transportation section of Meath County Council will carry out speed surveys on the N52 at Carlanstown to gauge the level of compliance to the posted speed limits in the area. If vehicle speeds are found to be above the expected levels, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) will be contacted to discuss possible traffic calming measures.

It is noted that Section 38 part (5) of the Road Traffic Act 1994, as amended, notes that Traffic calming measures shall not be provided or removed in respect of a national road without the prior consent of the TII.

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

The motion was adopted.

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

- 8.1 To note the report from the Planning Economic Development, Enterprise and European Affairs SPC meeting of 19th December 2019.

The report was noted.

- 8.2 To note the report from the Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC meeting of 22nd January 2020.

The report was noted.

9 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

10 Any Other Business

- 10.1 Kevin Stewart raised the following issue:



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- 10.1.1 Reminded councillors that Cavan County Council would make a presentation on 26th February regarding the N3 Virginia Bypass.

- 10.2 Councillor Mike Bray raised the following issues:
 - 10.2.1 Requested that the pedestrian crossing at Rathmore N.S. be reviewed in terms of its safety for users and asked that it be either removed or made safer/clearer to oncoming traffic in the interim with a view to providing a more permanent solution.
 - 10.2.2 Requested that the 80km/h speed limit signs on the Girley Road be reviewed and possibly replaced with 'Slow' signs, particularly as resurfacing works are planned.

- 10.3 Councillor Sarah Reilly raised the following issue:
 - 10.3.1 Requested an update from the Heritage Officer regarding the graveyard at Crossakiel where concerns had been expressed around the structural safety of the building and graveyard and whether any works were planned.

- 10.4 Councillor David Gilroy raised the following issues:
 - 10.4.1 Complimented the efforts of Meath Fire Service in dealing with the recent fire at Athboy N.S.
 - 10.4.2 Welcomed the Public Realm Plans for Athboy and Oldcastle.

- 10.5 Councillor Seán Drew raised the following issues:
 - 10.5.1 Welcomed the provision of new bus shelters and referred to the need for an additional bus shelter on the Cavan Road south bound.
 - 10.5.2 Queried whether a response had been received from the letters issued to the two school principals regarding safety issues on the schools campus – it was confirmed that no responses had yet been received.
 - 10.5.3 Referred to a recent incident at the pedestrian crossing on the Navan Road and



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requested that, as part of the planned resurfacing works, that consideration be given to additional traffic calming measures, such as signage, rumble strips and barriers to either side of pedestrian lights – it was pointed out that barriers can create additional safety issues if children become trapped between the road and barrier. It was agreed that the Road Safety Officer would be requested to visit the schools to reinforce the road safety message.

10.6 Councillor Paul McCabe raised the following issues:

- 10.6.1 Queried the policy that applies to the replacement of school wardens – the current policy does not allow for the replacement of school wardens where signalised crossings are in place. If a school warden is unavailable, a member of the outdoor staff must be reassigned, with implications for other services. Where there is a request or a need for improvements in school crossings, as a first step, Meath County Council will consider if there is an engineering solution to improve safety.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach