



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ratoath Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

9: 30 a.m., 14th April 2021, Via Zoom

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Damien O'Reilly**, presided.

Councillors Present: Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, Brian Fitzgerald, Nick Killian, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, 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 3rd March 2021.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 3rd March 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

2.1 Councillor Nick Killian raised the following:

2.1.1 Requested that the crossing from the Shrine to the cemetery on the Cemetery Road, Ratoath be reinstated – it was confirmed that this would be provided within the next two weeks;

2.1.2 Referred to Item 7.3 – Notice of Motion in the March meeting minutes and the opposition expressed by residents to the restoration of the bridal path.



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- 2.2 Councillor Gillian Toole raised the following:
- 2.2.1 Requested an update on the Part 8 for the Ratoath Pedestrian & Cycling Scheme;
 - 2.2.2 Requested an update on the provision of land for social housing in Ratoath – it was agreed to follow up on the expressions of interest;
 - 2.2.3 Requested an update on Item 4.1 – Disposal in the March meeting minutes;
 - 2.2.4 Requested information on the valuation process associated with Section 183s;
 - 2.2.5 Requested that contact be made with Ratoath Tidy Towns in relation to the use of the stones from Moulden Bridge – it was confirmed that the Arts Officer plans to run a competition to design a feature using the salvaged stone;
 - 2.2.6 Requested an update on the footpath in Curragha;
 - 2.2.7 Referred to Item 7.3 – Notice of Motion in the March meeting minutes and pointed out that the motion referred to the proposed restoration of the bridal path on the Glascarn and Outer Relief Road sections.

With regard to Item 2.2.3, David Jones, Senior Executive Officer, Housing Department joined the meeting and acknowledged the discussion that took place at the March meeting. He confirmed that the land, acquired in 2005, was being assessed in terms of providing affordable/low cost sites, similar to those provided in Lagore, Dunshaughlin. This assessment includes the infrastructural requirements to service the site, with associated costs and potential funding sources, including the department's Serviced Site Fund. Due diligence must also be carried out from a planning perspective, in terms of the appropriate use of the site, which is in a rural setting, and consistency with planning policies and objectives. Advance expressions of interest will also be sought to ensure that there is a demand for such sites, were they to be provided. The Section 183 proposed at the March meeting would provide a yearly lease agreement for the site, which would remain in the council's ownership.

Matters raised by councillors included:



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- The possible development of a small estate of affordable housing if individual sites proved problematic.
- Expressed the view that there would be adequate demand for such sites – whilst the Serviced Site Fund provides funding per unit for the enabling infrastructure, the units must be direct construction at own cost and sold to recoup those costs, so there is a risk attached. The cost rental scheme through the Approved Housing Bodies, which is being piloted, provides a capital fund for the acquisition of turnkey units and these are then provided at a reduced rent. If extended, this may have potential in Ratoath Municipal District.

It was agreed to provide a report to the May meeting, to include an overview from the planning perspective.

Dara McGowan, Senior Executive Officer, Facilities Management confirmed that the Section 183 process proposed a 5 year lease, but this has been suspended following the request by the Councillors and that, in the interim, it is proposed that a 11 to 12 month licence would regularise the situation, with a condition that this could cease with 30 days notice. No further action will be taken until a decision has been taken by the Councillors.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of the late Paul Monahan, former council employee and Dunshaughlin Area Administrator;
- The family of the late Ger Dowd, formerly of Dunshaughlin and who won the Irish Grand National;
- The family of the late Mai Foley, Drumree Road, Dunshaughlin, former council librarian.

Congratulations were extended to:



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- Dermot McLoughlin, trainer, and Sheila Mangan, owner, on winning the Irish Grand National 2021;
- Rachel Blackmore on becoming the first female jockey to win the Aintree Grand National 2021;
- Dunboyne, Dunshaughlin and Ratoath secondary schools on their success in the Local Student Enterprise Programme;
- Shabana Dowd on her appointment as Deputy Principal at Coláiste na Ríoga, Dunshaughlin.

4 To meet with representatives from Fairyhouse Racecourse and Horse Racing Ireland.

Paul Dermody, CEO, HRI Racecourses, and Peter Roe, General Manager, Fairyhouse Racecourse, attended the meeting and delivered a presentation, which included an overview of HRI, the economic benefits of horse racing and breeding, the organisational objectives and possible synergies.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- The possibility of developing an all-weather course, similar to Dundalk – it was confirmed that Tipperary Racecourse had won a recent tender for an all-weather track to meet demand in the south/south-west of the country and is due to open in 2023. Whilst Fairyhouse had submitted a tender, the selection facilitated a geographical spread and the right-handed track does not suit this type of course.
- Suggested that consideration be given to re-establishing a local committee to promote Fairyhouse within the local community – it was acknowledged that this had been a success in 2018 but did not proceed in 2020/2021. Options are being considered to increase the profile within the local community.
- The possibility of using part of the car park as a park & ride facility, with revenue being generated by parking charges, the possibility of hosting a farmers & local artisan market on a weekly basis and expressed hope that a hotel development adjacent to Fairyhouse may proceed in the future – a long-term masterplan for Fairyhouse is at an early stage



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of development, with all options being considered and, whilst horse racing remains the core objective, there is capacity for additional activities throughout the year.

- Underlined the importance of the equine industry to the county and referred to the different career options that are suitable for those interested in racing.
- The possibility of reopening the bridal path for walkers – whilst the benefits of the path being opened are acknowledged, there was no option but to close it due to the issues of anti-social behaviour and health & safety concerns, including duty to employees.

On behalf of the executive, Des Foley welcomed the opportunities for the council to work with HRI and Fairyhouse with regard to tourism and economic development, once the County Development Plan and the Masterplan were concluded. It was agreed that, when appropriate, an on-site meeting would be arranged.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Transportation

5.1.1 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:

- Thanked Philip and his team for meeting with residents in The Downs and for the extra bin collections especially on bank holiday weekends
- Queried whether the swing for younger children in Dunshaughlin playground is to be replaced – an additional swing is being sought.
- Requested an update on the provision of the raised table at the Gaelscoil – raised tables at a number of locations are being put out to tender.



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- Referred to the damaged railings following works at the bridge in Dunboyne park and queried if these could be replaced or monitored regularly – these works are being outsourced and the issue will be referred to Transportation.
- Requested that trees at Clonkeen be included in the tree pruning programme as they are obstructing the footpath – it was agreed to trim these trees back.
- Requested that the slide in Ratoath playground be replaced with a steel slide and referred to ongoing issues of anti-social behaviour in the playground – a quote for a stainless steel slide has just been received.
- Requested a breakdown and the final cost of works in Ratoath playground.
- Referred to the request made at the March meeting for the fence to be heightened and a timelock installed on the gate of Ratoath playground and acknowledged the response received. It was pointed out that these work well in other locations, e.g. Seabury, Malahide, and asked that costings for these be provided.
- Queried whether consultation had taken place with residents regarding works on the path along the R155 to the rugby club – once a drawing/plan is available, residents will be consulted.
- Requested an update on the footpath from Hillview to the Bog Road in Dunshaughlin – it is hoped to add this to a local improvement scheme.
- Requested an update on the Part 8 for Ratoath and urged that works in the village centre, particularly the footpath opposite Supervalu, be expedited – reference was made to the number of submissions received regarding the original proposal that included the removal of trees and resulted in the Part 8 having been withdrawn. Some consultation has been undertaken in relation to developing a revised scheme but it was acknowledged that critical elements of the scheme needed to be



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progressed, e.g. junction improvements, whilst availing of the funding already secured. It was proposed that an amended scheme be brought to the May meeting.

- Referred to a tree at The Paddocks opposite the playground, with the roots having damaged the footpath and causing a safety issue – this tree has been surveyed and it was agreed to check the results of the survey.
- Queried when the bin would be replaced in Ratoath playground – the bin had been vandalised and there are no plans to replace it.
- Queried the timeframe for traffic calming works on the Skryne Road – these works will be undertaken after works on the Maynooth Road.

5.2 Corporate Services

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

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

6 Notice of Question

There were no Notices of Question.

7 Notice of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion.

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

8.1 To note the Corporate Policy Group Meeting Minutes of 26th February 2021.

The report was noted.



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- 8.2 To note the report from the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC meeting of 25th March 2021.

The report was noted.

- 8.3 To note the report from the Housing, Community & Cultural Development SPC meeting of 7th April 2021.

The report was noted.

9 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

10 Any Other Business

- 10.1 Councillor Damien O'Reilly raised the following issue:

10.1.1 Requested that Randall Plunkett be invited to the June or July meeting to discuss works in Dunsany Castle and possible synergies that might be developed – this was agreed.

- 10.2 Councillor Nick Killian raised the following issues:

10.2.1 Referred to the number of solar farms planned for Ratoath Municipal District and the related concerns of residents and suggested that Energia be invited to meet with councillors – it was confirmed that the executive were to meet with Energia later today.

10.2.2 Referred to the concerns of residents on Glascarn Lane due to the speed, volume and nature of traffic accessing a small industrial estate.

10.2.3 Referred to the need to install a larger water pipe to address low water pressure affecting residents on Brennan's Lane.



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- 10.2.4 Requested an update on the replacement bus stop on Cemetery Road, Ratoath.
- 10.2.5 Thanked Des Foley for his work as Director of Transportation and acknowledged the many local projects that have been progressed.
- 10.3 Councillor Gerry O'Connor raised the following issues:
- 10.3.1 Thanked the executive for restoring the full allocations under the Municipal District Allocation Scheme and extending the winter gritting programme to include all regional roads.
- 10.3.2 Requested that the commitment to replace trees removed at Moulden Bridge be met due to concerns expressed by residents.
- 10.4 Councillor Maria Murphy raised the following issue:
- 10.4.1 Requested that the winter gritting programme be extended to include urban roads, such as the Rooske Road, Dunboyne – a commitment had been given to extend the programme to include all regional roads during the next season. Capacity will then be assessed to see if additional roads, such as the Kilbride Road, can then be added.
- 10.5 Councillor Gillian Toole raised the following issues:
- 10.5.1 Requested that an axle ban/weight restriction be introduced on Glascarn Lane.
- 10.5.2 Referred to the need for an environmental balance between the development of solar farms and the retention of tillage farms and food production.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:



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Cathaoirleach