



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ratoath Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

8th October 2014, Innovation House

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**, presided.

Councillors Present: Brian Fitzgerald, Nick Killian, Maria Murphy, Maria O'Kane, Damien O'Reilly, Gillian Toole.

Officials in Attendance:

A/Director of Service: Joe Fahy

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Administrative Officer: Paul Monahan

Senior Executive Engineer: Adrian Hobbs

Executive Engineer: Philip Traynor

Senior Executive Officer: David Jones

Administrative Officer: Brian Murphy

Clerical Officer: Fiona Casserly

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 10th September 2014.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 10th September 2014 were adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Nick Killian highlighted difficulties with the iPads and in accessing the meeting documentation on Alfresco. It was acknowledged that some issues might arise as the new system is being introduced but that these should be resolved over time.

Councillor Brian Fitzgerald highlighted the commitment to circulate the planning list for the Ratoath Municipal District / Dunshaughlin Electoral Area. He also enquired as to whether a



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schedule of meetings had been agreed for Councillors to meet with planners; it was confirmed that no dates had been agreed.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of the late Bill Coleman, former Town Manager of Cary, North Carolina.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Dunshaughlin Harvest Festival Committee and Ratoath Festival Committee on their recent successful village events and the Council for its role in facilitating the events.
- Dunboyne Motor Club on staging the recent Spirit of Dunboyne Motor Parade.
- Ratoath Foróige Club on reaching the final of the Citizenship Awards.
- Those involved, including Meath County Council staff of the Ratoath Municipal District, on the launch of the Ratoath Slí na Sláinte route.

4 Statutory Business

4.1 Housing

- 4.1.1 To receive a presentation from the Housing Department on the current Housing Programme.

Brian Murphy, Administrative Officer, Housing Department, delivered a presentation to Councillors on the current Housing Programme, which included the Housing Department staff structure, functions and services provided under the main headings of Capital/Grants, Social Housing, Technical Services and Homelessness/Housing Investigations. Information specific to Ratoath Municipal District was also provided.

Matters raised by Councillors included the following:

- Acknowledgement of the difficult work undertaken by Housing Department staff and the progress achieved;
- Breakdown of the figures to indicate the numbers in each category, e.g. single parents;



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- Inspection of rented properties and action taken;
- The need for the Tenant Purchase Scheme to be re-introduced;
- The level of cooperation of lending institutions with the Mortgage to Rent Scheme;
- The lack of private rented accommodation, the increasing cost of rent and the adequacy of rent supplement;
- The number of privately owned vacant units in urban centres – it was pointed out that the voluntary sector has access to private finance and Meath County Council can liaise between property owners and voluntary agencies if appropriate;
- Services provided to the homeless;
- The role of the local authority as a direct provider of housing and the land available for housing provision;
- Anti-social behaviour and the eviction process – it was pointed out that this was a slow process and new legislation would apply.

Responses were provided by the Administrative Officer and Director of Services.

5 Notice of Question

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

“Can the Environment Section of Meath County Council please provide a detailed map of lands in the Dunboyne area that are suitable for burial grounds with a view to progressing the identification of locating suitable lands.”

A response was provided by Larry Whelan, Senior Executive Officer, Environment Department, as follows:

While the Environment Department is not in a position to provide such mapping at present due to the extensive nature of investigations which would be involved, including geological and hydrological assessments, it is the intention to identify sites for each Municipal District for the next 30-50 year period.

Due to the considerable work load and specialist nature of the work involved, it is anticipated that a tender process will be required to procure a hydro-geologist to undertake this task for all six Municipal Districts.



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Councillor Damien O'Reilly expressed disappointment at the response and the delay in progress being made. It was requested that a meeting be arranged with the Environment Department to discuss this matter further.

5.2 Submitted by Councillor Gillian Toole

"Can the Executive confirm if there is a "business plan" or a list of "priority tasks", based on the most recent Local Area Plan and/or Public Representations, available for the Ratoath Municipal District, to be considered or referenced when considering the MD Draft Budgetary Plan?"

A response was provided by Paul Monahan, Administrative Officer, Ratoath Municipal District, as follows:

Section 102 (4A)(a) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014) provides that "In the case of a county council or a city and county council, the Chief Executive shall consult the municipal district members for each municipal district in the local authority's functional area in the preparation of a draft local authority budget and, for that purpose, a draft budgetary plan for the municipal district shall be prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive and submitted for consideration by the municipal district members for each municipal district in the manner and in the format that may be prescribed by regulations made by the Minister.

The draft budgetary plan will set out how any General Municipal Allocation allocated to the Municipal District will be spent. This only refers to the discretionary funding that is allocated to the Municipal District, with discussions on the main, strategic, non-discretionary expenditure of the local authority forming part of the main local authority budget preparation.

The purpose of a draft budgetary plan is to provide each municipal district with an opportunity to allocate its portion of the General Municipal Allocation according to its priorities. This does not replace the main, strategic, non-discretionary expenditure of the local authority, the spending of which will be prioritised by the members as part of the development of a schedule of municipal district works after the budget has been adopted. It is a reserved function of the members of a municipal district to adopt the draft budgetary plan.

Members' requests for works to be carried out are considered in the context of the existing work programme, nature of the request, and available resources.

Local Area Plans are not related to the Municipal District Draft Budgetary Process. Within the framework of higher-level plans (such as Regional Planning Guidelines and



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City and County Development Plans) local area plans provide more detailed planning policies for areas where significant development and change is anticipated, without having to prepare very detailed local planning policies and objectives for many specific areas within city and county development plans. Statutory Local Area Plans provide for proper consultation with the public and statutory consultees, and are subject to approval by elected members.

The process of reviewing the Ratoath Local Area Plan is due to commence this autumn and the members will be updated as necessary.

5.3 Submitted by Councillor Nick Killian

“To ask the Executive as to what progress has been made to secure funding / design for the following footpaths:

- 1. Completion of footpath on Fairyhouse Road to Ratoath BMX track as was promised in 2012 and 2013.*
- 2. Footpath as previously discussed for the past 3 years from the Nine Mile Stone to Harlockstown.”*

A response was provided by Paul Monahan, Administrative Officer, Ratoath Municipal District, as follows:

- 1. The Council applied for funding to the NTA for this footpath. The application wasn't successful as the NTA considered that it's a cycle lane / path i.e. a shared facility and not a footpath that is required to service the park as people cycle to the facility and don't walk their bikes to it. The NTA has provided funding this year to carry out a cycle network study / plan for Ratoath, to highlight shortfalls in the Ratoath Pedestrian / Cycling Networks. The Council will, when the study is complete, make an application for schemes identified in the above. The consultancy service for the proposed network plan is currently out for tender / pricing.*
- 2. Again the Council made an application for funding for this project in 2013. The NTA felt that it requires a substantial financial outlay because of its rural location. This coupled with the fact that the NTA had just committed to substantially fund the Main Street, Ashbourne refurbishment works meant that the application was unsuccessful.*

Councillor Nick Killian pointed out this was an ongoing issue and that the NTA had promised funding in 2012 to complete the footpath to the BMX Track, which has 600 members. He also emphasised the road safety issues that apply to Nine Mile Stone to Harlockstown, arising from speeding and traffic volumes.



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6 Notice of Motion

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Gillian Toole and Councillor Maria O’Kane

“We call for an allocation of €2,000 of discretionary funding to cover the cost of printing 15,000 copies of the pamphlet "Signposts - a handbook on Alcohol & Substance Misuse for Parents and Young People" developed by the Prevention and Education sub-committee of The North Eastern Regional Drugs Task Force. We intend to use the pamphlets as part of a public health information campaign that will be delivered locally with support from NERDATF.”

It was agreed that this matter should be considered following the allocation of the discretionary fund to the Municipal District. The role of the HSE in funding this initiative was also raised.

The Notice of Motion was deferred.

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Nick Killian

“That the Members of Ratoath Municipal District would agree to invite officials from Bus Éireann to our November meeting to discuss ongoing difficulties with the various bus services to and from Dublin.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.

7 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

8 Any Other Business

- (i) Councillors requested that the new operational structure being implemented would deliver an equal allocation of resources across the six Municipal Districts.
- (ii) Councillor Gerry O’Connor offered to fund a night out for the Ratoath Municipal District staff and requested Paul Monahan to organise this.

This concluded the business of the meeting.



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Signed:

Cathaoirleach