



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ratoath Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

9:30 a.m., 8th December 2021, Via Zoom

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Nick Killian**, presided.

Councillors Present: Brian Fitzgerald, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Damien O'Reilly, Gillian Toole.

Apologies: Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith.

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Dara McGowan

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 November 2021.

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

1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Special Finance Meeting held on 10th November 2021.

The minutes of the Special Finance Meeting held on 10th November 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Congratulations were extended to:

- Dunshaughlin Harvest Festival on their recent market;
- Dunboyne Ladies team on winning the Leinster Championship;
- Dunboyne College on their recent Christmas Fair.

4 To receive an update on Meta's sustainability goals and their activities at COP26.

Aoife Flynn, Community Development Manager, Europe and Eoghan Griffin, Sustainability Strategy Manager, Europe attended the meeting and thanked the Cathaoirleach and councillors for inviting them to provide information on Meta's sustainability goals and actions.

A short presentation was delivered, with information on achievements and planned work, sustainability highlights relating to climate, energy and water, the design and operations of data centres, and product and partnerships. An update was also provided on local initiatives, including liaison with the Climate Action Forum and supports provided at community level, with reference made to an announcement due early in the new year regarding a significant investment related to digital skills training for underserved communities.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Referred to the ongoing negative coverage of data centres in the context of energy usage and the need to counter this negative perception by increasing awareness of how renewable energy is being used – this can be followed up within the Irish context, acknowledging the challenges faced by energy providers. It was pointed out that an additionality approach is being adopted, whereby Meta works in partnership with utility companies around the world and can act as a flagship partner, e.g. providing security of



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

supply to enable suitable projects to proceed. Meta remains committed to renewable energy and supports Ireland in achieving its goals. Data centres are designed to exceed energy efficiency standards and operate on 100% renewable energy. It was agreed to forward an email to councillors outlining a number of key points relating to this area.

- Welcomed the support of communities in Meath to date and the proposed investment in digital skills training.
- Requested an update on the site in Clonee, including future plans – it was confirmed that construction was proceeding as planned and is due to be completed in 2022.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Aoife and Eoghan for joining the meeting and for the information provided.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Environment

- 5.1.1 To receive a presentation in respect of the publication of the draft River Basin Management 2022-2027 and the public consultation process for same including the making of submissions or observations.

Larry Whelan, Senior Executive Officer, David Keyes, Senior Executive Engineer and Emmet Conboy, Executive Chemist, Environment Section attended the meeting and a presentation was delivered, which included the River Basin Management Plan, the condition of waters nationally and locally, the main themes of the plan, the main pressures and catchment response in Meath, overview of measures proposed, selected plan measures and how to make a submission and get involved locally.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Expressed disappointed at the sustained decline in water quality.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

- Queried the impact of flood alleviation works and referred to the need to prioritise the cleaning of rivers and streams – the focus is on achieving a balance between maintaining the natural river state and alleviating flood risk. Whilst flood alleviation requirements remain, the draft River Basin Management Plan looks at areas suitable for restoration works, e.g. rehabilitation of river stretches. The OPW has improved its methods in dealing with arterial drainage schemes.
- Queried plans for works to deal with the number of surface water drains feeding into Castle Stream.
- Queried the level of engagement with agricultural representative groups such as the IFA – the approach involves working with the agricultural community with a balance needed between the use of engagement and statutory powers.
- Referred to the issue of coastal erosion.
- Welcomed the possibility of extending the bathing water season - the regulations are being reviewed, which may result in allowing local authorities to extend the season. However, this would require additional resources and, during winter, weather events such as heavy rainfall will impact on failure rates.
- Referred to the recent flooding incident at Tara Mines and queried whether there were any concerns regarding excess water or water quality – this is an EPA licenced site, with the excess water having been accommodated within the mine shafts and no new emergency discharges.
- Queried whether septic tank inspections were continuing and underlined the need to review the grant process – the inspection plan, nationally, is targeted at areas of risk, which will impact on failure rates. The grant scheme was revised in 2020 with no detail yet available of a further review.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

5.2 Transportation

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

The report, circulated in advance, was noted. Reference was made to the ramps and pedestrian crossing provided on the Skryne Road, Ratoath and proposed that the vehicle activated sign be relocated – it was requested that it be relocated to the Curragha Road.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Thanked Philip and his team for all their work throughout the year, particularly during the recent storm.
- Requested an update on the timeline for the proposed Irish Water works on Main Street, Dunshaughlin.
- Referred to a request made by the principal of Coláiste Ríoga for a pedestrian crossing from the school to the opposite side of the road.

The proposed housing estate works programme, circulated separately, was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.

6 Notice of Question

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

“Can Meath County Council provide an update and timeline for the construction of a pathway from Newtown roundabout, Dunboyne to Dunboyne AFC (A86 KT68).”

Response:



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Meath County Council has not received an allocation of funding to progress this footpath scheme and therefore is not in a position to provide any timeframe for the construction of same.

The response was noted. It was agreed to see if this could be included as a NTA project in 2022.

7 Notice of Motion

7.1 Submitted by Councillor Maria Murphy

“We call on Meath County Council to pursue the installation of the pelican crossing on the Old Navan Road, Dunboyne near SuperValu. The pelican crossing was conditioned as part of the planning permission granted for the SuperValu complex under reference RA160805. The crossing is now needed to assist pedestrians due to the increase of traffic in the area.”

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

The planning permission, granted by Meath County Council, had included a condition for the provision of a pelican crossing. The permission was appealed to An Bord Pleanála and the conditions of the planning permission granted by the board did not include this crossing. The Transportation Department will review road safety at this location and will apply for funding for any appropriate measures identified.

The supporting information and motion, proposed by **Councillor Maria Murphy** and seconded by **Councillor Damien O’Reilly**, was noted.

7.2 Submitted by Councillor Damien O’Reilly

“I call on Meath County Council to write to the HSE regarding the vacant site, (Folio Number MH39195F) in Ratoath and request them to provide details of what their future plans are for this site.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

If the HSE have no plans for the future use of this site, will they hand it over to Meath County Council to provide a park/play space for the Ratoath community.”

A short discussion followed, with reference made to an email response from the HSE confirming that the intention was to retain ownership of the site for the provision of a primary care centre, despite similar facilities in both Dunshaughlin and Ashbourne. It was suggested that the letter request that consideration be given to a portion of the site being made available for the provision of a small park and that the letter also request a timeline for the provision of the primary care centre and information on the services to be provided, which are not available in either Dunshaughlin or Ashbourne.

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

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

- 8.1 To note the Corporate Policy Group Meeting Minutes of 29th October 2021.

The minutes were noted.

- 8.2 To note the Corporate Policy Group & Group Whip Meeting Minutes of 18th November 2021.

The minutes were noted.

- 8.3 To note the report from Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC of 26th November 2021.

The report was noted.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

9 Correspondence

- 9.1 Correspondence received from LMETB in response to the notice of item 2 from the October meeting regarding the entrance to Ratoath College.

The correspondence was noted. It was requested that a report be provided to the January meeting, confirming when the road will open and the implications for Ratoath.

10 Any Other Business

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

10.1.1 Requested an update on the Part 8 for the Dunboyne Industrial Estate link road.

- 10.2 Councillor Nick Killian raised the following issue:

10.2.1 Requested an update on the Part 8 for the Ratoath pedestrian and cycleways – the documents are due back from the consultants next week and, following their review by the Planning Department, it is intended to commence the public consultation early in the new year.

- 10.3 Councillor Gillian Toole raised the following issues:

10.3.1 Queried whether the allocation made in the capital programme for the Ratoath Village Enhancement could go towards the provision of a public amenity such as a park or whether this would be used as match funding for the NTA pedestrian and cycleways – no match funding is required.

10.3.2 Requested an update on the relocation of the bus stop at Donnolly's Hardware.

10.3.3 Queried whether money was to be recouped from the NTA for the cost of reinstating the R147/R154 following subsidence and, if so, could that recoupment be allocated towards a footpath off the R154.

- 10.4 Councillor Gerry O'Connor raised the following issue:



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

10.4.1 Queried why councillors had not been notified of the opening of the municipal district Community Amenity Grant Scheme prior to its publication.

10.5 Councillor Brian Fitzgerald raised the following issue:

10.5.1 Requested an update on the water situation in Batterstown, including proposed works and timescale.

On behalf of the Executive, Dara McGowan wished all the councillors a very happy Christmas and thanked them for their work and support throughout the year.

The Cathaoirleach concluded the meeting by thanking Dara, the municipal district staff and the meeting administration team for their work, help and support and wished all staff and councillors a happy Christmas.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach