



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ratoath Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

9:30 a.m., 9th February 2022, County Hall, Navan

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Nick Killian, presided.

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

Apologies: Councillors Deirdre Geraghty-Smith and Gerry O'Connor.

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 12th January 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 12th January 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Councillor Gillian Toole and seconded by Councillor Damien O'Reilly.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Gillian Toole requested updates on the following:

- Moulden Bridge, particularly the boundary fencing – the Transportation Section is liaising with the contractor with a view to completing the snag list;



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- The Part 8 for the Ratoath Pedestrian & Cycling Scheme, including the timeframe for the commencement of the public display period – all efforts are being made to put forward a robust plan for public display, which will commence in mid-March;
- The planned works for Harlockstown, which, whilst being in Ashbourne Municipal District, serves as a main artery to/from Ratoath – the initial contract will commence in April, with the full project to be completed this year. Whilst some traffic delays are inevitable, a traffic management plan will be in place to minimise traffic disruption.

Councillor Maria Murphy requested that the plans for Main Street, Dunboyne be taken into account when planning decisions are being taken in relation to relevant developments – the Transportation Section participates in the pre-planning process and makes comments on all planning applications and the plans for Main Street will be integrated into any proposed developments.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

There were no expressions of sympathy or congratulations.

4 Statutory Business

4.1 Planning

4.1.1 To receive a briefing on proposed Public Realm Plan for Ratoath to be prepared by students from Queens University Belfast.

Alan Russell, Executive Planner delivered a presentation, which provided a background to public realm plans, with reference to the site visit undertaken by the students and their supervisors, issues to consider and funding opportunities. It was confirmed that the students were developing proposals in conjunction with their supervisors, who are qualified planners, the consultants who are dealing with public realm plans and the council's Planning Department.

Matters raised by councillors included:



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- Referred to the possible links with the Meath Partnership project, which aims to assist communities to prepare for initiatives such as this.
- Queried whether this is due to run concurrently with the Part 8 and whether funding is available to progress actions identified – it was confirmed that the Part 8 would progress, as planned, and that having public realm plans in place was important to access funding opportunities as they arise.
- Requested that a public realm plan be developed for Clonee village.
- Welcomed the collaboration with students from Queens University.
- Requested a timeline for the project – it is expected that a draft will be available in May, with further engagement to take place with councillors. Following this, the council will decide on the next steps, e.g. public consultation.

4.2 Transportation

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

The report had been circulated in advance.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Welcomed the signage in Dunsany and new road name signs in Ratoath.
- Requested signs for Irish Street and Well Road and also queried if it would be possible to rename the Old Drumree Road to Pullwee Street.
- Queried whether it would be possible to erect signage similar in design to that in Kells.



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- Referred to the need for traffic safety measures at the crossroads approaching Dunboyne due to limited sightlines.

4.3 Corporate Services

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

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

4.4 To consider and adopt the 2022 Schedule of Municipal District Works.

Barry Lynch, Director of Service, and Corrina Elder, Senior Engineer, Housing Department 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. Reference was made to a national programme of planned maintenance to be procured by mid-year, with a budget allocated from own resources to carry out an asset survey.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Queried whether any social housing schemes would be targeted for energy efficiency works, e.g. older estates such as Kilbreena – all housing units are being reviewed, with older houses likely to be targeted in the programme of works, which will be developed when the funding is announced.
- Requested that smaller issues reported are resolved quickly – this was noted.
- Requested that tenancy induction programmes include advice on how tenants can prevent issues such as mould and condensation, e.g. ensuring adequate ventilation – this was noted.
- Queried the impacts of the recent announcement of a national retrofit funding scheme – the programme announced is primarily aimed at private homes. However, an energy retrofit programme has also been announced for social housing but the amount allocated to Meath is not yet known. An asset



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management survey is also to be carried out, which will support the national move towards more planned maintenance.

- Referred to the lack of land available in Ratoath Municipal District for social and affordable housing and the need for the department to acknowledge the cost of land in the area – land is at a premium in south Meath and, whilst the approved housing body sector is very active in the municipal district, the council will continue to seek opportunities to acquire land.
- Queried the approaches that could be taken to acquiring land and the role of NAMA – it was pointed out that all these issues were considered as part of the county development plan process and that NAMA's remit was to return as much value as possible to the State.

Martin Murray, Director of Service introduced Caroline Corrigan, who is due to join the Transportation Department as Senior Engineer, and referred to some changes due to be implemented in the Transportation Department. John McGrath, Senior Engineer, Transportation outlined the process and timelines for the Schedule of Municipal District Works, the funding amounts, where known, and sources, a road survey update and summary of PSCI ratings, the proposed programme of works, including the funding breakdown.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Acknowledged the significant progress made in the roads network in recent years, including the local road network.
- Requested updates on the Part 8s for the R156 Mullagh to Jenkinstown and the Dunoyne to Maynooth Road – a specific objective to link the M4 and M3 has been identified at a national level and Meath County Council is working with the other key stakeholders to consider how best to progress this. The safety issues on the R156 are acknowledged and an appraisal has been submitted, with no grant confirmation as of yet.
- Queried whether the quality of surface dressing had deteriorated in recent years – these works are supervised and the contractor has access to the latest



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technology. In recent years, high temperatures during the summer have resulted in melting road surfaces and sand had be used in these instances. As funding has increased, different treatments can be used on high traffic roads to improve durability.

- Requested that contact details for all projects be circulated to councillors.
- Welcomed works in Batterstown, Kilcloon and Dunsany and asked that public lighting be provided in Culmullen.
- Expressed concerns at the linkages between estates in the Dunboyne Transport Study, which may result in anti-social behaviour and asked that the lessons learned as a result of the Ratoath Pedestrian and Cycleway project be incorporated into the plans for Dunboyne – a number of actions were identified as part of the Dunboyne Transport Study. Progress is being made with regard to the Part 8 for the link road and the council is engaging with developers regarding the Eastern Relief Road. The council is also working with the NTA regarding improved permeability and, whilst the plans may not suit everyone, professional advice and expertise will be used to identify the optimum solutions.
- Referred to the need for a footpath from Dunboyne Soccer Club – this forms part of the Dunboyne Transport Study.
- Referred to the need to provide a cycleway from Dunboyne to Clonee.
- Requested that the Rooske Road, Dunboyne and the Skryne and Kilbride roads, Ratoath be included on the winter gritting programme – an increase in funding has allowed for the inclusion of all national and regional roads in the winter gritting programme. If other locations are identified at local level, these can be discussed with the District Engineer with a view to dealing with these as the need arises.
- Requested that the road surfaces in Dunboyne village centre be assessed for safety, particularly for cyclists.



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- Requested an update on CIS – a funding application has been made for CIS projects, of which two are in Ratoath Municipal District. If the funding requested is received, one project can commence this year and the second next year.
- Requested an update on the proposals for Moyglare to Newtownmoyaghy – consultants are being appointed to consider feasibility options.
- Requested that the works planned for the R147 at Dunshaughlin be linked with the proposed watermain works – the council is aware of the planned works by Irish Water and, whilst this project will remain on the schedule, it may be reviewed later this year and be linked with the public realm plan.
- Requested that safety measures be provided at Rathbeggan and Dunsany national schools under the Schools Safety Programme – a capital programme allocation has also been made and a list of schemes is being drawn up, in liaison with the Road Safety Officer and District Engineer.
- Referred to unresolved issues relating to possible unauthorised developments and high heavy goods traffic volumes in Glascarn and expressed concerns that the planned improvement works might lead to further increased speed – the grant available from the department is restricted to road surfacing and cannot be used for land acquisition to widen the road.

The 2022 Schedule of Municipal District Works for Ratoath was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all the Housing and Transportation staff at central and local levels.

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Maria Murphy** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole** to extend the meeting by thirty minutes to 12.00pm.

5 Notice of Question

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly



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"I call on Meath County Council to provide an update on all land banks within Ratoath Municipal District, available for the sale of low cost, self-build sites."

Response:

The Council does not currently have low-cost sites available for sale. However, it is intended that an additional 5 sites will be made available in conjunction with the next phase of the Council's social housing development at Lagore, Dunshaughlin. It is anticipated that these should be ready for applications in mid 2023.

The Council is also in the process of assessing the viability of housing provision on two other sites at Drumree and Dunsany respectively. This assessment will include:

- *infrastructure costs required to enable any development, in particular Irish Water requirements*
- *Potential sources of funding for the site development costs*
- *An assessment as to the extent of housing provision that can be permitted in accordance with the Council's Rural Development Policy*
- *Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage policy on sustainable communities including any potential tenure mix.*

The response was noted.

6 Notice of Motion

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"I call on Meath County Council to begin the process of a HGV ban for Dunboyne in a parallel timeframe as the Part 8, planning application for the new section of link road between Dunboyne industrial estate and the R157."



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

As part of the development of the Part 8 application for the new link road between Dunboyne Industrial Estate and the R157 a Traffic / Transport Assessment (TA) Report will be prepared which will consider the implications of the proposed scheme on traffic in the area and identify potential additional measures which should be considered should the new link road be constructed. Meath County Council will discuss potential future HGV restrictions in the area with the designers as part of the development of this report.

Councillor Damien O'Reilly opened the discussion by requesting that any preparatory work for the introduction of a HGV ban, e.g. bye-laws and public consultation, be progressed in parallel with the Part 8 for the link road, which was supported by Councillor Maria Murphy. Councillor Nick Killian also pointed out that the student capacity in Dunboyne College of Further Education will increase. It was pointed out that the current sequence of proposed works, for the link road and eastern relief road, would continue and, when constructed, these roads would impact positively on traffic levels in the village centre.

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

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

- 7.1 To note the Corporate Policy Group Meeting Minutes of 3rd December 2021.

The minutes were noted.

- 7.2 To note the report from the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC of 20th December 2021.

The report was noted.

- 7.3 To note the report from the Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC of 2nd February 2022.



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The report was noted.

8 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

In response to a query raised, it was confirmed that no reply had been received from the HSE – Estates Management in response to correspondence issued following the December meeting and relating to the HSE site in Ratoath. It was agreed that a further letter would issue inviting a representative from the HSE – Estates Management to a meeting with councillors to discuss the matter further.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 To agree arrangements for the March meeting of Ratoath Municipal District.

9.1.1 It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in Dunshaughlin Civic Offices and would be hybrid in nature.

9.2 Councillor Damien O'Reilly raised the following issues:

9.2.1 Requested that contact be made with the Planning Department querying whether planning applications can be submitted for Pace North Dunboyne or whether the LAP must first be in place.

9.2.2 Proposed that the Cathaoirleach contact the Cathaoirleach of Maynooth Clane Municipal District requesting a joint meeting to consider issues relating to the shared Local Area Plan, to include Kilcock – it was agreed that the executives should first meet, when commencing the LAP. At that stage, a meeting can be organised between the Members and this meeting can also consider local operational issues.

9.2.3 Proposed that a letter issue to the European Commission Food and Veterinary Office at Grange, Dunsany requesting that councillors be facilitated in visiting the building to learn of activities taking place there and explore any possible synergies.



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9.3 Councillor Gillian Toole raised the following issues:

9.3.1 Suggested that contact be made with Teagasc in Dunsany to see if it would be possible to visit that centre also.

9.3.2 Queried when the countywide speed limit is due to commence.

9.3.3 Referred to the air quality project taking place in Trim and requested that consideration be given to undertaking similar projects in Ratoath and Pace, due to occasional reports of malodour and increased industry levels, respectively.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

