



## ***Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes***

### ***Kells Municipal District***

#### ***Ordinary Meeting***

***4.00pm, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022, Kells Civic Offices***

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Eugene Cassidy, presided.

**Councillors Present:** Mike Bray, Seán Drew, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Paul McCabe, Sarah Reilly.

**Officials in Attendance:**

**Director of Service:** Dara McGowan

**Technician:** Michael Murphy

**Meetings Administrator:** Claire King

**Staff Officer:** Triona Keating

**Apologies:** Aaron Smith, Executive Engineer

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting by acknowledging the terrible tragedy that occurred in Creeslough, County Donegal, which resulted in such a significant loss of life – a minute's silence was observed for those lost and injured.

#### **1 Confirmation of Minutes**

##### **1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022.**

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Councillor Seán Drew and seconded by Councillor Paul McCabe.

#### **2 Matters arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.



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### **3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations**

Congratulations were extended to:

- The winners and organisers of the Municipal District Pride of Place Awards;
- Fintan Bray, cousin of Councillor Mike Bray, on being elected onto Fianna Fail's National Executive, the first person with Downs Syndrome to be elected to a political position in Ireland;
- Councillor Mike Bray on his recent wedding;
- Edita Asaciova, Corporate Affairs & Governance, on the birth of a baby girl.

### **4 Disposal of land pursuant to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001**

- 4.1 Agreement in principle to disposal of 0.0032Ha of Land at the Spire of Lloyd in Kells Co. Meath.

Councillor Seán Drew welcomed the increase in annual rent and the allocation in the capital programme for the development of the lands at Lloyd.

This was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Seán Drew** and seconded by **Councillor Sarah Reilly**.

### **5 Statutory Business**

#### **5.1 Community**

- 5.1.1 To receive an update on the preparation of the Meath Local Economic and Community Plan and the upcoming public consultation.

Fiona Fallon, Senior Executive Officer, Community delivered a presentation which set out the process for preparing the plan, which it is intended to have complete



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by April/May 2023. The consultation approach was outlined and councillors were urged to assist in increasing awareness of the plan being prepared and encourage community involvement in the consultation phases. The draft plan will be brought to the municipal district for comment prior to being presented to the LCDC and full Council for approval.

Matters raised by councillors included reference to the benefits of the plan when making funding applications and querying whether provision would be made for the dynamics of the county, i.e. rural and urban areas – this will depend on the level of engagement with the process and the issues will be dealt with as they arise, with a tailored approach to be taken.

### **5.2 Planning**

#### **5.2.1 To receive an update on the preparation of the public realm and regeneration plan for Kells.**

Wendy Bagnall, Senior Executive Planner highlighted the objectives in the County Development Plan of developing public realm plans and improving pedestrian connectivity. Kevin McGann, BDP Consultants, delivered a presentation which included information on the brief, the project brief, the requirements of the scheme, the outline of the site, work to date, the overall process, the analysis being undertaken, public engagement including the public event taking place on 19<sup>th</sup> October, the online survey, key milestone dates and similar projects.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Welcomed the progress made.
- Queried how the LAP would tie in with the public realm plan and when the LAP is due to be prepared – whilst the LAP is a statutory plan, the public realm plan is more about placemaking focused on the core of the town and they do complement each other. The public realm plan is more about how people perceive, use and move around the town. To avoid confusion, it is intended to complete the public realm plan first. The LAP programme has not yet commenced.



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- Referred to the online survey which is limited in terms of the information that can be added – this has been resolved.
- Acknowledged the role of councillors in encouraging engagement.
- Referred to the excellent groups that are active in the town and requested that specific invitations be issued to these groups for the public event – the PPN will be used to target communications.
- Referred to the number of public realm plans developed for centres across the county and queried how their implementation is being planned – public realm plans are used as the basis for funding applications, e.g. projects are being progressed in Athboy and Oldcastle. An action plan will be developed from the public realm plan, following which funding applications will be made to progress projects.
- Referred to the importance of addressing the issues relating to traffic movements, junctions, etc. and queried if Transportation will input into the plan – this was confirmed.

Wendy Bagnall also confirmed that a framework of consultants was in place and a tender process commenced to 21<sup>st</sup> October in respect of the recreation and amenity lands at Lloyd. It is planned to look at how best to utilise the lands to serve the people of Kells. It is intended to introduce the consultants at the next meeting and undertake a similar consultation exercise as that for the public realm plan.

Following a number of interruptions made by a member of the public and approaches made by him to the screen and a staff member, the Cathaoirleach requested the individual to leave the meeting on two occasions, both of which were refused. The individual concerned then proceeded to take a seat at the central table, which is designated for councillors and officials.

### **5.3 Transportation**

- 5.3.1 To seek approval to put the plans and particulars of the proposed development



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N52 Road Safety Improvement Scheme (RSIS) Calliaghstown Kells on Public Display.

Paul McKown, Executive Engineer, Transportation Department delivered a presentation which included a brief history to the scheme, recent progress and updates, the proposed Part 8 process, the general arrangement plan and details of the proposal. Consent was sought to proceed to public display.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Thanked Paul and the council staff for their work on the project and for the level of local engagement undertaken and also thanked the residents for their work and encouraging cooperation in the area.
- Queried what funding is available for the scheme and the likely timeframe – funding cannot be secured until planning permission has been granted, the process for which will take approximately 20 weeks. Whilst there are various funding streams available, planning permission must first be secured.
- Queried aspects of the proposed scheme including the footpath layout and whether there would be a traffic island – in order to comply with national TII standards, it will be necessary to take some land from several gardens. In order to minimise the impact on gardens, a compromise design has been developed. Different types of design can be used for traffic islands. The road is relatively narrow and to widen it to accommodate a traffic island may encourage increased speed. A gateway without a central island is being proposed with signage, public lighting and a different road texture to be provided.
- Queried whether TII would support the proposed project - the council has liaised with TII and an objection is not anticipated.
- Queried when the county speed limit review would be undertaken – it is expected to bring this to the December municipal district meetings,



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having taken into account representations made by councillors and members of the public.

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

The report, circulated in advance, was noted.

### **5.4 Corporate Affairs and Governance**

- 5.4.1 To note Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Kells 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**

### **7.1 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher**

“Kells Municipal District calls on the Minister for Social Protection to reinstate the social welfare sub-office in Oldcastle, closed for the last two years, and keep the Social welfare office services in place in Kells, as it the intention of the Department to move some services from the Kells office to the Navan office in mid-October.”

Councillor Michael Gallagher introduced the motion by stating that there are currently no plans to re-open the Oldcastle sub-office and that it is also the intention to move the Community Welfare Officer from Kells to Navan. He underlined the need to retain this important service, particularly in light of the current cost of living crisis and to facilitate the most vulnerable.



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The motion, proposed by Councillor Michael Gallagher and seconded by Councillor Sarah Reilly, was agreed.

### **7.2 Submitted by Councillor Eugene Cassidy**

“I am calling on Meath County Council to write to the OPW about the future of the cross of Kells, to include exploring the option of returning the cross to Cross Street and what the requirements might be if this is considered feasible.”

Councillor Eugene Cassidy introduced the motion by referring to the public realm plan being developed, which will focus on traffic movements, pedestrianisation, etc. and how the location of the cross will be raised as part of this process. He suggested that it would be timely to get the views of the OPW now. Councillor Seán Drew spoke in support of the motion, given that the final decision regarding its location will lie with the OPW and it is appropriate to get their views now on how the cross can be safely relocated to Cross Street. Councillor Sarah Reilly supported the motion but expressed frustration at the number of letters issued to the OPW regarding the Round Tower and St. Colmcille’s House and expressed concern at the current condition of St. Colmcille’s House, particularly over the winter months. She asked that these locations also be raised again. Councillor Mike Bray agreed and asked that Loughcrew also be included. Councillor Michael Gallagher expressed his disappointment with the OPW and asked that a letter also issue to the relevant minister. Councillor David Gilroy agreed that the letters should also go the relevant ministers. Councillor Eugene Cassidy disagreed and stated that the letter should refer to the cross only as this will form a key part of the public realm plan. Councillor Paul McCabe suggested that a meeting with the OPW be requested so all legitimate questions can be raised. It was agreed to follow up on the previous meeting request made.

The motion, proposed by Councillor Eugene Cassidy and seconded by Councillor Seán Drew, was agreed.

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

### **8.1 To note the Corporate Policy Group Meeting Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022.**

The minutes were noted.



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### **9 Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

### **10 Any Other Business**

#### **10.1 Councillor Sarah Reilly raised the following issue:**

- 10.1.1 Referred to the concerns of the Kells Businesses Christmas Lights Committee regarding the electricity bill for the lights this year, which normally cost €1,200-1,300 per year. She queried whether it would be possible for the council to cover these costs this year – it was confirmed that the Christmas lights in general were being looked at in the context of directions received regarding energy savings. The concerns referenced will be raised.

#### **10.2 Councillor Michael Gallagher raised the following issues:**

- 10.2.1 Referred to the property in Drumconrath, which has been secured but not cleaned up, which is having an impact on the estate.
- 10.2.2 Requested that a road or roundabout in North Meath be named after Liam Mellowes, a TD for North Meath who was executed in December 1922 – it was pointed out that an estate in Navan is named after Liam Mellowes, with a plaque to be erected, but that a Notice of Motion can be submitted to the November meeting.

#### **10.3 Councillor Seán Drew raised the following issue:**

- 10.3.1 Requested an update on the planned door and window replacement for houses in Magdalene Court.

Before the meeting concluded, Dara McGowan addressed the public gallery and reminded the member of the public in attendance that, following repeated disruptions at a meeting a number of





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months ago, he had been requested by the Cathaoirleach to leave the meeting and had refused. This occurred again at a subsequent meeting. He confirmed that, following further disruption at today's meeting, the situation would now be reviewed and a decision taken on an appropriate course of action.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Eamon Cassidy", written over a horizontal line.

**Cathaoirleach**

