



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

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

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

***4.00pm, 21<sup>st</sup> November, 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**

**Executive Engineer: Aaron Smith**

**Meetings Administrator: Claire King**

**Staff Officer: Triona Keating**

### **1 Confirmation of Minutes**

#### **1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022.**

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Councillor Paul McCabe and seconded by Councillor David Gilroy.

#### **1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Special Finance Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022.**

The minutes of the Special Finance Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of Councillor David Gilroy and seconded by Councillor Seán Drew.

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



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There were no matters arising from the minutes.

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

Sympathy was extended to:

- Brian Collins, former Kells Town Councillor, on the death of his father, Louis.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Castletown Football Team on winning the Junior Championship;
- St. Brigid's, Ballinacree on winning the Junior B Championship.

### **4 Statutory Business**

#### **4.1 Planning**

- 4.1.1 To receive the Chief Executive's Report (Reference P822016) in accordance with Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2021 and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022 in relation to the proposed development consisting of the construction of 5nr. residential units at Pitcher Lane, Kells, Co. Meath.

Claire Hughes, Executive Engineer, Housing Department outlined the Chief Executive's Report, circulated in advance, including the recommendations. The Part 8 process was outlined, including the six week period for councillors to consider the report from the date of its receipt.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Complimented all staff who worked towards progressing this development, which is supportive of government policy.



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- Complimented Meath County Council for the amount of housing being provided in the municipal district and acknowledged the fact that the process and objections can sometimes lead to delays.
- Queried whether an alternative process to Part 8 can be used to speed up the delivery of housing developments – the council is obliged to follow the normal statutory planning process. During the consideration period of six weeks, the design team continues to work in the background and the tender documents can be prepared.
- Queried the BER rating that will apply to the units – the minimum rating is A3 whilst these units will likely be A2.
- Queried the reference to local policy in section 4.3 in the report – it was agreed to check this with Planning.
- Welcomed the condition to have an archaeologist on site.
- Queried whether steps will be in place to deal with the incline – steps will provide access to the two storey units.
- Queried whether any of the units will be age friendly – the composition/tenure is based on housing need and the one bed units will have access to a disabled parking space and will be on the ground floor.
- Referred to car parking issues in the area, e.g. St. Colmcille's Villas, and queried how this and other nearby developments will impact on this and the need to review parking in estates.
- Acknowledged the site constraints in terms of its size and the need to maximise the development but referred to the limited car parking spaces being provided – the plans meet the minimum parking provision requirements and additional parking would have prevented the full development from proceeding.



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- Queried if the proposed arrangement would pose issues for those using the disability spaces and also for exiting the development and access by emergency services– the plans meet the minimum parking requirements – the accommodation of all traffic movements has been assessed and provision for emergency service access has been made via Pitcher Lane.
- Expressed disappointment at the absence of public open space – whilst the value of public open space is acknowledged, its provision would have prevented the full development from proceeding, due to a reduction in the number of units that could be provided. The minimum amount of private space, or more, is being provided and some will welcome the reduced maintenance associated with smaller spaces.
- Queried the materials to be used for the boundary walls – the boundary wall will be a block wall to the rear of the units and the boundary between gardens will be concrete post and timer panels.
- Queried whether solar panels and EV charging points will be provided – the units will be A rated and will have a heat pump but solar panels may not be of high value in smaller units. Provision will be made for the future installation of EV charging points.
- Queried the planned space for bin storage for the apartments – both apartments will have access to private open space, where bins can be stored.
- Queried whether consideration had been given to the name of the estate – this has not yet been decided and this will be subject to the standard naming process.
- Queried the likely timeframe for the delivery of the houses on the Kildalkey Road, Athboy – this is currently out to tender until 15<sup>th</sup> December. It is hoped to have identified and appointed a contractor in early 2023.



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- Queried the average timeframe for the delivery of housing developments from concept to construction – this will vary depending on the complexity of the site and extenuating circumstances but every effort is made to progress these as quickly as possible.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Claire and the team in the Housing Department for their work on this and all other housing developments.

### **4.2 Transportation**

- 4.2.1 To receive a report on the non-statutory public consultation for the proposed safety improvements on the R162 from Kilberry to Lisnagrew.

Fergal McCabe, Executive Engineer, Transportation Department provided an update on the non-statutory public consultation, with one submission having been received from An Garda Síochána. The issue raised relates to Mullins Cross and the submission and response were outlined. Work is due to commence later this week.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Welcomed the planned works and the engagement of the Gardaí.
- Acknowledged that it is not possible to have public lighting in every location.
- Referred to a number of minor accidents at the location, many of which may not be recorded.
- Queried the timeframe for completion of works – it is expected that works will be substantially completed before Christmas, including resurfacing, signage and road markings. Kerbing will be provided on either side of the monument.



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- Queried the planned traffic management during works – during the resurfacing works, a Stop/Go system will be in place during the day and traffic will be monitored.
- 4.2.2 To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Kells Municipal District.

The report, circulated in advance, was noted.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Reference was made to the poor notification provided to local businesses in advance of the recent resurfacing works on Newmarket and Suffolk Streets. It was requested that, when works are planned, the contractor is required to provide sufficient advance notice. The municipal district engineer was complimented on dealing with the matter efficiently when notified of the issue.
- Requested a report on the vehicle activation sign, including its locations, data and effectiveness and the potential to relocate it to other appropriate locations.

## **5 Notice of Question**

### **5.1 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray**

“To ask Meath County Council to provide an update on current or any upcoming Turnkey, Part 5 and CAS housing projects in the Kells Municipal District and to give a timeline as to when these units will be allocated.”

#### **Response:**

*The following projects are progressing in Kells Municipal District:*

**7 no. Turnkey units in Connacht Street, Athboy**



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- *2 units delivered 05/04/22 and allocated*
- *Expected delivery November 2022.*

### **12 no. Turnkey units in Oldcastle Road, Kells**

- *Expected delivery in December 2022*

### **6 no. Part V units in Kells.**

- *Expected delivery in December 2022*

### **8 no. AHB (TUATH) CALF turnkey Units in Carlanstown**

- *Nominations sent to AHB*

### **2 no. AHB (Tuath) CAS Construction Turnkey in Carlanstown**

- *Nominations sent to AHB*

### **5 no. AHB (SVDP) CAS Turnkey units in Oldcastle**

- *Stage 1 funding approved*
- *Anticipated delivery Q4 2023*

*Properties to be delivered in 2022 will be advertised on Choice Based Lettings and will be allocated across December 2022/January 2023.*

The response was noted.

## **6 Notice of Motion**

### **6.1 Submitted by Councillor Sarah Reilly**

*“To promote and facilitate carbon efficient modes of transport, that design works are completed and funding secured for the erection of bus shelters at the school campus, Navan Road, Kells.”*



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

*The responsibility for the provision of bus stop infrastructure is a matter for the relevant bus operators and the National Transport Authority (the Authority) in the first instance (Section 44A of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008)*

*Meath County Council provides assistance to the National Transport Authority in respect of the delivery of sustainable infrastructure, such as the project management of the construction works relating to bus stops and those necessary to facilitate the erection of the bus shelters by the Authority's bus shelter installation contractor.*

*All requests for new bus stops at locations in County Meath should be directed to the National Transport Authority. Public representatives can send queries via email to [oireachtaslaiison@nationaltransport.ie](mailto:oireachtaslaiison@nationaltransport.ie)*

*Meath County Council caveats the above statement by noting that the National Transport Authority is responsible for the provision of bus stops and bus shelters at approved bus stops on public bus routes. It would appear that the service in question may be a dedicated school bus service, operated under the School Transport Scheme. If this is the case it could fall outside of the NTAs remit, as it does not have any role in respect of services which are not part of the public bus network. In this instance the provision of a bus shelter at this location would be a matter between the school and the school bus service provider.*

Councillor Sarah Reilly expressed disappointment at the process involved in providing this infrastructure. Councillor Paul McCabe suggested that a representative from Bus Éireann be invited to a meeting to secure support for the provision of bus stops and to discuss service issues.

The motion, proposed by Councillor Sarah Reilly and seconded by Councillor Seán Drew, was noted.

### **6.2 Submitted by Kells Municipal District Councillors**





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“We are requesting Meath County Council and the OPW to examine the feasibility of acquiring the vacant premises (known as TP Rogers) on the corner of Cross Street and Market Street in Kells, with the objective of converting the premises into a permanent indoor location to house the Market Cross in the historic core of Kells town centre.”

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

*Meath County Council are not presently considering the purchase of any additional public buildings in Kells and in addition to this, the Council has not allocated funding for a project of this nature in the Council's 3 year capital plan.*

Councillor Seán Drew introduced the motion by urging that the feasibility of the proposal be considered by the council and the OPW, given the proximity of the building to the location where the Market Cross stood before its relocation to the courthouse. He stated that, when it was relocated, a commitment was given that it would be moved back to the vicinity of Cross Street in the future. He also referred to the reluctance of the OPW to locate the cross outside and preferred that it be protected but this was objected to at the time. Councillor Drew emphasised that the preservation and conservation of the cross was the priority and this opportunity should be considered as a means of achieving that. He also welcomed the views of the consultants who are preparing the public realm plan in terms of where the cross should be located.

Councillor Sarah Reilly referred to this proposal as a unique opportunity for Kells and, following a submission made, acknowledged that the council was considering the use of part of the building for housing purposes, which would be welcomed as town centre living. She also referred to the images provided by Kells & District Tourism Network, which depicted the erosion of the cross due to its external location.

Councillor David Gilroy stressed that this should be considered in the context of the public realm plan and acknowledged the expertise of the OPW in terms of the conservation of monuments.

Councillor Michael Gallagher expressed his support for the motion and welcomed the suggestion that the building might also be used to provide accommodation.



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Councillor Mike Bray expressed his support for the motion but referred to the difficulty in making contact with the OPW to discuss this and other OPW sites in the municipal district. He also referred to the need for funding to be allocated to Kells to progress this or other initiatives, such as the provision of community facilities.

Councillor Paul McCabe expressed his support for the motion and queried if a feasibility study has already been carried out by the council. He also expressed disappointment at the difficulties in contacting the OPW. He referred to the need to address the erosion of the cross.

Councillor Eugene Cassidy referred to his Notice of Motion in October, asking that contact be made with the OPW regarding the future of the cross and its possible relocation to Cross Street. This was prior to this building coming onto the market. He acknowledged the key role that the cross will play in the public realm plan, with Cross Street being the centre of the town. He underlined the need to know the views of the OPW in terms of their location requirements and the suitability of any proposed location. He also referred to the statutory requirements should housing be provided in the building and the likely associated costs.

Dara McGowan pointed out that the supporting information, whilst outlining this position, had been provided when the building came onto the market. However since then, the Housing Department had been requested to assess the suitability of the building for housing and a report is due back this week. He confirmed that the OPW have confirmed that they will meet councillors with a date to be agreed. The topics previously raised by councillors have been provided to the OPW as the basis for discussion.

Councillors thanked Dara for arranging the meeting and his work to date.

The motion, proposed by Councillor Seán Drew and seconded by Councillor Sarah Reilly, was noted.

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

7.1 To note the Corporate Policy Group Meeting Minutes of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.



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The minutes were noted.

- 7.2 To note the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC Meeting Minutes of the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

The minutes were noted.

- 7.3 To note the Transportation Strategic Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

The minutes were noted.

### **8 Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

### **9 Any Other Business**

- 9.1 Councillor Paul McCabe raised the following issue:

9.1.1 Queried if any issues had arisen with flooding due to the parklets in place, e.g. drainage, as an issue has arisen with one in Kells and a request has been made to Transportation to have the contractor review it and rectify the issue or remove it altogether as it could potentially cause flooding in adjacent buildings – it was agreed to check this.

- 9.2 Councillor Mike Bray raised the following issues:

9.2.1 Requested an update on a previous Notice of Motion which called for the provision of a Vehicle Activated Sign on the Delvin Road side of Athboy, including whether TII had agreed to this, and referred to the concerns of residents regarding speeding on the Kells Road, Oldcastle and queried if a Vehicle Activated Sign can be provided – there is no formal policy in place regarding the provision of these signs. The results on the effectiveness of the sign on the Rockfield Road will first be assessed before further signs are provided.



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9.2.2 Queried what the approach was in terms of prioritising the preparation of Local Area Plans, e.g. based on population, as only three years remain for the preparation of these – the Planning Department must first deal with the Judicial Reviews and the preparation of two joint area plans has commenced. It was agreed to contact Planning on this query.

9.3 Councillor Michael Gallagher raised the following issues:

9.3.1 Requested that the flooding issues at Oristown be addressed – a funding application has been made to the department and the water will be pumped out if it reoccurs. Due to the area being in a lowland, it is difficult to resolve.

9.3.2 Requested an update on the request to commemorate Liam Mellows in north Meath.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach