



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ashbourne Municipal District

Ordinary Meeting

10:00 a.m., 14th February 2023, Ashbourne Civic Offices

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Amanda Smith**, presided.

Councillors Present: Joe Bonner, Suzanne Jamal, Aisling O'Neill and Conor Tormey.

Councillors Present via Zoom: Councillor Alan Tobin.

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Fiona Lawless

Executive Engineer: Mel Cronin

Meetings Administrator: Claire King

Staff Officer: Triona Keating

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 10th January 2023.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 6th December 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Conor Tormey** and seconded by **Councillor Aisling O'Neill**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Alan Tobin wished to have it noted that, in relation to Item 4.1.1, he had supported the taking in charge of Archerstown Wood on the understanding that the fence would be repaired or replaced – it was confirmed that interim repairs had been undertaken and the matter will be reviewed.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations



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There were no expressions of sympathy or congratulations.

4 Statutory Business

4.1 Environment

4.1.1 To receive an update on Stamullen Burial Ground and Playground.

Larry Whelan, Senior Executive Officer, and Declan Grimes, Senior Executive Engineer, Environment outlined the capacity issues in cemeteries within the area and the background to the process in identifying and securing a site. A presentation was delivered, which included information on site requirements and considerations for both the burial ground and playground, the site description and constraints, the assessment undertaken, the proposed plans and design for the site and an overview of the Part 8 process. It was confirmed that consideration is to be given to drafting cemetery byelaws.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Welcomed the proposed plans, which will be of great benefit to the people of Stamullen, including the burial ground, playground, woodland amenity and link to the linear park.
- Queried if it would be possible to include a facility for the hosting of services and refreshments – the site is subject to constraints and funding is limited, with no plans to set a precedent in terms of hospitality provision. Undertakers already provide facilities in the event of poor weather.
- Queried if wheelchair accessible equipment would be provided in the playground – whilst the design has not yet been undertaken, such equipment will be provided.
- Queried the access arrangements to be provided – access will be controlled, with gates to be locked at night. Other security measures, such as public lighting, will also be fully considered.



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- Queried the enforcement of policy regarding headstones – a strict policy with regard to headstone design will be in place with financial implications if this is not complied with.

4.1 Transportation

4.1.1 To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Ashbourne Municipal District.

The report had been circulated in advance and a further update was provided at the meeting.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Acknowledged the positive impact of the works at Oberstown Cross.
- Commended the works undertaken by Coillte on the N2 and queried if this would continue on the R150 – it is hoped to get private landowners to deal with the remaining trees.
- Referred to confusion due to the signage and visibility during roadworks at Tudor.
- Commended the footpath works at Harlockstown and suggested that the bus stop may not be in the correct location.
- Requested that consideration be given to extending the footpath at Baltrasna towards Fleenstown.

4.2 To consider and adopt the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works.

In attendance on behalf of the Transportation Department were Martin Murray, Director of Services, Caroline Corrigan, Senior Engineer, Kitty Foyle, Senior Executive Officer, and Majella Farrell, Administrative Officer.

Caroline Corrigan delivered a presentation which included information on an overview of 2022, sustainability and the circular economy, data led SMDW development, pre-2018 versus 2022 PSCI ratings, Meath's performance in comparison to the national average, an



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overview of the 2023 SMDW programme, challenges for 2023, sources of funding, how increased investment in the road network has led to network improvements and reactive, planned and strategic services.

Matters raised by councillors, and responses provided, included:

- Referred to the poor standard of road reinstatement following works associated with road opening licences and how utility companies blame the local authority for delays in securing road opening licences when, in many instances, applications have not been made – there are currently 6,200 active road opening licences, at various stages. It is the intention to ensure that road assets are protected whilst enabling important projects to proceed.
- Queried the difference between CIS and LIS – CIS relates to public roads whilst LIS relates to private roads. There are eligibility criteria and a community contribution is required. A list of projects is being progressed. Consideration will be given to how this information is presented as some projects involve short road lengths whilst others are significantly longer. Projects are prioritised based on road ratings and number of users.
- Queried whether the works to be carried out under the School Safety Programme would include a pedestrian crossing – this will form part of the general capital programme.
- Queried if the street sweeping programme can include estates – whilst the focus is on main streets, individual locations can be considered.
- Referred to the progress being made as a result of increased investment and the revised management approach.
- Queried if a footpath could be provided when repairs are being carried out on the bridge at Donaghmore on the R135.
- Referred to the need to upgrade the R125 and get rid of the bend on the bridge.
- Requested that consideration be given to how the provision of pedestrian and cycling links between Ashbourne and Ratoath can be funded and progressed.



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- Queried how much of the funding increase will be used to cover inflation/cost increases – such costs will be covered by own resources.
- Referred to the importance of proper and accurate road signage.
- Requested an update on the provision of a bus stop at Greenogue – consultation has taken place with the landowner and the council is waiting for the NTA decision regarding funding. It was confirmed that the whole route was being looked at but that the service providers must also agree to any changes made.
- Referred to Item 9.1 - Correspondence received from TII in relation to N2 Rath to Kilmoon Cross and queried if the project would proceed as no funding is available, with reference to the ongoing traffic congestion, and the implications for those applying for planning permission along the road – it was confirmed that the TII did not have funding to progress to Phase 3, with a lot of projects at national level. The restrictive zone does need to be refined and the restricted use of land will be diminished. A response has issued to TII, reaffirming support for the project.

It was agreed to provide an update on the Active Travel Programme at the April meeting.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Caroline and her team in the Transportation Department for the work being done.

Corrina Elder, Senior Engineer, Housing Department delivered a presentation, which included examples of improvement works carried out, sources of funding including centralised budgets and the funding allocated to the various categories and the planned programme of works for the year.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Queried the timeframe for the approval of applications for adaptation works, e.g. ramps – priority is given to cases involving hospital discharge, which are handled quickly. Whilst outside works can take longer, ramps cannot be installed on public footpaths.
- Queried how houses are selected for energy upgrade works, e.g. estate by estate – when pre-lets are returned, they are assessed in terms of BER rating and the



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extent of works required to increase the rating. Otherwise, BER ratings are carried out around a year in advance, with the focus on older stock and with 200/300 available at any one time

- Queried if energy bills are monitored following energy upgrade works – this is not within the remit of the Housing Department.
- Queried what is the average BER rating for existing stock, the timeframe for all stock to be upgraded to B2 and the target for this year – the average BER for existing stock is not available. There are enough BERs undertaken to plan the annual work programme. Consideration has to be given to the availability of assessors. New stock are A rated, whilst older stock with a D or E rating will be targeted for increasing the BER and the upgrade of all stock is a slow process.
- Queried if attic insulation could be improved in older stock rather than a full retrofit – if this was done in isolation, information may not be available on other works required and the grant funding could not be accessed by not achieving a B2 rating.
- Queried how many houses had been sold to long-term tenants in the past two years.

The 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works for Ashbourne Municipal District was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Bonner** and seconded by **Councillor Conor Tormey**.

5 Corporate Affairs and Governance

- 5.1 To note Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Ashbourne Municipal District.

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

6 Notice of Question

- 6.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin



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"Has the NTA Park and Ride office/section been created and can Ashbourne Councillors request a meeting with this office as soon as possible?"

Response:

The National Transport Authority (NTA) has a statutory function to secure the provision of public transport infrastructure, such as park and ride facilities, and has recently established a Park and Ride Design Office. A Park and Ride Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area was published in 2021 and can be viewed on the NTA website. Any related queries in relation to such infrastructure can be directed to the NTA via oireachtaslaiison@nationaltransport.ie.

The response was noted.

7 Notice of Motion

7.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

"I call on Meath County Council to look at the viability of one bridge construction and one bridge replacement along C1/7 - this will link green space between Tudor Heights and Racehill Manor and include the landscaping of Tudor Heights greenspace while the replacement of an existing bridge at Archerstown Wood/Milltown Estate/Hawthorns would allow access for all including people with a disability."

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

Meath County Council currently has no plans to construct a new bridge between Tudor Heights and Racehill Manor. Ashbourne Municipal District is aware of the ad hoc footbridge that crosses the watercourse dividing Milltown Estate and The Elms Estate in Ashbourne. We are looking to confirm who built this footbridge and did they have any permissions to do so. A replacement footbridge would require significant feasibility, design, permissions, planning and project management funding. Currently there is no funding for this proposal.

Councillor Alan Tobin introduced the motion by pointing out that the existing bridge was too narrow, that a replacement bridge could open up the green space and that a feasibility study should be undertaken. It was pointed out that the bridge in place may



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be removed as it had not been authorised and that funding is not available to provide a bridge connecting two housing estates. It was also pointed out that an application would have to be made to the OPW for a licence to cross a watercourse and this would be needed prior to any feasibility process starting. Councillor Joe Bonner suggested that this bridge may have been partially responsible for flooding upstream due to blockages and that its replacement would require major construction. Councillor Aisling O'Neill underlined the need to discuss this issue with residents prior to any action being taken.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Conor Tormey**, was noted.

7.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

"I call for the following to be kept on the Ashbourne Municipal District monthly agenda under Item 6 – Reports until such time as projects are completed or approved to be removed by sitting Councillors. This will allow for greater transparency and for the public to check on progress when monthly minutes are available online. If no update is available, under each individual item should state simply - "No Update".

Items for inclusions are as follows:

Transportation

- Greenogue bus stop
- Harlockstown footpath
- M2 Extension
- URDF project Dunnes to Pillo R135
- New or existing road opening licence requests for strategic infrastructure including gas, broadband, solar, ESB, water and waste water.

Community

- Linear Park Zone 3 - Skatepark

Housing

- Castle Street Housing Scheme
- Ashewood/Dunreagh Housing Scheme

Irish Water

- Stamullen waste water project



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- Irish Water trunk main Curragha to Ratoath

Environment

- Stamullen playground/graveyard

Asset Management

- Ashbourne Public Park update.”

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

Most of the projects listed in this Notice of Motion are already subject to monthly reporting as part of the Chief Executive’s Report, presented to the full council and available publicly at the following link: <https://www.meath.ie/council/your-council/plans-reports-and-by-laws/chief-executives-monthly-management-report>

Uisce Éireann are responsible for the water services projects referenced and provide updates at the councillor clinics and as projects progress.

In addition, presentations are made to the municipal district as projects progress, e.g. a presentation is included on the agenda of the February meeting of the municipal district in respect of the development of the new burial ground/ playground in Stamullen.

Please see below an update in relation to the Linear Park – Skatepark:

Procurement documentation is being prepared for the appointment of consultant engineers for the project. They should be in place by early March. Following this process, the procurement for the construction of the project will take place. A timeframe on the appointment of the contractor will be provided once the consultant engineers have been appointed.

Councillor Alan Tobin introduced the motion by stating that having these items on the monthly agenda would alleviate pressure on councillors in responding to reps by directing the public to the published meeting minutes. Councillor Joe Bonner referred to the existing process to have items added to the agenda, the likely impact on the duration of meetings if every item were to be added and pointed out that both the councillors and the public are well served in terms of access to information. Councillor Suzanne Jamal agreed with the sentiment of the motion but suggested that access to information could be improved if responses to Members Reps were received more quickly. It was pointed



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out that a new improved Sugar CRM system will soon be operational. It was agreed that updates would be provided, if appropriate, on a six monthly basis.

The motion, proposed by Councillor Alan Tobin and seconded by Councillor Suzanne Jamal, was noted.

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

- 8.1 To note the Corporate Policy Group Meeting Minutes of 2nd December 2022.

The minutes were noted.

- 8.2 To note the report from the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC meeting of 20th December 2022.

The report was noted.

- 8.3 To note the report from the Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC of 8th December 2022.

The report was noted.

- 8.4 To note the report from the Transportation Strategic Policy Committee of 15th December 2022.

The report was noted.

9 Correspondence

- 9.1 Correspondence received from TII in relation to N2 Rath to Kilmoon Cross.

The correspondence was dealt with under Item 4.2.

10 Any Other Business

- 10.1 Councillor Joe Bonner raised the following issue:



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10.1.1 Requested that the car park at Garden City shopping centre be resurfaced.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Cathaoirleach