

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

Kells Municipal District

4:00pm, 12th February 2024, Kells Civic Offices

An Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Paul McCabe**, presided.

Councillors Present: Sean Drew, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Eugene Cassidy, Mike Bray and Sarah Reilly

Councillors Present via Zoom:

Apologies/absent:

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Dara McGowan

Executive Engineer: Aaron Smith

Meetings Administrator: Áine Bird

Staff Officer: Ann Monaghan

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 15th January 2024.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15th of January 2024 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** and seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes.

Dara McGowan DoS updated the members regarding the process for taking in charge of Loughcrew Hills, Oldcastle. He advised that the workplan is driven by the availability of funding to complete the works needed to take an estate in charge. There are a few funding sources available, cash deposits, bond settlements and a limited fund from the Council for estates that do not have a deposit or bond, or where the deposit/bond is insufficient to cover the works required.

He said that schemes are grouped together based on being fully funded by the cash deposit or being funded from the Council's allocation. He said that currently there are 11 estates being progressed and when completed another batch of estates will be selected then.

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3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended:

- To the family of the late John Bruton former Taoiseach and TD.
- To Councillor David Gilroy on the passing of his mother Nora.

4 Disposal of Land pursuant to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001

There were no disposals.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 To consider and adopt the 2024 Schedule of Municipal District Works.

The Schedule of Municipal District Works includes two service divisions Transportation and Housing. The SMDW is prepared based on identified needs and priorities throughout the local authority area and where possible a multi annual approach has been adopted.

Caroline Corrigan SE Transportation gave a presentation on the schedule of Municipal District Works for the upcoming year. She advised that this is the final year of the three-year, 2022-2024 Restoration Maintenance and Improvement scheme. She said that last year had been a challenging year due to impacts from energy and fuel costs, inflation, and the availability of materials. She said that the weather also affected works with July been the wettest month causing flooding and damage to infrastructure. She gave a breakdown of funding allocated and said that the allocation from the council own resources of €18,561,460 is an increase on last year's allocation. She advised that the allocations from the Department have yet to be announced.

The members raised the following:

- Welcomed the budget as it's addressing all issues.
- Is the Council getting Value for Money for all works being done.
- Commended on all the works completed over the last three years.
- Requested several roads to be included in the next programme.
- Referred to the high standard of works being carried by the contractors.
- Enquired if data is available on the increase in traffic over the last 10 years.
- Referred to the materials used on the roads and if this is recycled.
- Enquired if there are many CIS & LIS applications in the system.

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- Asked how often PSCI surveys are carried out and if the information is available.
- Referred to the lack of carparking spaces on streets.
- Enquired why some roads not being completed junction to junction.
- Referred to a road included in last years works but didn't get completed.

Caroline Corrigan SE responded to the above:

- Advised to send in roads for inclusion for the next 3-year programme.
- Look at VFM and the quality of works being undertaken due to rising costs of materials.
- Recycled materials are being used in many road-work schemes.
- The LIS/CIS applications are ranked per year against criteria regarding surface conditions, number of houses and people on a road.
- Less car parking spaces in towns due to active travel and green spaces.
- PSCI surveys carried out every two to five years on regional/local roads.
- Funding can be limited to carry out works from junction to junction.

Councillor David Gilroy proposed the works, which was seconded by **Councillor Sean Drew**.

A roll call was taken on the Schedule of Municipal District Works as presented with Councillors, M Bray, S Drew, E Cassidy, S Reilly and P McCabe voting for the works and Councillor M Gallagher voted against the schedule of works.

Corrina Elder SE Housing gave a presentation on the schedule of Municipal District Works for the upcoming year. She outlined the proposed works of maintenance and repairs to be completed during the year in the Municipal District. She said that funding is sourced from both the annual revenue budget of the council and central grant allocation from the Department of Housing which has yet to be announced.

The members raised the following queries:

- Enquired if there is a delay on the turnaround of housing units.
- Asked if kitchen units are reused within the units.
- Referred to heat pumps which require houses to be insulated for them to work.
- Enquired about the delay in servicing of boilers and with the phasing out of boilers what will be used next year.
- Referred to the delay in responses to housing maintenance issues.
- Enquired if retrofit works included the replacement of windows.
- Commended all staff on the works being carried out.
- Asked if more houses will be upgraded in Magdalene Court, Kells.
- Welcomed the survey to all units which will assist in the planned maintenance works.
- Asked what criteria is used to assess houses for retrofits and is the council working with the SE Communities.
- Enquired if the Council carry out CPO process to acquire a house.

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Corrina Elder SE, responded to the above queries:

- Delays in allocating units can be due to procuring contractors for works, or refusals by tenants.
- Will reuse kitchens, if possible, contractors recycle all other items.
- Heat pumps are installed in units that are well insulated and have a B2 BER rating or higher.
- The council will not be removing oil boilers and will continue to repair them.
- Council had an issue procuring contractors to service boilers, this has been resolved.
- There was a delay last year responding to maintenance calls due to the large volumes, and is now up to date.
- The replacement of windows is not part of a retrofit but included in a planned maintenance of a unit.
- Referred to wooden windows in units where tenants are required to maintain these.
- To review Magdelene Court units to prioritise any houses for upgrading.
- Retrofits are being carried out currently on vacant/void housing units.
- Planned maintenance is carried out based on units that continually require maintenance.
- CPO of a property is progressed through the Vacant sites section.

On the proposal of **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** the members agreed to the Schedule of Municipal District Works for Housing as presented.

5.2 Transportation

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

The report circulated in advance was noted.

5.3 Corporate Affairs & Governance.

5.3.1 To note the Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Kells Municipal District

The allocations were noted.

6 Notice of Question

There was none.

7 Notice of Motion

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7.1 Submitted by Councillor Sarah Reilly

That Kells MD Councillors' seek support from the full Council for the establishment of a fund, to cater for footpath projects that facilitate active travel and are ineligible/rank poorly under Government Schemes.

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

The Council has an annual footpath programme that is funded from IPB and its own resources. The Council's 3-year capital plan also identifies spending under the heading of MCC funded Sustainable Travel. There are a number of factors which affect the choice of schemes that are included in the annual footpath programme including footpath condition, number of accidents, number of users, supporting objectives in the development plan, requests for works, development levies and potential to be funded by other sources. Given the nature of this motion it is recommended that it should be referred to Transport SPC for discussion.

On the proposal of **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** the motion and response were agreed.

The members supported the motion and said that there is very little funding available for footpaths. They suggested that one footpath be done in each MD per annum. It was also suggested that footpaths for upgrading should be reviewed by their usage as opposed to numbers of persons living in an area.

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

8.1 To note the Corporate Policy Group Meeting Minutes of 1st December 2023

The minutes were noted.

8.2 To note the Protocol Committee Minutes of 1st December 2023.

The minutes were noted.

8.3 To note the Draft Minutes of the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC of 23rd January 2024

The draft minutes were noted.

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9 Correspondence

9.1 Letter from Mr. Aidan Collins, Lightsource BP.

Members agreed that Mr Collins come prior to the next meeting to give a briefing. They asked that they get information on the project a few days before the meeting, so they can review and ask more informed questions on the day.

10 Any Other Business

The members raised the following:

- Asked that a big belly bin be looked at for Maudlin Street – engineer will review the area.
- Referred to littering outside Big Bites takeaway, Kells and if a letter could issue to them- advised will refer to environment to issue.
- Enquired if a road can be selected for driver feedback on speeding – to refer to transportation to follow up.
- Referred to private housing units being built on the Gardenrath road, Kells and that the Council should acquire units for affordable housing – will refer to housing section.
- Enquired if the Council can help with felling licences as several trees in private lands on the Headfort road fell onto ESB lines causing outages – advised that it's a matter for the owner to apply for a licence.
- Requested an update on an illegal development in Athboy – to follow up with enforcement.
- Asked that the wardens patrol areas where cars are parking on double yellow lines outside businesses – advised that it is illegal to park on double yellow lines.
- Requested an update on paying for parking evening before and if ticket still valid next morning – advised will follow up with parking for response.
- Referred to inspections on Septic Tanks and who does these. - advised that the council carry out inspections in pre-determined areas each year.

The meeting concluded at 6pm

Signed:

Cathaoirleach