

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

Ashbourne Municipal District

10.00am, 10th June 2025, Ashbourne Civic Offices

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Conor Tormey presided.

Councillors Present: Helen Meyer, Joe Bonner, Amanda Smith, and Suzanne Jamal

Apologies/ Absent:

Councillors Present via Zoom: Alan Tobin

Director of Service: Fiona Fallon on behalf of Barry Lynch

Executive Engineer: Peter Garry on behalf of Mel Cronin

Meetings Administrator: Francis Regan

Assistant Staff Officer: Stephen Carey

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting of 13th May 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13th May 2025 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Suzanne Jamal** and seconded by **Councillor Amanda Smith**

2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

Cllr Amanda Smith would still like clarification on the Pedestrian Crossing at the Mews, Stamullen & Silverbanks, Stamullen and the Path from Stadalt to Redwood.

Cllr Alan Tobin would like an update on the Stamullen playground and burial ground project.

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathies were extended to:

The family of **Cllr Joe Bonner** on the passing of his brother-in-law Donal Keaveney

Congratulations:

Cllr Conor Tormey on his appointment as Cathaoirleach and **Cllr Suzanne Jamal** on her appointment as Leas Chathaoirleach.

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

4.0 Statutory Business

4.1 Housing

- 4.1.1** To receive the Chief Executive's Report in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2023 and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001-2025, on the proposed development which will consist of: Development of Lands to the North of Ashewood Green and Ashewood Glen in the townland of Dunreagh, Ashbourne, Co. Meath. Planning Reference (PT8MH194).

Planning reference (PT8MH194) was presented to members for the second time. Interventions from members included:

- What would be the expected time frame for completion of the scheme?
- Why can it not be a mixed tenure with social and affordable units in the mix? Members have asked for this for the past two years.
- Can current road safety issues highlighted previously be dealt with before this scheme starts?
- Can the council borrow the money to deliver affordable units on this site as there many families that qualify under the financial bracket for affordable?

Fiona Fallon, Director, responded accordingly to the members' interventions.

As no agreement was reached, **An Cathaoirleach** put the matter to a roll call vote. Members were asked to vote "For" or "Against" the proposed Development of Lands to the North of Ashewood Green and Ashewood Glen PT8MH194.

Councillor	For	Against
BONNER, Joe	X	
JAMAL, Suzanne	X	
MEYER, Helen		X
SMITH, Amanda	X	
TOBIN, Alan		X
TORMEY, Conor		X
Result	3	3

As there was an equality of votes, per the Standing Orders, the person chairing the meeting has the casting vote. **An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Conor Tormey**, voted against the development of planning reference PT8MH194. Members resolved not to proceed with the development.

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

4.2 Transportation

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

The report was circulated in advance and was noted.

- Members asked can the velocity machine be requested to aid pothole maintenance.
- Can hanging baskets in Ashbourne be regularly watered?

4.3 Corporate Affairs & Governance

4.3.1 To note the Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Ashbourne Municipal District

This was noted.

5.0 Notice of Question

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

“What are the names of the approved Housing Bodies that operate in the Ashbourne MD and how many housing units do they provide?”

Response:

The table attached illustrates the number of properties delivered through AHBs in the Ashbourne Municipal District under the following schemes;

AHB Mortgage to Rent, AHB Leasing & CALF.

Ashbourne MD	
Approved Housing Body	No of Units
Respond	2
Cluid	101
Steer	6
Oaklee	4
iCare	8
Tuath	53
Total	174

This was noted

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

6.0 Notice of Motion

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

"I call on Meath County Council to prepare a traffic survey at the motorway junction in Stamullen, to help support the case for a motorway link road."

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

An Bord Pleanála, in January 2019 refused the proposal to provide the proposed link road (ABP Reference PL 17.301284). In the Inspector's Report, it states that the Inspector had read the applicant's Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) and in general accepted the overall findings. However, it was also noted that the TIA assumed that the proposed link road will not alter volumes of traffic joining or leaving the motorway at Junction 7 and the Inspector considered that this scenario is unlikely. The Inspector went on to say that 'The assessment, therefore, has no regard for the likely indirect effects of the connection of Stamullen to the motorway i.e. how it would affect traffic movements in the area to the west of Stamullen and potentially other junctions and flow patterns on the M1. Given the strategic economic importance of the M1 linking the capital City to Belfast, the very clear policies at national and regional level which seek to safeguard the carrying capacity of the national road network, such an omission is significant. In addition to the above, in the absence of a wider assessment of the implications of the development for traffic flows in the region, the development could result in unforeseen traffic flows through the residential lands to the south of the site (including HGVs) and the junction of this estate road with Gormanstown Road, to the detriment of residential amenity and amenity of the village of Stamullen.'

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) was published in December 2021. NIFTI is the Department of Transport's framework for prioritising investment in the land transport network and establishes a set of Investment Priorities. Sponsoring Agencies, promoting the scheme, must demonstrate that a proposed public investment aligns with these Priorities and Hierarchies in order to be considered for funding. NIFTI is based on two separate hierarchies. The Modal Hierarchy prioritises schemes for Active Travel, followed by Public Transport and then last is Private Vehicle. The Intervention Hierarchy prioritises schemes to Maintain existing assets, followed by Optimising existing assets, then Improve existing assets and finally constructing New infrastructure.

The National Planning Framework identifies the importance of the M1 corridor as part of the European Ten-T networks and states that there will be a focus on improving and protecting this corridor from unnecessary sprawl and development

The Guidelines for Planning Authorities – Spatial Planning & National Roads, Section 2.7, provides guidance on development at National Road Interchanges and Junctions. There are a number of criteria that must be considered where development could generate significant additional traffic with potential to impact on the national road. The following extract is of

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

particular relevance:

- ♦ Demonstration of the need for additional connectivity by reference to policy considerations such as the National Spatial Strategy, Regional Planning Guidelines and in the Greater Dublin Area, the National Transport Authority's transport strategy.
- ♦ Demonstration that all other options for servicing the development needs and, in particular, the regional and local roads network and the use of public transport solutions, have been examined and exploited to the fullest extent practicable;
- ♦ Demonstration that the additional traffic loading can be satisfactorily accommodated at the junction concerned and on the national road network.
- Ensuring that the proposed development will not give rise to an undesirable precedent for further traffic generating development at or in the vicinity of the proposed development.
- Satisfactory details of the proposed demand management measures; and • Acceptable funding and delivery proposals for any required improvements.

The Meath County Development Plan contains the following objective:

STA OBJ 8: To facilitate vehicular access to/from the town to commercial and employment uses on lands identified with an E2 "General Enterprise & Employment" and E3 "Warehousing & Distribution" land use zoning objective which would serve, inter alia, Stamullen town and access to the M1 Motorway interchange.

While the collection of existing traffic data via traffic counters forms part of the process of the appraisal of a scheme there is a significant resource requirement to forecast future demand and demonstrate that the proposed link supports national spatial and planning policies. It is noted that no public funding has been allocated towards the appraisal, planning and delivery of this project.

It is therefore considered that the development of the link should be led by the adjacent developers in consultation with the Council and other Stakeholders.

In conclusion, the Council do not propose to commence a traffic survey at this time.

The motion proposed by **Cllr Helen Meyer** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** was agreed.

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

"I call on Meath County Council to prepare a traffic survey for an outer link road for Ashbourne."

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

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, Volume 2, Ashbourne Written Statement, Chapter 5.6, notes that:

The attractive urban form and compact nature of Ashbourne has helped to foster a strong walking and cycling mode share which is further supplemented by a number of frequent bus services offering good connections to Dublin and neighbouring towns. The town also benefits from its close proximity to the M2 transport corridor.

The attractive urban form and compact nature of Ashbourne has helped to foster a strong walking and cycling mode share which is further supplemented by a number of frequent bus services offering good connections to Dublin and neighboring towns. The town also benefits from its close proximity to the M2 transport corridor.

Building upon the strong active mode share in Ashbourne, opportunities exist to improve permeability within the town centre and introduce pedestrian and cycle upgrades on key corridors linking residential lands to the town centre. The Public Realm Strategy for Ashbourne has identified various improvements to the streets and civic spaces in the town centre that would create a more attractive and coherent town centre. This includes the Main Street and Milltown Road, which received funding for improvements to cycling and pedestrian infrastructure under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

In order to reduce dependence on the private car and to make public transport more accessible and attractive to residents, there is an opportunity to support the delivery of a Park and Ride facility in the town. Such a facility would have the benefit of easing traffic congestion and encouraging a transition from car dependence to more sustainable forms of public transport. It is thus an objective of this Plan to identify a suitable location for a Park and Ride facility in the town.

In addition to improving access to bus services, consideration must also be given to the possibility of providing a rail link to Ashbourne in the long term. As part of the reappraisal of Phase II of the Navan Rail Project it is considered that there is an opportunity to examine the potential of including a spur from this rail line to Ashbourne (via Ratoath). It is an objective of this Plan to engage with Irish Rail and the National Transport Authority to examine the feasibility of providing this rail link.

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) was published in December 2021. NIFTI is the Department of Transport's framework for prioritising investment in the land transport network and establishes a set of Investment Priorities. Sponsoring Agencies, promoting a scheme, must demonstrate that a proposed public investment aligns with these Priorities and Hierarchies in order to be considered for public funding. NIFTI is based on two separate hierarchies. The Modal Hierarchy prioritises schemes for Active Travel, followed by Public Transport and then last is the Private Vehicle. The

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Intervention Hierarchy prioritises schemes to Maintain existing assets, followed by Optimising existing assets, then Improve existing assets and finally constructing New infrastructure.

Noting the strong walking and cycling mode share that exists in Ashbourne, supported by the significant investment in sustainable transport infrastructure to date and the future objectives in the Meath County Development Plan and the investment priorities outlined in the NIFTI, any proposals which might undermine this investment may not be eligible for grant funding.

It is recommended that the motion is referred to the Transportation & Urban Regeneration SPC for further discussion, or alternatively submitted during the consultation period , when commenced, in preparation for the review of the current Development Plan, as the end of the period of the plan comes into focus.

The motion proposed by **Cllr Helen Meyer** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** was agreed. **Cllr. Tobin** is of the opinion that we do need a second road and that it does need to be in the County Development Plan to ease congestion.

7.0 Correspondence

There was none.

8.0 Any Other Business

A large pothole is increasing in size at Primatestown Junction. Can this be filled?

The meeting concluded at 10.49am

Signed:

Cathaoirleach