

Minutes of the October Monthly Meeting of Clare County Council held via MS Teams on Monday, 11th October, 2021 at 3:45 p.m.

Present via MS Teams:

Present:

Councillors M. Howard, M. Nestor, J. Flynn, C. Colleran Molloy, P. Murphy, A. Norton, P. Daly, J. Cooney, P. Hayes, P. Burke, A. O’Callaghan, T. O’Brien, J. Crowe, M. Begley, P.J. Ryan, P. McMahon, G. Flynn, D. McGettigan, P. O’Gorman, S. Talty, J. Killeen, J. Garrihy, L. Grant, P.J. Kelly, B. Chambers, G. Keating, C. Murphy, I. Lynch.

- Mr. Pat Dowling, Chief Executive.
- Ms. Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator.
- Ms. Margaret O’Rourke, Assistant Staff Officer.
- Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development.
- Mr. Liam Conneally, Director of Economic Development.
- Mr. Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development.
- Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald, Director of Finance and Support Services.
- Mr. Cyril Feeney, Senior Engineer, Physical Development.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan presided.

Vote of sympathy.

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- The Ryan family on the death of Eugene Ryan, Ennis
- The Boyce family Cratloe on the death of John Boyce.
- The McMahon family, Ennis on the death of Tony McMahon.
- The Garry family, Kildysart on the death of Patrick Garry.
- The Griffin family Feakle on the death of Vincent Griffin.
- The O’Grady family Feakle on the death of Marian Kelly nee O’Grady.
- The Gilligan family Kilnaboy on the death of Mary Gilligan.
- The Crowe family Quin on the death of baby Ted Crowe.

National Development Plan

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan addressed the meeting and stated that the members will be aware that the National Development Plan (N.D.P.) 2021 – 2030 was published last week. Cllr. Ryan stated that he was disappointed that the remainder of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR), a vital infrastructure project for this county, is not included in the programme in the N.D.P. Cllr. Ryan continued that he

did not believe its omission is a showstopper for what people in Clare want to achieve for this part of our country.

Cllr. Ryan welcomed that commitment to the Killaloe Bypass and Bridge Crossing, a non-national roads project as well as a commitment to much needed investment in general road maintenance.

Cllr. Ryan continued “Also, while not specifically listed in the NDP, the plan commits to upgrading existing national road networks and enhanced regional accessibility which should include the N19 Shannon Access Road. The Plan also addresses towns and villages that are experiencing major congestion issues and again, while not specifically listed, Cllr. Ryan stated that he was hopeful that the Ennistymon Inner Relief Road (Blake’s Corner) will continue to be funded as well as the N85 improvements at Kilnamona.

The N.D.P. commits to the Flood Risk Management Plans carried out under Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAMS) Programme, which should see the flood relief schemes at Shannon, Kilkee, Springfield, Bunratty and Kilrush being delivered over the lifetime of the plan. The Limerick City and Environs Flood Relief Scheme is specifically listed which will provide flood protection to Westbury, Shannon Banks and the Clare Campus of the University of Limerick. The N.D.P. also commits to continued funding for minor flood schemes.

Cllr. Ryan noted that the N.D.P. is committed to Active Travel and Greenway Projects many of which are progressing across County Clare currently and, while not specifically listed in the N.D.P., Cllr. Ryan was hopeful the West Clare Railway Greenway and other active travel projects will be delivered under this plan.

Importantly for our rural county, there is a stated commitment for Irish Water to invest in the servicing of small towns and villages from a water and wastewater perspective which hopefully will see a funding programme commitment for some of our unsewered towns and villages.

Concluding, Cllr. Ryan said that while the lack of specific mention of the LNDR in the N.D.P. is a disappointment, phase 1 of the road is already under construction and he believes that the rest of this important road which will support the University of Limerick (UL)/South Clare Strategic Development Zone will happen in due course.

Item 1: Minutes of Council Meetings.

a. Ar moladh Cllr. P. Hayes
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Cooney agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the September Meeting of Clare County Council held on 13th September, 2021 be adopted and signed.”

Item 2: Matters Arising.

Cllr. P. Hayes requested an update on the transfer of Council staff to Irish Water.

Cllr. P. Murphy welcomed the extended deadline for applications for the Streetscape Enhancement Scheme. L. Cleary Director of Rural Development confirmed that the deadline has been extended until the end of December.

Cllr. M. Begley requested clarity in relation to some aspects of proposed projects that may require planning permission and stated that this will cause delays for projects.

Item 3: Minutes of Municipal District Meetings.

a. Ar moladh Cllr. A. Norton
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Murphy agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District Meeting held on the 7 September, 2021 be noted.”

b. Ar moladh Cllr. P. Burke
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Cooney agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Killaloe Municipal District Meeting held on the 14 July, 2021 be noted.”

c. Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Crowe agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Shannon Municipal District Meeting held on the 29 July, 2021 be noted.”

d. Ar moladh Cllr. B. Chambers
Cuidithe ag Cllr. S. Talty agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the West Clare Municipal District Meeting held on the 20 July, 2021 be noted.”

Item 4: Minutes of S.P.C. Meetings.

a. Ar moladh Cllr. P. McMahon
Cuidithe ag Cllr. M. Begley agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Economic Development S.P.C. meeting held on 8 June, 2021 be noted”.

b. Ar moladh Cllr. J. Crowe
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Cooney agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Physical Development S.P.C. meeting held on 9 June, 2021 be noted”.

c. Ar moladh Cllr. P. Burke
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Hayes agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Rural Development S.P.C. meeting held on 18 May, 2021 be noted”.

d. Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P.J. Ryan agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Social Development S.P.C. meeting held on 10 March, 2021 be noted”.

Item 5: Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meetings.

The members noted the minutes of the meeting held on 6th September, 2021 as presented.

Item 6: Monthly Management Report.

The monthly management report attached to the agenda included key activities in the principal service areas and was noted by the members.

Cllr. C. Murphy requested an update on the timeline for remediation of asbestos sites.

Cllr. J. Garrihy welcomed funding allocation announced under the Community Enhancement Grant Scheme and the Active Travel Scheme recently. Cllr. Garrihy welcomed progress on the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Liscannor and Kilfenora and sought an update on the plans for Doolin.

Cllr. M. Begley requested clarity in relation to proposed works at Erinagh Canal Bank Walkway.

Cllr. J. Flynn welcomed the virtual private rented inspections being carried out and felt that it is an opportunity for tenants and landlords to assess compliance with rented standards.

Cllr. P. Murphy congratulated an Clár as Gaeilge on its achievement in securing the Baile Líonra Gaeilge Award presented by Minister Jack Chambers TD recently. Cllr. Murphy welcomed works carried out on Latoon bridge, the tidal barrage in Clarecastle and the town and village renewal scheme in Clarecastle. Cllr. Murphy requested an update on the river bank walkway between the Quin Road in Ennis and Clareabbey.

Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy welcomed improvement works carried out on footpaths and streetscape in Ennis as well as works done on the Ballyalla walk trail. Cllr. Colleran Molloy complimented the work on the Daniel O’Connell Monument in Ennis.

S. Lenihan, Senior Engineer provided details of the work being carried out on the river bank walkway between the Quin Road and Clareabbey access road.

S. Lenihan, Senior Engineer responded to query raised by Cllr. M. Begley and provided an update in relation to proposed works on the Erinagh canal bank walkway.

S. Lenihan undertook to revert to Cllr. Murphy in relation to the asbestos remediation plan.

Item 7: Co-option to fill vacancy on Clare County Council.

Report dated 30th September, 2021 from Ann Reynolds, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services was circulated with the agenda. The report states that it is proposed to fill the casual vacancy on the Council arising from the resignation of Cllr. Susan Crawford. The vacancy will be filled in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, i.e. the person to be nominated by the same registered political party who nominated for election the member who caused the casual vacancy.

The report states that correspondence has been received from the Green Party nominating Liam Grant, Seapark, Lahinch, Co. Clare for co-option to Clare County Council. Liam provided his written consent to this co-option.

By virtue of his proposed co-option to the Council, Liam Grant will also fill the vacant Councillor positions on the following:

- West Clare Municipal District Committee
- Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee
- Board of Glór Irish Music Centre
- County Rural Water Monitoring Committee
- Regional Health Forum West
- Western Inter County Railway Committee

Ar moladh Cllr. S. Talty

Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“That Liam Grant, Seapark, Lahinch, Co. Clare be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy in Clare County Council pursuant to Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001.”

Ar moladh Cllr. S. Talty

Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“That Liam Grant, Seapark, Lahinch, Co. Clare be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy in

- West Clare Municipal District Committee
- Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee and
- Board of Glór Irish Music Centre
- County Rural Water Monitoring Committee
- Regional Health Forum West

- Western Inter County Railway Committee

The elected members welcomed Cllr. Liam Grant to Clare County Council and stated that they looked forward to working with him.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive extended best wishes to Cllr. Grant and assured him of the full support and co-operation of staff in the organisation.

Cllr. L. Grant addressed the meeting and thanked the Green Party for nominating him to fill the vacancy and stated that it is an honour to take the green party seat on Clare County Council. Cllr. Grant vowed to work with all the members and to do what is best for County Clare.

Item 8: Disposal of property at Glór, Ennis, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 9th September, 2021 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of property, (by way of lease) subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 9th September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. A. Norton agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of property at Glór, Ennis by way of lease subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 9th September, 2021.”

Item 9: Disposal of lands at Dulick, Gort Rod, Ennis, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Cllr. A Norton declared that she is Chairperson of the Board of Educate Together for which there is no pecuniary or beneficial interest and withdrew from the meeting for this item.

Report dated 9th September, 2021 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of an area of lands measuring 0.8145 hectares at Dulick, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 9th September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Daly
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of lands at Dulick, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 9th September, 2021.”

Item 10: Disposal of lands at Gort Road Business Park, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 9th September, 2021 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of an area of lands measuring 0.0257 hectares at Gort Road Business Park, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 9th September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. A. Norton agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of lands at Dulick, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 9th September, 2021.”

Item 11: Disposal of property at Main Street, Whitegate, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 20th September, 2021 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of an area of lands measuring 0.0142 hectares at Main Street, Whitegate, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 20th September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Burke
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Cooney agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of property at Main Street, Whitegate, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 20th September, 2021.”

Item 12: Disposal of lands at Laghile, Cratloe, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 22nd September, 2021 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of an area of lands measuring 0.0812 hectares at Laghile, Cratloe, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 22nd September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Ryan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Crowe agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of lands at Laghile, Cratloe, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 22nd September, 2021.”

Item 13: Disposal of lands at Laghile, Cratloe, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 22nd September, 2021 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of an area of lands measuring 0.2437 hectares at Laghile, Cratloe, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 22nd September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Ryan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of lands at Laghile, Cratloe, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 22nd September, 2021.”

Item 14: Disposal of property at Cappaduff, Mountshannon, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 21st September, 2021 from Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of property at Cappaduff, Mountshannon, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 21st September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Burke
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Cooney agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of property at Cappaduff, Mountshannon, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 21st September, 2021.”

Item 15: Disposal of property at Tradaree Court, Shannon, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 23rd September, 2021 from Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of property at Tradaree Court, Shannon, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 23rd September, 2021.

Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Crowe agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of property at Tradaree Court, Shannon, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 23rd September, 2021.”

Item 16: Schedule date for Budget Meeting.

It was agreed that the Budget meeting will take place on Friday, 26th November, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. having been proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. J. Garrihy and agreed by the members present.

Item 17: Recommendation from Rural Development S.P.C. for proposed commencement of Burial Grounds Byelaws Review.

Report dated 28th September, 2021 from Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development was circulated with the agenda. The report states that at the recent Rural Development S.P.C. meeting held on 21st September, 2021 the members received a presentation from Mr. Ollie O’Loughlin on the review process and recommendations arising from the Review of Burial Grounds Operations and Policy. A proposal was made for the commencement of a review of the Burial Ground Byelaws 2015 to address the issues identified in the review relating to the erection of headstones/monuments, lawn cemeteries/kerbs/footstones and management of stakeholders working in Council owned burial grounds including Funeral Undertakers/Memorial Sculptures/Gravediggers/Contractors. The approval of the Council is sought to commence this process of the Review of the Bye-laws. This will involve public consultation.

This was agreed by the members present having been proposed by Cllr. P. Hayes and seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

Item 18. Overdraft Facility in 2022.

Report dated 4th October, 2021 from Noeleen Fitzgerald, Director of Finance and Support Services was circulated with the agenda. The report states that an overdraft facility is required to be in place for the twelve month period commencing January 2022 to December 2022 in line with Departmental guidelines. The members approved an increased overdraft facility up to December 2021 at the November 2020 Council meeting up to a maximum of €30 million. It is proposed to seek approval for a reduced overdraft limit of €20 million for the calendar year January 2022 until December 2022.

Ar moladh Cllr. A. Norton
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy agus glacadh leis

“That pursuant to the provisions of Section 106 of the Local Government Act, 2001 Clare County Council hereby approves of borrowing up to a maximum of €20 million by way of overdraft facility from the Council’s Treasurer for the year ending 31st December, 2022.”

Item 19. Clare Climate Change and Green House Gas Emissions Strategy.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Garrihy agus glacadh leis

“Preparation of a Clare Climate Change and Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions strategy to meet its 2030 commitments.

I ask that Clare County Council through its co-investment in the Limerick Clare Energy Agency (LCEA - whose byline is “Energy Solutions for Sustainable Development”) to urgently commission and produce an update in terms of the 2012 LCEA published commissioned report that had two parts namely (1) “Limerick and Clare Climate Change Strategy” and (2) “Limerick and Clare Energy & Emissions Balance“ in order that County Clare is adequately informed of actions needed to be able to meet its 2030 commitments for National Climate change, Green House Gases (GHG) emissions reduction & associated decarbonization of energy production and reduction of use. The real threat of Climate Change is clearly set out in the recent UN IPCC report whose findings have been described as “code red for humanity”.

Background - The LCEA 2012 report used the UN Climate Change ‘Kyoto Protocol’ commitment targets, which had 1990 as a baseline, for analysis of data up to 2010 to reach conclusions. The LCEA 2012 report had among its aims in connection to; (1) above, ‘to clearly identify the solutions to the challenge of reducing energy related emissions and to outline the actions to be taken to meet the commitments under the Kyoto Protocol’; (2) above “the energy related Green House Gases (GHG) emissions are calculated, which presents the LCEA with the data to target actions in meeting the regions Kyoto Protocols commitments.“

Cyril Feeney, Senior Engineer, Physical Development replied as follows:

“Clare County Council has commissioned the RPS Group to prepare a Clare Energy and Emissions Balance report for 2021 including the predicted energy use up to 2030. The 2030 targets are based on the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP). The RPS Group have also been commissioned to prepare a Clare Renewable Energy strategy which seeks to identify the renewable energy resources in County Clare and compare it to the Clare Energy and Emissions Balance to determine the potential for self-sufficiency and burden sharing of Ireland's 2030 targets. The Clare Renewable Energy strategy will form part of the new County Development Plan. The Limerick Clare Energy Agency have been instrumental in providing details on calculations methodology and data to assist RPS in their report preparation.

Clare County Council adopted its own 5 year Climate Change Adaptation strategy in 2019. The strategy outlines under a number of different themes the objectives and actions that the local authority will take in the area of renewable energy.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 will also bring further clarity potentially in the coming months in how the local authority will tackle the effects of climate change. For example, under Section 14B it specifies that each local authority shall prepare and make a plan relating to a period of five years (in this section referred to as a ‘local authority climate action plan’) which shall specify the mitigation measures and the adaptation measures to be adopted by the local authority. The Limerick Clare Energy Agency will continue to support the maintenance of energy and emissions data and in due course, when the relevant statutory instrument has been commenced, assist in the development of a Clare County Council Climate Action Plan.”

Cllr. J. Flynn stated that he is not confident that Clare County Council is effective in addressing climate change and referred to submission by him requesting that Clare County Council establish a Climate Change and Environment Strategic Policy Committee. Cllr. Flynn felt that there is an onus on Clare County Council to prepare a county with resilience in order to protect the infrastructure and people in the county as Clare is a vulnerable county in the context of coastal levels and the increased ferocity of climate events. Cllr. Flynn stated that he would like to see greater urgency in addressing climate change actions and strategy in order to protect bio-diversity and the environment we have in this county.

The elected members acknowledged the work being done by Clare County Council in addressing climate issues and noted that when the Strategic Policy Committees were being established it was agreed that each S.P.C. would address climate change challenges by placing it on the agenda for all S.P.C. meetings. It was also noted that Pat Dowling, Chief Executive and Padraic McElwee, Head of Enterprise were speaking at webinar specifically dealing with Local Authority Climate Action Economic Opportunities on 12th and 13th October which is a collaboration between Local Authorities and the AILG.

Cllr. J. Flynn stated that he is not happy with what is happening on S.P.C.s and felt that Clare County Council is behind other counties in relation to households becoming decarbonized. Cllr. J. Flynn referred to the climate change coastal vulnerability study which was recently referred to the Physical Development S.P.C. by the Economic Development S.P.C.

L. Conneally, Director of Economic Development stated that this issue was referred to the Physical Development S.P.C. and undertook to follow up and have a response available for the next Economic Development S.P.C. and will keep the members up to date.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive stated that this is a pervasive issue that permeates across all works in the county and that the methodology being used in all objectives is ongoing. Mr. Dowling undertook to discuss this issue with the executive senior team in order to prioritise this going forward.

Item 20. Bathing water quality testing.

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Murphy

Cuidithe ag Cllr. I. Lynch agus glacadh leis

“In light of the significant increase in the amount of people swimming at our designated bathing locations on a year round basis, that Clare County Council would commit to a bathing water quality testing regime across the full calendar year.”

Cyril Feeney, Senior Engineer, Physical Development replied as follows:

“Clare County Council have 14 No. designated bathing areas comprising of 9 blue flag beaches and 4 other bathing areas which have achieved Green Coast standard. Currently the bathing areas are monitored during the time period specified in accordance with the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 i.e. between the 1st June to the 15th September each year. The bathing water quality testing regime is labour intensive involving onsite sampling, lab analysis, posting of information, liaising with the H.S.E., putting in place advisory or prohibition bathing notices and covers a significant geographic area of the county. It is a major investment of resources and forms part of a bigger inspection regime mandated each year by the E.P.A. The E.P.A. also issue guidance on their website regarding bathing which applies throughout the year and not just during the designated bathing season; <https://www.beaches.ie/protect-your-health-with-the-48-hour-rule/>

“After a heavy rainfall event it is important to avoid contact with the water for at least 48 hours to prevent the risk of getting a recreational water illness. It is best to follow the 48 hour rule after significant rainfall even if beaches.ie, the local authority website or beach noticeboard show the water quality is okay for swimming as the information is showing the water quality of the last reported water sample and this may not accurately represent current water quality. This is because when local authorities sample the water at your favourite beach and bathing area, it takes 2-3 days to analyse the sample and then time to process results and disseminate to the public.”

Unfortunately, it is not possible at this time to commit to an expanded 12 month bathing water testing regime due to the significant scientific resources required.”

During discussion the elected members noted that sea swimming is now part of many peoples lives for health and wellbeing purposes and felt that there is a duty of care to protect swimmers. The members agreed that high risk areas should be identified in

order to protect public health and that proper waste water treatment facilities would help solve some issues. The elected members felt that Clare County Council and the E.P.A. should play a leadership role by providing a year round water testing facility in bathing areas.

Item 21. Car park ticket machines.

Ar moladh Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

Cuidithe ag Cllrs. M. Howard agus P. McMahon agus glacadh leis

“In light of the ever changing world going from cash to card, that Clare County Council would consider changing car park ticket machines to facilitate the use of cards as payment across the county.”

Liam O’Connor, Administrative Officer, Physical Development replied as follows:

“An extensive review of car parking throughout the county is to be undertaken in 2022. As part of this review all available digital parking options will be considered to identify optimum pay parking solutions. These payment options are likely to include an online app and parking meters that can accept both coin and card payments.

The review will aim to promote and maximise the payment of charges online as an alternative option to using the pay & display coin machines leading to greater efficiencies with reduced maintenance costs, coin collection costs and reduced safety implications associated with the collection and counting of coin.”

The elected members welcomed the response as they felt people are now using cards and phones as a primary source when making payments instead of using coins.

Item 22. Privately led infrastructure in towns and villages.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Garrihy

Cuidithe ag Cllrs. C. Murphy, J. Cooney, J. Crowe, S. Talty, P. Burke, J. Killeen, G. Keating, I. Lynch, G. Flynn agus B. Chambers agus glacadh leis

“In the context of the lack of necessary municipal wastewater infrastructure in the vast majority of our small towns and villages across the county we call on Clare County Council to accept the principle of privately led infrastructure in towns and villages where there is a demand, desire and need for development. A robust and stringent legally binding framework of standards and continued upkeep / maintenance must be developed around this infrastructure to ensure environmental protection into the future and to protect the local authority the state and homeowners against future issues.”

Cyril Feeney, Senior Engineer, Physical Development and Helen Quinn, A/Senior Planner, Economic Development replied as follows:

“Clare County Council will continue to engage with Irish Water and seek to put in place a mechanism whereby Irish Water will facilitate the Taking In Charge of

Privately Led Infrastructure on completion of multi-unit developments of a satisfactory standard.

In the absence of a commitment from Irish Water to take such infrastructure in charge on completion, Clare County Council would not be in a position to facilitate developments dependent on privately led infrastructure.

The members will be advised of all progress made with Irish Water through the new Clare County Development Plan making process.”

The elected members outlined that there are 52 towns and villages in County Clare without proper infrastructure resulting in no land being zoned in these towns and villages. It was stated that there will be a real crisis in future planning in our county for communities going forward if this serious issue is not addressed.

The members agreed that Irish Water should be disbanded and an alternative solution should be put in place which will address the problems being experienced in rural towns and villages where communities are at risk of becoming obsolete.

The members agreed that public private partnerships are required to develop and deliver infrastructure for small towns and villages while adhering to high standards with oversight and monitoring provided by Clare County Council. The members felt that this would provide opportunity for villages to take in populations and use community facilities.

It was noted that worthwhile solutions are available and the members suggested that Butler Manufacturing Systems be invited to brief the elected members on systems that can be installed as well as packages and maintenance costs involved.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive acknowledged the concerns raised by the elected members and agreed that this is a challenge in the context of planning for our county. Mr. Dowling stated that Clare County Council has engaged with the Minister and that a response is expected this month. Mr. Dowling noted that there are shovel ready projects in the county and that support from central government is required.

L. Conneally, Director of Economic Development addressed the meeting and stated that Clare County Council supports the servicing of all settlements in the county for the growth and survival of centres and that legal jurisdiction is with Irish Water. Mr. Conneally stated that if the Department issues pilot schemes for the county, Clare County Council is willing to facilitate this if finance is available. Mr. Conneally noted that it will need to be followed up with legislation and identify specific sites for capital infrastructure and that repair and maintenance have to be provided.

Mr. Dowling stated that the Department and Irish Water are in discussion on this topic in relation to how local authorities can deliver infrastructure.

Item 23. Low density high quality serviced site development.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Garrihy

Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“I call on Clare County Council planning department to identify a range of appropriate sites in our small towns and villages which are suitable for low density high quality serviced site development which would be available to people wishing to live and be part of rural communities and to zone these sites appropriately in the

county development plan. The objective is to provide high quality, attractive options for a mix of housing and development to those who wish to live in Rural Clare and to be a central part of the regeneration and revival of our rural towns and villages.”

Liam Conneally, Director of Economic Development replied as follows:

“The proposed Draft Clare County Development Plan will include settlement plans and strategies incorporating settlement maps for towns and villages across the county. Within each town/village specific zoning objectives and designations will be identified for individual parcels of land. It is anticipated that a range of sites will be identified as suitable for future residential development and will be zoned/designated as such. Specific commentary relating to those sites including commentary relating to possible densities and housing mix will also be included in the relevant settlement strategy.

Following the publication of the draft plan in December 2021 there will be a period within which the public can make their observations/submissions and I hope that communities will engage in this consultative process.

The council will support the members stated objective of providing high quality attractive housing options, incorporating a mix of housing types which will be central to the growth and regeneration of the towns and villages across the county.”

The elected members agreed that rural parts of County Clare need to be enhanced as people are expressing a desire to return to live in their native areas due to remote working opportunities as a result of Covid-19. The members felt that the Clare Oireachtas members should exert leverage for our county at national level to challenge the national and regional objectives used to identify land for zoning in order to provide a wide provision of housing in rural areas as it is vital that a mix of housing is given consideration in the new County Development Plan.

Item 24. National Framework Plan.

Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Kelly

Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Killeen agus glacadh leis

“That Clare County Council calls on Clare members of Oireachtas Eireann to arrange a joint meeting with An Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Minister Ryan with a view to addressing the damage done to rural Clare by National Framework Plan and proposed planning guidelines.”

During discussion, the elected members agreed that the low population target for County Clare is preventing rural Clare from development. The members noted that the population targets were set pre Covid-19 and requested that the population targets be re-assessed as there is a national shortage of housing in rural areas where people are re-locating. The members called on our Oireachtas Members to lobby at national level and to be educated in relation to the imbalance that exists as schools and communities will be lost if people are forced to live in urban areas against their wishes.

L. Conneally, Senior Planner addressed the meeting and stated that this issue has been raised since the preparation of the regional spatial strategy. Mr. Conneally informed

the members that if additional population targets are allocated it will be distributed in accordance with requirements.

Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy proposed that the time to finish the meeting be extended in order to deal with the outstanding items. This was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by the members present.

Item 25. Attract industry to region.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. McMahon
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P.J. Ryan agus glacadh leis

“In view of the excessive electricity demands in the greater Dublin area, that Clare County Council call on the Government and the IDA to increase efforts to attract industry including those who will bring data requirement to this region.”

The elected members were in agreement that new data centres should be provided outside the greater Dublin area and that the west of Ireland is a suitable location due to the windpower available off the west coast.

Item 26. HPV vaccine.

Ar moladh Cllr. M. Howard
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Murphy agus glacadh leis

“Clare County Council urge Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly to revisit the directive only allowing those in first year secondary school education to receive the HPV vaccine.

Many students missed "mop up" clinics due to Covid 19, being home schooled or were considered too immature and are now being excluded for the vaccination programme.”

The elected members agreed that the protocol for the HPV vaccination protocol should be extended to allow all secondary school students receive the vaccination. The members noted that the cost of €900 for the three vaccinations is excessive and that it is unfair that parents have to pay for this vaccination as their child missed out in first year for a variety of reasons beyond their control. The members agreed that Laura Brennans legacy should be honoured by making the vaccine more widely available to help the next generation and increase the uptake for the vaccination to 80%.

Item 27. Upgrade passport control facilities at Shannon Airport.

Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Ryan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“That this council requests that Minister for Transport, Climate, Environment & Communications Eamon Ryan and Minister for Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform Pascal Donohoe provide funding to upgrade passport control facilities at Shannon Airport to bring them up to modern days standards.”

The members agreed that the passport facility at Shannon Airport is out of date and that better facilities should be provided for the operators and members of public travelling through the airport. The members welcomed the appointment of Pádraig Ó Céidigh as the Chairperson of the Shannon Group plc.

Item 28. Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. D. McGettigan agus glacadh leis

“That Clare County Council would request the Minister for Housing to change the requirements under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and that the mandatory increase on developers to 20% in the Housing for All policy be entirely focused on the delivery of affordable housing and the social element be removed as it is causing considerable difficulties for developers who are in the business of building private housing. I would also call on the Minister to prohibit bulk buying by vulture funds in order that private development is available to owner occupiers. There is also a requirement for the Minister to prevent planning applications for private housing becoming social housing through local authority support and public funding. Local Authorities need to be properly resourced to deliver social housing and the Minister needs to expand the Local Authority Home Loan Scheme aimed at single applicants to counties other than Dublin, Cork and Galway a lot of people in Clare on the lower income bracket could benefit from this scheme.”

During discussion the elected members noted that the Minister has announced that funding will be targeted for the Housing for All Scheme where a strong demand exists and it was agreed that Clare County Council need to demonstrate the demand for affordable and social housing in Clare. It was agreed that the Oireachtas Members be requested to lobby the Minister to secure the scheme for Clare as there are several elements for housing for all that would benefit if implemented. The members also agreed that the banding system should be reviewed.

Item 29. Back to school costs.

Ar moladh Cllr. D. McGettigan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“Call on Clare County Council to write to the department and the Minister and all members of the education committee to highlight the crippling costs of back to school for families.

To request that stricter guidelines be put in place at a national level regarding the use of specific uniforms, school jackets, to increase substantially funding for the school book scheme.”

The elected members outlined the costs involved in getting children back to school and the financial struggle this is imposing on families with a few children and who also have employment concerns.

Item 30. Incentives for apprenticeships.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Murphy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. McMahon agus glacadh leis

"That Clare County Council call on an Tánaiste and Minister for Trade, Enterprise and Employment to ensure that sufficient incentives are introduced to both encourage our youth to seek apprenticeships and to encourage qualified tradespeople to facilitate this necessary training".

The elected members agreed that apprenticeships should be encouraged as there is a demand for tradespeople to deliver projects. It was agreed that the programme needs to be changed as extending the time for apprenticeships from 4 – 6 years is not acceptable and that companies should be funded and compensated to encourage take-up of apprenticeships.

The members acknowledged the support of Deputy Michael McNamara who has raised this issue with An Taoiseach recently.

Item 31. Comhfhreagras/Correspondence.

- P. Dowling, Chief Executive addressed the meeting and stated that it is the intention to welcome Councillors back to the Council Chamber on the 8th November for the November Council Meeting. Mr. Dowling informed the members that the option will be available if members wish to continue with blended meetings either remotely or in person in accordance with the guidelines.

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda:

1. Correspondence dated 20th September, 2021 from Shannon Group in relation to recovery in air services.
2. Correspondence dated 27th September, 2021 from Clare Valley Business & Tourism Association in relation to their Top Tourism Town Voters' Choice win.
3. Resolution circulated by Sligo County Council in relation to remunerating frontline workers.
4. Resolution circulated by Leitrim County Council in relation to land drainage boards.
5. Resolution circulated by Leitrim County Council in relation to housing grant scheme.
6. Resolution circulated by Meath County Council in relation to Japanese knot weed.
7. Virtual Conference entitled "Climate Action Economic Opportunities – Local Authorities Supporting Enterprise" taking place on 12th and 13th October, 2021.
8. LAMA Autumn Training Seminar taking place on 3rd and 4th November, 2021 at Sligo Park Hotel.

Conferences.

Reports on Seminars/Conferences attended.

With regard to seminars/conferences attended, reports completed in accordance with Section 142 of the Local Government Act 2001 were made available at the meeting.

AILG elected members training Programme Module 1 - "Government Decision on the Reform on Remuneration Payable to Local Authority Elected Members and Update on Planning and Development Bill" taking place in the Tower Hotel & Leisure Centre, Waterford on 18th September, 2021.

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €345.29 including conference fee of €65.

It was agreed that Cllrs. P. McMahon and P. Daly attend this Conference.

September 2021 AILG Training Programme Module 1 entitled "Government Decision on the Reform on Remuneration Payable to Local Authority Elected Members and Update on Planning and Development Bill 2021 and other Planning Related Matters" being held in the Sligo Park Hotel, Pearse Road, Sligo on 2nd October, 2021.

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €304.48.

It was agreed that Cllr. P. Murphy attend this Conference.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____