

Minutes of Meeting of the Killaloe Municipal District held on Wednesday, 6th November 2019 at 3.00 p.m. in the offices of Killaloe Municipal District, Mountshannon Road, Scarriff.

In attendance: Cllr. Joe Cooney
Cllr. Pat Hayes
Cllr. Pat Burke
Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan

Officials: Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Service
Mr. Declan Flanagan, Executive Engineer
Mr. Kieran O'Donnell, Administrative Officer
Ms. Pauline Costello, Staff Officer

Apologies: Cllr. Tony O'Brien
Mr. Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pat Burke chaired the meeting.

At the outset, a vote of sympathy was extended to Cllr. P. Hayes, on the death of his mother, Peggy Hayes. Cllr P. Hayes thanked all those that had sympathised with him and his family.

Congratulations were extended to Declan Flanagan, Executive Engineer on his recent wedding.

Item 1 Minutes of Killaloe Municipal District Meeting held on 18th September 2019.

The minutes of the Killaloe Municipal District Meetings held on 18th September 2019 were adopted having been proposed by Cllr. J. Cooney and seconded by Cllr. A. O'Callaghan.

Item 2 Matters Arising:

Cllr. A. O'Callaghan requested an update on the proposed new water main from Sorreny to Derra. Kieran O'Donnell, Meetings Administrator agreed to follow this up with Irish Water.

Cllr. P. Hayes also asked the Meetings Administrator to follow up on the contact with Eir

regarding the removal or replacement of dangerous poles.

Declan Flanagan confirmed that the design of the footpath on the Doonane Road was ongoing and almost completed.

Cllr. P. Hayes enquired if the Council had sought national funding for funding for charging routes. Sean Lenihan, Senior Engineer advised that 200 points would be installed as part of the scheme.

Item 3 Set date for next meeting.

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, 15th January 2020 at 3 p.m.

Item 4 Declaration of a public road at Cloonbeg, Clooney.

A report prepared by Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer had been circulated with the Agenda.

The road in question is from a point adjacent to Clooney Church, at the Junction with the R352, terminating at a point 800 metres South West of the Junction. The road is 3 metres wide and the condition is adequate for the medium future use. There are 9 residential properties on the roadway. Tom Mellett recommended that the road be declared a public road.

It was proposed by Cllr. A. O'Callaghan and seconded by Cllr. J. Cooney and agreed by the members that pursuant to Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993, the road as shown on the map be declared a public road.

Item 5 Correspondence from Irish Water

Correspondence from Irish Water dated 11th October 2019 had been circulated with the Agenda. Irish Water declined the request from the Killaloe MD members to hold a Councillor Clinic on October 14th in Ennis as they did not have the available resources to host two clinics within a period of 1 month. They attached a brief update on a number of capital projects that had been discussed at the most recent meeting of Killaloe MD, including Tulla Water Supply, Killaloe Water Supply, Killaloe Waste Water supply and Scarriff Water Supply. Cllr. P. Hayes expressed his disappointment with the contents of the update but it was agreed by the members that the issues would be discussed in detail when the members meet as a group with Irish Water at the Clinic on 11th November.

As Sean Lenihan, Senior Engineer was present, it was agreed by the Members that Item 14 on the Agenda would be dealt with next.

Item 14 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Burke

“Calling on Clare County Council to provide a detailed progress report on the planned Killaloe Bridge /By Pass.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Burke
Seconded by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan.

Sean Lenihan, Senior Engineer, Physical Development, replied as follows:

“Work continues across a number of areas including archaeology, ground investigation, marine surveys, ecological and detailed design. As required, we are liaising with DTTaS, TII, OPW, IW and the Utility companies in relation to technical compliance and statutory consents.

We are also working towards finalising the various Landowner Deals by agreement where possible, while others are being processed through the Arbitration process. An updated Business Case was submitted to the Department last month for their review and the next Project Team meeting is scheduled for Thursday Nov 14th.

The Tender short-listing process will commence by year’s end with the scheme going to tender in early Summer 2020 following expected completion of the detail design in March. Following the procurement process and evaluation of tenders received, we would expect to award the contract in late 2020 subject to Department approval. The construction period is expected to take 3 years thereafter.”

Sean Lenihan outlined the complexity of the project to the members which included dealing with 103 land owners. The Council has approval to bring the project through the tender stage but will require further approval before commencing construction. He was confident that the project will proceed as planned. The project was one of the Council’s high priorities as it was seen as an important gateway to the county.

The members welcomed the progress made and looked forward to a further update from Sean Lenihan on progress during 2020.

Item 6 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T.O’Brien

“That Clare County Council carries out major traffic calming at the junction of the R463 and the R466 at O Brien’s Bridge/ Bridgetown junction.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes (on behalf of Cllr. T. O’Brien)
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“This junction was nominated for the 2020 Low Cost Safety Scheme. However priority was given to locations based on accident statistics. The District office will carry out vegetation management and review signage at this location and will resubmit for inclusion in the 2021 Low Cost Safety Scheme.”

Item 7 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T. O’Brien

“That traffic calming measures be taken to slow traffic down at the entrance to Clarisford from the R463”.

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes (on behalf of Cllr. T. O’Brien)
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer replied as follows:

“There are currently no plans to carry out works at this location. However, Killaloe Municipal District office is willing to assess the location to determine what measures may be necessary.”

Item 8 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T. O’Brien

“That Irish Water provide a report as to their plans for investment in the waste water treatment plant at Ballina which also serves Killaloe.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes (on behalf of Cllr. T. O’Brien)
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer replied as follows:

“I have quoted below from Irish Water response, received 11th October 2019, to queries on capital projects in the Killaloe Municipal District;

“Killaloe Wastewater: Irish Water is currently progressing plans for the upgrade of the Ballina Wastewater Treatment Plant which also treats wastewater from Killaloe. This project is currently at detailed design stage and we hope to progress to a planning application in 2020.””

Item 9 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

“Give an update on the Taking in Charge of the Maigh Dara development in Quin”.

Proposed by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Kieran O’Donnell, Administrative Officer, Planning Department, replied as follows:

“The Maigh Dara housing development in Quin was taken in charge by Clare County Council on the 9th September 2014.

Priority works were carried out at that time including:-

- Repairs to storm sewers
- Replacement/Adjustment of manhole covers and gullies
- Boundary treatment
- Alterations to footpaths i.e. drop kerbs etc.
- Lining of sewers
- Sealing/benching of manholes
- Lowering of stopcocks.

There is a balance of €16k available from the bond monies which have been claimed.

There is still an issue with a short section of the storm drain on the entrance road into this development and a final wearing course on the road surfaces is required. The remaining bond monies are not sufficient to fund the cost of these outstanding works which are estimated to cost in excess of €100k.”

Cllr. Alan O’Callaghan requested that the outstanding works be re-costed so that an up-to-date cost estimate is available.

Item 10 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

“Ask the Council to give an update on the 2019 CIS Schemes for the Killaloe MD area and how many more schemes are on hand and are awaiting approval in future years”.

Proposed by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“The following table shows the complete 2019 list for approved CIS projects in the Killaloe Municipal District. The only outstanding project is Currakyle, Caher which is currently under construction. The total value of works in the Municipal District for 2019 was €311,260. There are currently 2 No. outstanding applications which will be prioritised for works in 2020.

1. L81942 BALLYBROGHAN
2. LOWER FEAKLE
3. COOLNAHILLA, BODYKE
4. BALLYGLASS, WHITEGATE
5. BOUREGEGAUN, FEAKLE
6. KNOCKALOAGHAN, CRUSHEEN
7. DOON, TUBBER
8. CARHUNACLOHE, CRUSHEEN
9. 2019 CIS CLOONEEN & LAHARDAN , CRUSHEEN

10. CURRAKYLE, CAHER

Item 11 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

“In light of the new resurfacing on the R470 and in the interest of road safety, I request more white lining to be done on this road”.

Proposed by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney.

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“Road Markings will be completed along this improved section of road once weather conditions allow for it. Any new lining will be in compliance with the Traffic Signs Manual.”

Item 12 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Burke

“Calling on Clare County Council to attend to a dangerous open drain on the roadside at Ballyglas, Scarriff.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Burke
Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“This drain is adjacent to the L-8048, there is a verge of approx 0.5m between the road edge and the drain. It is not uncommon to have such an arrangement on rural roads, this coupled with a lack of resources dictate that Killaloe Municipal District Office have no current plans to alter this situation.”

Cllr. P. Burke expressed concern about the danger posed by this drain and Declan Flanagan, Executive Engineer agreed to examine it further.

Item 13 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Burke

“Calling on Clare County Council to give consideration to widening the bridge and stretch of road adjacent to the AJ Plastics factory at Ballinagough, Whitegate on the R352.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Burke
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney.

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer replied as follows:

“The bridge on this section of road is called Birchpark Bridge CL 352-005.00. It has a rating of 3 and is not in the 2020 application for repair works, it will be included for repair in 2021.

Killaloe Municipal District Office will assess road width and condition at this location, any works required will be subject to appropriate funding being available.”

Cllr. P. Burke requested the Council to seek funding from all potential funding sources. He claimed that this section of road was the worst section on the R352. In the interim, Cllr. J. Cooney requested the Council to look at improved signage at this location.

Item 15 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Cooney

“As currently the L7000 Fermoyle to Broadford is in very poor condition and very narrow which makes it difficult for road users to pass through. I propose that passing bays are constructed at different locations on the road allowing cars to pull-in also that complete re-surfacing of the road is carried out.”

Proposed by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Seconded by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan.

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“This road is currently not on the 2019-2021 roadwork’s programme and so it is not proposed to carry out resurfacing. A number of passing bays currently exist along this road; there are currently no plans to create additional passing locations. Any essential repairs will be carried out, subject to budgetary constraints.”

Cllr. J. Cooney was not satisfied with this response. He requested that, at a minimum, the Council needed to improve the passing bays to allow cars pull in and sections of the road required urgent patching.

Item 16 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Cooney

“That Clare County Council carry out improvement works on the Fahy More South Road Bridgetown, which is very dangerous to road users.”

Proposed by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Burke.

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“This road is not currently on the 2019-2021 Road Works Programme. It has a PSCI rating of 3 and would be a suitable candidate for the Community Investment Scheme. Essential maintenance works will be carried out within the District’s current financial constraints.”

Item 17 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Cooney

“That Clare County Council immediately carry out road works on the Ardnataggle Road, Bridgetown, in the interest of Road Safety.”

Proposed by: Cllr. J. Cooney
Seconded by: Cllr.P. Burke.

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer replied as follows:

“This road is not currently on the 2019-2021 Road Works Programme. It would be a suitable candidate for the Community Investment Scheme. Essential maintenance works will be carried out within the District’s current financial constraints.”

Cllr. J. Cooney requested that every effort be made to include it under future road works programmes.

Item 18 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Hayes

“I propose that Clare County Council put in place some traffic calming measures on Main Street, Feakle.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes
Seconded by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan.

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“A Traffic Survey of Feakle Village will be conducted for one week during the month of November. The information gained through this survey will govern what measures would be most appropriate to the Main Street area of Feakle. Any works identified will be subject to available funding.”

Item 19 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Hayes

‘I propose that safety measures be put in place on the Tulla-Doonane road as there are some sections without any embankments, for the protection of motorists and pedestrians’.

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes
Seconded by: Cllr. A. O'Callaghan.

Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

“The L-8148-11 (1.2km) was surfaced dressed in 2017. During these works the sections most in need of banking were addressed. Any further works of this nature on this section of road will be subject to budgetary restraints.”

Declan Flanagan agreed to meet with Cllr. Hayes to review the worst sections of this route.

Item 20 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Hayes

“I am asking for an update into Clare County Council’s plans for vacant and derelict properties in the Killaloe District.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes
Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney.

Anne Haugh, Director of Service, replied as follows:

“A Vacant Homes Action Plan for Co. Clare was prepared by the Social Development Directorate and submitted to the Department in December, 2017. Vacancy rates from CSO (Census 2016) showed 10,925 vacant homes in the county and when holiday homes are excluded the figure reduces to 6,104. Geo-Directory figures from An Post show 2,700 unoccupied dwellings.

The Council examined Geo-Directory figures as it identifies vacant postal addresses whereas the Census data does not give this information. From information examined nationally by the Vacant Homes Unit, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, the level of vacant dwellings would appear to be significantly overstated in the 2016 Census and is generally considered as about half of their stated figure.

As per Census 2016 Killaloe Municipal District has 1,173 vacant properties (excluding holiday homes) and as per Geo Directory there are 530. Vacant Houses for the entire County are being assessed on an ongoing basis using data from Q4 of 2018 Geo Directory and entries by members of the public on www.vacanthomes.ie.

The Vacant Homes Website has recently been re-launched by Mayo County Council encouraging the public to make use of the vacant homes website and register vacant residential properties in their area. To date 35 houses in Clare have been entered on the Website by Members of the Public. Of these, there are a small number that Clare County Council may be able to acquire in due course if and when legal issues are resolved. Others can be ruled out for the following reasons such as:-

- Insufficient address;
- Locations are in a rural area where there is insufficient demand.

Assessing the reasons for vacancy can be a difficult and slow process due to the following:-

- Property owners do not reside in the area and a lack of knowledge on their whereabouts is a barrier to advancing acquisition;
- No title exists.

Where the owners' details can be obtained from Land Direct, they are being contacted by Clare County Council and requested to bring their properties back in to use through the following means:-

- Repair and Lease Scheme
- Buy and Renew Scheme
- Long Term Leasing
- To date 25 no. properties have been acquired throughout the county under the Buy and Renew Scheme.

Work is ongoing in collaboration with Rural Development Directorate focusing at present on Vacant/Derelict Houses in Tulla, Broadford, Tuamgraney and Sixmilebridge. The Geo-Directory statistics show that there are approximately 65 houses recorded as vacant in Sixmilebridge Townland, 11 in Broadford, 49 in Tulla and 22 in Tuamgraney. A more in-depth analysis of Tulla shows that there are 26 no. properties within the village and the remainder are in rural locations. Of the 26 no. properties within the village the following is the current status:

| Current Status | No. of Properties | Next Steps |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Occupied | 4 | No further action required |
| Occupation being examined | 2 | Establish ownership |
| Under/Planned Refurbishment | 4 | Write to owner to establish future use. |
| Not registered on Land Registry | 10 | Establish does Registry of Deeds title exist |
| Owner deceased | 1 | Relatives in America as per local knowledge. Examine further. |
| For Sale | 1 | CCC to inspect |
| Sold | 3 | To be monitored |
| In Use as Community Facility | 1 | No further action required |
| Total | 26 | |

A similar analysis is currently being carried out for Sixmilebridge, Tuamgraney and Broadford. We will continue to maximise the number of vacant units that can be returned to use and a full report on the outcome of this exercise will be presented to the Municipal District Elected Members when complete.”

Cllr. P. Hayes welcomed this very detailed response and outlined his support for any initiative that would support rural towns and villages.

Item 21 Any other business.

Cllr. A. O’Callaghan welcomed the new Council App that had been developed in order to assist Councillors with queries and representations. He also welcomed Fiona Mc Garry in her new role with the Clare Champion

Cllr. J. Cooney complemented everybody involved with the improvement works carried out in Scarriff Town and the other members also offered their praise for the quality of the work carried out.

On behalf of all the members, Cllr. P. Burke wished Carol Byrne well in her new position and thanked her for her coverage of Killaloe MD meetings with the Clare Champion over many years.

The members also sought an update on the operational areas that would be covered by the Municipal District from January 1st and requested details of the staffing implications, if any, for the outdoor staff in the Municipal District. They requested that the Headed Paper for the Municipal District be amended to reflect the new Municipal District area.

The members requested that Sgt. Deirdre O’Doherty of the Killaloe Garda Station be invited to a meeting of Killaloe Municipal District early in 2020.

The meeting then concluded.

Kieran O’Donnell
Meetings Administrator.

8th November 2019.