

**Minutes of the Shannon Municipal District Meeting held on
Tuesday 18th May, 2021 at 9.45am in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road,
Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present: Councillors Pat McMahon (Cathaoirleach), PJ Ryan, John Crowe, Gerard Flynn, Donna McGettigan, Pat O’Gorman and Michael Begley.

Officials Present : Liam Conneally Director of Service, Sean Lenihan Senior Engineer, Jason Murphy Meetings Administrator, Tom Mellett Senior Executive Engineer and Patricia O’Neill, Staff Officer.

Cathaoirleach Pat McMahon opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

1. Minutes of Shannon Municipal District Meeting held on 16th March, 2021 were proposed by Cllr. PJ Ryan and Seconded by Cllr. Michael Begley and agreed by all.
2. Update by the Project Management Office on capital projects in the Shannon MD – Presented by Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer.

N19 Shannon Airport Access Road

Phase 2 (option selection) is currently on going and following the recent public consultation phase, observations received are being assessed and will feed into the final option selection. At the outset, this project will provide an enhancement of the existing alignment and will include cycle and pedestrian improvements. The results of the investigatory works will help form the emerging route selection process with the preferred option identified by the end of July. This will be followed by further public consultation. The strategic importance of this access road to the Airport, Industrial zone and in harnessing direct foreign investment was highlighted.

Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme

Shannon was part of the CFRAM study with the town and airport identified as an area for further assessment. Given the hydraulic links between the airport and the town, it was considered important to address flood issues jointly and subsequently following collaboration with the OPW and Shannon Airport, the various elements of work were merged to form the Shannon & Environs Flood Relief Scheme. The project cost is estimated at €20m. Contracts have been awarded recently for geophysical survey, topographical survey, CCTV survey and site investigations. These works will inform the ultimate design of the project.

Springfield, Clonlara Flood Relief Scheme

Planning Permission was granted by An Bord Pleanála at the later end of 2020. The importance of the scheme being technically, environmentally and financially viable was emphasised. Following ground investigative works there is a concern that there may be underground passages of water. The Hydrologist report is due for completion and will be submitted to the Consultants for consideration. It is hoped that the findings will be favourable and Clare County Council continue to work with OPW colleagues.

Limerick North Distributor Road (LNDR)

Project appraisal documents are currently with the Department and a meeting has been requested with the Department. Clare County Council is committed to ensuring that the LNDR is front and

center to Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy (LSMATS), with mutual benefits for both projects. The delivery of this project is critical to the delivery of other projects by the NTA. The costings for phase 2 is estimated at €145m.

Errinagh Canal

The upgrade to the walkway along the Errinagh Canal from the Burlington Factory to UL will provide a safer and alternative access to the University. The invasive species contractor has been on site in recent months and has removed giant hogweed vegetation. Clare County Council is currently reviewing construction aspects with key stakeholders. It is intended that this upgrade will feed into other projects for the area.

Following on from this presentation the Elected Members raised the following points:

- A possible start date for the Errinagh Canal project
- N19 Shannon Airport Access road would also provide for Industries along this route.
- Consideration be given to incorporating a dual carriageway rather than single carriageway on the upgrade of the N19 Shannon Airport Access road.
- As the LNDR is progressing, infrastructure should be put in place to enable Meelick to connect to Limerick Main Drainage.

In response to issues raised by the Elected Members Seán Lenihan stated:

- Not in a position at present to give a definitive start date for the Errinagh Canal project but it is anticipated that works will be completed during the summer period.
- The upgrade of the N19 Shannon Airport Access Road will include a roundabout to serve the industrial area.
- In respect of the provision of a dual carriageway on the upgrade of the access road, factors such as traffic surveys pre covid and cost will be taken into consideration. The PMO continue to work closely with TII for what is best for the region.
- While Seán Lenihan acknowledged the Members comments in relation to the need to upgrade the sewerage scheme in Meelick, the PMO are not directly involved in this element but that this issue is being raised with Irish Water by Clare Co Co as part of a bigger issue with unsewered settlements in the County.

3. Proposed Declaration of public roads at An Tobar, Hurlers Cross, Bunratty, Co. Clare
Proposed by Cllr. PJ Ryan and Seconded by Cllr. Pat McMahon and agreed by all.

4. Allocation of funding under the Shannon MD Small Community Grant Scheme 2021 – proposed by Cllr. Pat McMahon and seconded by Cllr. PJ Ryan.

5. Economic Development

Jason Murphy, Senior Executive Officer updated the Member as follows:

- A number of Workshops with the Elected Members have taken place in recent weeks including Shannon Town Master Plan, Casual Trading and Beach bye laws and Housing quarterly brief. The importance of these briefing was highlighted and the input from the Members in making submissions to projects/plans from briefings.
- Shannon MD Small Community Grants Scheme 2021 – A total of €27,470 was allocated to 30 groups under this years scheme. The deadline for drawdown of the grant is 29th October, 2021.

- Mobility plan for Shannon Town is progressing and the Shannon MD Office will be working with Road Design Office on this project.
- GMA projects under the 2021 allocation have been finalised with the Elected Members.
- Planting scheme for the district to be discussed and agreed in the coming weeks with the Elected Members.
- Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2021 – expressions of interest are requested for projects under the 2021 scheme. The closing date for the submission of applications is 31st May 2021. The priorities of the 2021 Town and Village Renewal Scheme are on vacant and derelict buildings and sites, upgrade and enhancement of shop-fronts and street facades in towns and villages, develop parks, green spaces and recreational amenities in town centres, regeneration projects that support active and vibrant town and village centres. A workshop will be arranged to identify proposed projects which can be delivered over an 18 month period.
- Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2021 – engagement with the Elected Members will take place in relation to the identification of such projects.
- The Support Scheme for Town/Village Paint Works is available again this year under the Community Supports Scheme 2021. A total Budget of €40,000 is provided to support this initiative under the scheme. Each Municipal District is responsible for selecting a town/village and the allocation per MD is €10,000.
- Sports capital grant application – Shannon MD has applied for funding under this scheme for the purchase of playground equipment.
- Local Enterprise Office will make a presentation to the Elected Members in the coming months on projects in the district.

Cllr Gerard Flynn stated that Shannon Town should be included for consideration under the Town & Village Paint scheme. He also requested that consideration should be given to an application under the TVR scheme for the Drumgeely area, which was the original town centre for Shannon.

It was also raised by the Members of the lack of public lighting from Ballycasey Roundabout to Shannon Springs Hotel along Bóthar Mór. There are a number of very tall trees in the area and consideration to be given to the addressing this.

Liam Conneally added that a number of grants are available at present from Government to assist Local Authorities, businesses and communities. He emphasised the need to be prepared to access these grants and the need for the Shannon MD to get their share of funding available. A state of readiness is crucial and this will be addressed through further consultation with the Members and Community Groups.

Liam Conneally informed the Members that both the Chief Executive and he met recently with IDA in relation to property in the ownership of Clare County Council with a view to requesting assistance for project proposals for this location. He further added that for the IDA to attract foreign direct investment a number of factors will be taken into consideration including the tax regime, skills base that is required and available, housing, quality of life and how that will impact in attracting foreign investment in the future. He stated that Clare County Council continues to collaborate with Shannon Group and all the stakeholders.

Mr. Conneally also informed the Members that interdepartmental meetings regarding the Shannon Estuary are taking place to consider the opportunities this asset has to offer in attracting investors. It is anticipated that not only can enough power be generated off the west coast of Ireland but also to export into Europe and beyond. He stated that he will revert to the Members on the progress of these discussions.

6. Roads

Tom Mellett updated the Members in relation to works in the district

- Footpath works completed include – 250m of footpath in Shannonbanks, 250m of footpath at Dromoland, Newmarket On Fergus and footpath from Shannon Hibs to Shannon embankments.
- Fairgreen Nemarket On Fergus – upgraded lights to front car park, surfaced rear carpark and introduced new lighting.
- Drainage works carried out in Lackyle and Meelick.
- Contracts for grass cutting and tree cutting are now in place.
- Town & Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)
 - Sixmilebridge TVR design is now complete and preparation is underway for putting forward a Section 38.
 - Bunratty TVR – currently meeting with designer
- Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) – materials ordered for Shannon Looped walks and should be in place in the coming weeks.
- NTA Bus Shelter Programme – works had been stalled on these works due to Covid-19 restrictions but with the lifting of restrictions works have now commenced and the contractor is on the ground.
- Low Cost Safety Schemes for Clonlara and Sixmilebridge for completion in 2021
Sixmilebridge Low Cost Safety Scheme to be incorporated into the TVR contract for delivery.
- Active travel & other footpaths
 - contractor appointed to carry out surveys in Meelick and Parteen.
 - Mobility study for Shannon Town has commenced – community group carried out a cycle audit and expression of interest has been sought for a walking audit.
 - Other projects approved under this scheme include the upgrade of the Ballycasey Green area and the upgrade of the Shannon Banks footpath between Hampstead Park and Athlunkard Bridge.
- Dromoland to Clonmoney – works have been completed on clearing the cycleway in preparation for upgrading.
- Colas have been contracted to carry out drainage works and repairs to vehicle restraint barrier on R458 Radisson and Lansdowne bridge.
- Roadworks programme – roads prepared and ready for works to commence. Current weather conditions have delayed the commencement of these works.
- Biodiversity – the Shannon MD is working with Planning, Environment, Community groups and Councillors to roll this out to other areas in the MD.

Cllr Gerard Flynn requested a review of the speed controls measures installed at Bóthar na Rinne, between St. Patrick's Comprehensive and the residential area of Tradaree and Cluain Airne.

7. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. PJ Ryan

Ar molagh Cllr. PJ Ryan

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

That this MD would carry out repairs to a section of the R462 adjacent to Cratloe Cross and directly opposite the Cul De Sac road as the road is subsiding.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District office will investigate this location and schedule any repairs required.

8. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. PJ Ryan

Ar molagh Cllr. PJ Ryan

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

That this MD would carry out repairs and surfacing to the footpath on Church Road, Cratloe as it is in very poor condition.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District Office is currently preparing the annual footpath maintenance contract. This path will be included for assessment.

9. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. PJ Ryan

Ar molagh Cllr. PJ Ryan

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

That this MD would carry out repairs and surfacing to a section of the road between Nix's Bridge and Mount Gordon, Meelick

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District office will investigate this location and schedule any repairs required.

10. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Donna McGettigan

Ar molagh Cllr. Donna McGettigan

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Gerard Flynn

Considering the importance of bees in our ecosystem and the fact that even faster declines of bees are recorded in Ireland, with 77 different species of solitary bees in Ireland, I call on this MD to create and place "bee hotels" in along with the pollinator areas in Shannon and across other areas to help sustain and grow our bee population.

These hotels can be made from recycled materials and are easy to make, they can be part of a school project and then used along with the pollinators as education on bees, their life and how important they are to us.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District Office in partnership with Shannon Tidy Towns and supported by our local Elected Representatives has successfully trialled 5 pollinator sites around Shannon Town.

We will be considering ways to further expand the number of pollinator sites in 2022 with the aim of creating a network to support all pollinators.

In tandem with this initiative, we will be seeking advice on how best to help nesting bees naturally and to create and retain bee habitat which would incorporate physical measures as described in the motion.

11. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Donna McGettigan

Ar molagh Cllr. Donna McGettigan

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Gerard Flynn

Ash dieback disease has spread rapidly and we are in danger of losing all our ash trees.

I call on this MD to work with Teagasc who are developing a gene bank with the ultimate goal of producing tolerant ash seed, in order to remove and replace dying or dead ash trees with ash dieback tolerant trees.

Congella McGuire replied as follows:

Ash trees in County Clare have been particularly affected by Ash Dieback, due possibly to the amount of Ash plantations and the prevalence of Ash planting on acid soils in the county.

Contact has been made with Teagasc in Nenagh with responsibility for County Clare in regard to Ash dieback disease.

Teagasc are doing some work in other counties in the region to graft the small percentage of Ash Trees found to be resistant to Ash Dieback.

Discussions around a Citizen Science project is currently being explored, where we could seek input from the public to identify Ash trees resistant to Ash Dieback in Clare and perhaps replicate what is being done elsewhere.

Teagasc are considering this proposal further and will revert back when further information is at hand.

This Motion received the full support of all the Elected Members.

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Donna McGettigan

Ar molagh Cllr. Donna McGettigan

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Gerard Flynn

I call on this MD to put in place traffic calming measures in the Radharc na Coille housing estate, Shannon. Residents are complaining that traffic in and out of the estate is too fast for a residential area, particularly with children playing in the estate.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

This housing estate contains three lengthy straights of roadway, with Cul-de-Sacs leading from them or with housing accessing directly onto them and so may require a number of different traffic calming solutions.

The Municipal District Office will conduct a speed survey within the estate and use this information to determine the nature of the problem and to assist in identifying potential solutions.

Funding for any proposal will need to be identified once a design is complete.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Pat McMahon

Ar molagh Cllr. Pat McMahon

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Gerard Flynn

I am requesting Clare County Council to repair the footpaths at Woodland Heights Estate, Newmarket On Fergus as they have deteriorated badly.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District Office is currently preparing the annual footpath maintenance contract. This estate will be included for assessment.

If large scale works are required, the Municipal District Office will prepare an application under an appropriate grant scheme for 2022.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Pat McMahon

Ar molagh Cllr. Pat McMahon

Cuidithe ag Cllr. PJ Ryan

That Clare County Council would implement safety measures on the Stonehall Road, Newmarket On Fergus in the interest of public safety for residents in the locality including pupils and staff attending Stonehall National School.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

I have met with the Principle of the National School to discuss this issue. The Municipal District Office will reinstate the depleted rumble strips on each approach to the school.

I have agreed to carry out a traffic survey once Covid conditions are relaxed to the point where we could see pre-Covid levels of Traffic on our roads again. This information will be used to assist in identifying traffic management solutions.

I have also agreed to work with the school to advance applications for traffic management works in the vicinity of the school.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Pat McMahon

Ar molagh Cllr. Pat McMahon

Cuidithe ag Cllr. PJ Ryan

I am requesting Clare County Council to erect “No overnight parking” signs at the back entrance to house no.’s 63-74 and 91- 108 Kilnasoolagh Park, Newmarket On Fergus, as it is causing an inconvenience to the residents.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

A ban on overnight parking would require Bye Laws. “Set Down Only” signs would be more appropriate for this location.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. John Crowe

Ar molagh Cllr. John Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

I am requesting Clare County Council to provide a temporary speed limit of 50km on rigid trucks and 40km on articulated trucks on the L3056 leading from Bobby O’Connell & Son’s Quarry. This is required due to the excessive speed these vehicles travel at on this road and a concern for the safety of all road users. The provision of a temporary speed limit on Heavy Goods Vehicles will dramatically improve road safety on this busy road.

John Leahy replied as follows:

This location will be placed on file for consideration at the next national speed limit review for Clare. In the interim an examination of the location will be carried out to assess if specific safety measures are warranted and this assessment will include a review of accident data at the area/location. If the location meets the criteria for a Low Cost Safety Scheme or other intervention then this will be subject to a Department of Transport funding allocation.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. John Crowe

Ar molagh Cllr. John Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Donna McGettigan

I am requesting Clare County Council to reinstate the bus shelter at Cratloemoyle, adjacent to the Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa. This is a much needed facility for the staff, guests, local community and school going children. After all their safety and wellbeing are paramount.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The NTA Bus Stop upgrade programme had been halted under the Covid-19 restrictions. Works on this programme recommenced on May 10th last and the contractor is currently carrying out preparatory works. The Radisson bus shelter is on the programme of works and it is currently estimated that all works will be completed by the end of the year.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. John Crowe

Ar molagh Cllr. John Crowe

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Pat McMahon

The L3162 was resurfaced in August 2020 between Monument Cross and Kilmaleery Cross (approx. 900 meters) and as a result of various factors, there is an urgent need of remedial works. The current condition of the road is a health and safety risk particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Tom Mellett replies as follows:

This road was surface dressed in 2020 and meets the standard required. We will direct the patcher to this road when it is next in the District.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Michael Begley

Ar molagh Cllr. Michael Begley

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

That this MD would up-grade ie repair/replaster/paint, the Westbury entrances and roadside wall as they are in a very unsightly state.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District Office has secured funding to carry out upgrade and repairs works along this wall, which has fallen into a state of disrepair.

We are carrying out investigation works to determine the condition of the wall before finalising our plans.

The intention is to engage with local Community Groups before works commence and that all works will be completed by the end of this year.

20. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Michael Begley

Ar molagh Cllr. Michael Begley

Cuidithe ag Cllr. PJ Ryan

That this MD take whatever steps are necessary to achieve adequate sight line at the junction of L-3062 and L30621 (Cloonoughter and Clooncarhy, Clonlara).

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District Office will refer this location to the Road Design Office in order to secure a redesign for the junction and I will revert to Cllr. Begley on this matter.

21. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Michael Begley

Ar molagh Cllr. Michael Begley

Cuidithe ag Cllr. PJ Ryan

That the L-7042 from it's junction with the L-3064 (known as the "Castle Road", Clonlara), be included for restoration/improvement in the 2022 Roads Programme.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

This road will be assessed for inclusion in the 2022 programme of works.

22. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Gerard Flynn

Ar molagh Cllr. Gerard Flynn

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Donna McGettigan

I am calling on The Director of Economic Development and the Area Co-ordinator for the Shannon District to engage the services of a public relations officer and publish the many positives that exist in Shannon Town as a place to live, bring up a family and avail of the many opportunities that exist for employment, education, social interests & also an expansive landscape to enjoy. In recent years comments from some in regard to Clare County Council and their management of Shannon has done some damage to Shannon Town and in my opinion it is time for some positive action to counteract this and restore pride in Shannon.

Jason Murphy replied as follows:

The channels of communications between agencies and customers have been transformed significantly with the development of on-line media. Clare County Council has adapted to this shift and continues to review communication platforms and how we engage.

Following a review of structures, the Shannon Municipal District function now forms part of the Economic Directorate within Clare County Council and the outlook has changed to focus on the wider needs of the community and business.

The Municipal District Office is based in Shannon and works closely with the seven elected representatives to develop projects throughout the district. Communities supported through the office include those in Athlunkard, Parteen, Clonlara, Meelick, Cratloe, Sixmilebridge, Bunratty, Newmarket on Fergus and Shannon. The works carried out are vital to the success of the Shannon district and indeed the district has a lot to offer families, communities, visitors and business alike. Towns across the district, like Shannon, have a lot to offer in terms of amenity, services and employment with strong communities and a rich culture.

The importance of promoting the positives of the district towns and indeed the projects being carried out between the MD Office, elected representatives and communities is recognised and the MD Office will work with the Communications Office to develop a media plan.

The Elected Members unanimously supported this Motion and emphasised the need to promote the positives about Shannon and the wider area. Cllr. Flynn added that Clare County Council has a domain that should be utilised to promote the positive news about Shannon Town and the wider District.

Liam Conneally added that while a lot of good work is done in the Shannon district, it isn't always well publicised and would have concern the impact this negative publicity could have on potential investors. A review will be carried out of our communication channels in how we publicise the positives in the district.

23. Notice of Motions submitted by Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

Ar molagh Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

Cuidithe ag Cllr. PJ Ryan

I am requesting this MD to look at raising the manhole cover on the R462 at O’Gorman’s Cross, Cratloe. This manhole was put in place a number of years ago when the bridge under the road collapsed.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

The Municipal District office will investigate this location and schedule any repairs required.

24. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

Ar molagh Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Donna McGettigan

That this MD would carry out repair works to the roads and the roadside drainage gullies to the rear of the houses at Slaney Park and Allen Park Shannon. As there has been a lot of wear and tear over the years with delivery trucks. As a result the road has dropped and the gullies are too high to take water.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

Maintenance works for this location will be added to the Municipal District Office’s schedule.

25. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

Ar molagh Cllr. Pat O’Gorman

Cuidithe ag Cllr. Michael Begley

I call on this MD to carry out a survey on traffic movements on the main route through Westbury housing estate. With the view of reducing the speed limit or putting traffic calming measures in place.

Tom Mellett replied as follows:

Once traffic volumes have returned to pre-Covid levels a traffic monitor will be deployed in the Westbury estate. This information can be used to identify areas of concern where further works will be required.

26. AOB

- Date for AGM – it was agreed that a date for the AGM would be identified in the coming weeks.
- Cllr. Michael Begley raised the following
 - Spraying of Hogweed to take place as soon as possible before it starts seeding
 - Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) has been announced within the last week. A list of schemes for the MD to be put forward.
 - Led lights replaced in some poles and not in others.
 - Water outage in Blackwater is a weekly occurrence. This needs to be raised with Irish Water as a matter of priority to get this mains sorted out.
- Cllr. Gerard Flynn requested that consideration be given to the completion of a section of road at Bonnabinnia, Cratloe under the LIS.
- Tom Mellett responded as follows to the points raised by the Elected Members:
 - The contractor for the spraying of Hogweed is currently in place.
 - The Department have issued details of this years LIS and the MD is looking at the particulars of the scheme.

- In relation to the replacement of some lights by led lights, Tom Mellett informed the meeting that led lights are only replaced if there is a fault in the existing standard light.
- Disposal of lands at 24 Cill Chais, Shannon.
Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer circulated correspondence and a map outlining the proposed disposal of 60 square meters (0.01482 acres) of property at 24 Cill Chais, Shannon. Following consideration of same by the Elected Members it was proposed by Cllr. Gerard Flynn and seconded by Cllr. PJ Ryan.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____