

Minutes of Special Meeting of West Clare Municipal District held on 21st May, 2020 at 2pm. in the Council Chamber, Aras Contae an Chlair, Ennis

Cathaoirleach sa Cathair:

Cllr. B. Chambers.

I Láthair:

Cllr. S. Talty, Cllr. R. Garvey, Cllr. G. Keating, Cllr. J. Killeen, Cllr. J. Garrihy, Cllr. I. Lynch, Cllr. C. Murphy, Cllr. P.J. Kelly.

Officials present:

Mr. Leonard Cleary, Area Co-Ordinator & Director of Service
Mr. J. O'Malley, A/Senior Executive Officer ,West Clare Municipal District
Mr. J. Corry, Administrative Officer & Meetings Administrator.
Ms. Carmel Kirby, Director of Service, Physical Development
Mr. C. Feeney, Senior Engineer, Environment and Water Services

At the outset of the meeting L. Cleary welcomed everyone

1. Provision of supports from Clare Co Council to those affected by the the water supply in Miltown Malbay and surrounding area.

L. Cleary referred to the ongoing problems in Miltown Malbay regarding water outages. He referred to the correspondence that the Chief Executive had sent to Irish Water on the 15th May expressing his concerns regarding water supply issues facing the residents of Miltown Malbay. He welcomed the response that had been received from Irish Water, earlier that day, in response to the Chief Executive's correspondence. This correspondence outlined that Irish Water prepared to provide assistance in the event that a burst on the public water main affected supply to the 4 Group Water Schemes supplied from the public supply. It also outlined that Irish Water were working closely with Clare Co Council in advancing the taking in charge of the 4 Group Water Schemes. It concluded that as a longer term solution that Irish Water was currently progressing plans to replace a section of old water main between Mullagh & Miltown Malbay which would commence in Q1 2021 subject to funding. Also regarding Rockmount reservoir Irish Water indicated that tender documents would issue in the next few weeks & this was also programmed to go to construction in 2021.

The Members welcomed the response received from Irish Water. They indicated that this matter was extremely serious because of the frequency of the water outages and the impact that this had particularly because of the importance of sanitization during the Covid pandemic as well as the impact water losses had for businesses, farmers etc. They indicated the importance of funding being made available to carry out improvement works.

C. Kirby acknowledged the difficulties experienced by the people in Miltown Malbay and indicated that Clare Co Council had numerous correspondences with Irish Water on the matter. She welcomed the response received from Irish Water earlier that day and she indicated that she would continue to engage with them to ensure that they delivered on what they had promised and that she would keep the Members updated. She concluded by thanking C. Feeney and the staff of Clare Co Council for their efforts in assisting with the problems being experienced in Miltown.

L. Cleary thanked everyone for their contributions and he concluded by thanking J. O' Malley and his staff for their efforts in assisting with the problems being encountered.

2. The impact of COVID-19 on the West Clare community over the next 12 months.

L. Cleary acknowledged the impact of Covid-19 on the West Clare community both in terms of economics and its impact on communities. He added that as a Municipal District that they needed to put a clear plan in place being mindful of HSE guidelines and the the Government Plan. He added that Clare Co Council had a clear role and that the Elected Members had a mandate to chart the way forward.

Cllr. Murphy emphasized the dependence of West Clare on Tourism and he referred to statistics that he had received from Finance regarding a summary of rates by business sector per MD which reinforced that fact. He added that with the impact of Covid-19 on tourism that there was very little for many of these businesses in West Clare to fall back on. He emphasized the importance of looking at the procurement process such that work could be given to local contractors such that they employed local workers and their income filtered down into the local economy.

L. Cleary emphasized the importance of remote working going forward and how West Clare were well prepared in that regard with 3 of the 4 Digital Hubs established by Clare Co Council in Clare being in the West Clare MD. He indicated that all the hubs would be reopening in the next week. He added that the Council were putting in place a plan to reopen beaches in West Clare including public toilets. He added that L. Conneally, was setting up a countywide Task Force and that LEO were dealing with SME's. He added that he would like to revisit the West Clare MD Strategic Plan to see how could same be amended post Covid-19. He suggested that the Members give this some thought & to revert with any suggestions re same. He emphasized the availability of Restart Grants from Clare Co Council to facilitate businesses returning to work . He referred to the 10 year Tourism Strategy which was going before the Steering Committee in the next 10 days for consideration and which had factored in the aftermath of Covid-19. He concluded by saying that he could arrange a Workshop with reps from various sections in Clare Co Council to discuss the approach being taken to support businesses and the community post Covid.

It was agreed that a further Special Meeting would take place at 4pm in the Council Chamber, Aras Contae an Chlair on 9th June to discuss further.

It was also agreed that the West Clare MD AGM would take place at 4pm on 23rd June in the Council Chamber, Aras Contae an Chlair.

The meeting then concluded and the Cathaoirleach thanked all for attending.

Signed :

Cllr. B Chambers

Cathaoirleach

Signed :

J. Corry

Meetings Administrator

Dated this the 23rd day of June 2020.