

MINUTES OF ATHLONE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COURTHOUSE, ROSCOMMON ON MONDAY THE 8th DECEMBER, 2014. AT 9.30 A.M.

PRESENT: Councillor Paddy Kilduff, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: I. Connaughton, L. Fallon, J. Keogh, J. Naughten and T.Ward

OFFICIALS: Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Antoinette Robinson, Administrative Officer

13.14. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh
SECONDED by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Athlone Municipal District held on 6.10.2014.

MATTERS ARISING:

Budget 2015 General Municipal Allocation for Athlone

Members raised the following issues:

- Looking forward to an increase in the budget on the Athlone Municipal Area
- When will there be an indication of the changes to the Budget?
- Population should be taken into consideration and the budget weighted accordingly.

Road at Monksfield

Majella Hunt, Director of Services stated that previous engineering inspections indicated that the road was not wide enough to incorporate a right-turning lane. Eugene Dwyer, Senior Engineer has inspected the road recently and no decision has been made as yet.

National Cycle Route Dublin to Galway

Members raised the following issues:

- The preference for the Cycle Route is that the old N6 is used or if this cannot be facilitated then there should be a requirement that no farms are split as a result of the new route.
- The original route was the most sensible option. The route is now Shannonbridge to Ballinansloe.
- The route is going through boglands which are prone to flooding. Will this mean that the route cannot be used at certain times of the year.
- There should be direct access to Clonmacnoise.
- Consultation with farmer is essential so that no farms are split up as part of the route.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Fallon
SECONDED by Councillor Ward

That the old cycle route is used and that the €400,000 funding is used in the area from Athlone to Cornafulla.

Majella Hunt, Director of Services addressed the members and stated that the Smarter Travel scheme was a separate funding from the Department. A number of obstacles were identified on the old N6 as this is a highly residential road. As a result the cycling route would be too

expensive in order to accommodate dwellings. There is no Departmental funding available beyond Cornafulla. This route was not adequate in terms of the national policy which is the development of a route from Dublin to Galway through scenic areas as cyclists wish to be in the countryside. The route will have connections to towns accessed through the local network. The Director acknowledged the concern of the members with regard to farms and she stated that the Consultants will meet each farmer for a one-to-one consultation. Roscommon County Council and Westmeath County Council will have an appeal under planning legislation.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon
SECONDED by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** to issue a letter to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport outlining the members resolution that no farms would be severed in the course of the development of the new cycle route.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Connaughton
SECONDED by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** to issue a letter to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport outlining the members concerns regarding potential flooding in the area proposed for the cycling route.

14.14 QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO. 135.

Replies to the Questions submitted by members were circulated (see schedule).

15.14. NOTICES OF MOTION:

3. MONKSLAND PLAYGROUND:

Notice of Motion from Councillor Naughten – 3/14

“That Roscommon County Council provide funding to upgrade and expand the Monksland Playground to cater adequately for the increasing population in this area.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

The development of playground facilities is subject to the availability of funding and the requirement for development of playground facilities in the area sought. At present the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport has no funding scheme in place. Should a scheme be announced in 2015 development of playground facilities can be considered in the context of the terms of the scheme, the funding made available and also the possible requirement for matching funding to be provided from Development Levies.

Members raised the following issues:

- Disappointment at the response as there are a significant number of residents concerned in the Monksland area and the facilities are not adequate to cater for the population.
- The playground should be extended and the equipment increased.
- The issue has been readied by residents and the current equipment is not suitable for children under six years.
- A playground in the estate should be considered at the planning permission stage and football parks, skateboard parks and basketballs courts in proportion to the population of the estate.
- There is a problem with vandalism at the playground and the repair of the equipment is an on-going problem.
- Wish to congratulate the County Council on the facilities at Lecarrow.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Naughten

SECONDED by Councillor Ward

That there is an allocation in the budget in February for Monksland Playground.

4. TAKING IN CHARGE OF ROADS:

Notice of Motion from Councillor Ward – 4/14.

“That Roscommon County Council take in charge the Pollalaher Road which is situated off regional road R363 and is in a dire state of disrepair. It measures one-fifth of a mile in length. There are seven dwelling houses situated along this road and three farmers use this road to access their lands”.

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

An application to have this road taken in charge has been received from the residents and the application is currently being considered by the Council.

Members raised the following issues:

- The road is marked on the map as taken in charge but this is not the case.
- It is important that the road is resurfaced as part of the 2015 Roads Programme.

5. ROAD AT BOGGANFIN & HILL OF BERRIES:

Notice of Motion from Councillor Fallon – 5/14.

“That Roscommon County Council immediately enter into discussions with the NRA to develop a plan to reduce the risk of serious accident to the people of Bogganfin and Hill of Berries area trying to access their homes from the N61. The residents of the area are now living in constant fear from high speed traffic making it impossible to carry out daily journeys in safety.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

All National Routes are presently undergoing safety audits being carried out by Consultants on behalf of the National Roads Authority. Based on the results of these audits, the NRA will decide where their safety budget will be spent. Roscommon County Council may still submit possible schemes but funding will not be forthcoming unless the NRA safety audit highlights a need. Roscommon County Council will carry out an independent survey of traffic speeds and vehicle numbers at this location and make a submission to the National Roads Authority.

Members raised the following issues:

- There has been an increase in the amount of traffic. There is a problem at Ballymurray school and at a number of junctions along the road.
- The priority for the NRA is to ensure that traffic is moving faster not the local residents. Request that the NRA visit the location and see the problems of access between 8 am and 10 am and between 4 pm and 6 pm every day
- Safety is an issue for residents accessing the N61. In Barrymore there are lights, footpaths and road markings which makes the area safe for residents. The road at the Hill of Berries needs considerable investment.
- There should be a traffic count on the road from Ganley’s roundabout to the junction at Cornaseer.
- There is a need for a new road from Athlone to Kiltoom. A bypass of the road would relieve the problem in the short term.
- The village of Knockcroghery needs a pedestrian crossing.
- A speed limit reduction would make a big difference to the situation.
- There is confusion regarding the sign for the Hodson Bay and hopefully the sign can be relocated.
- Where is the update on the submission to the Department for reclassification of the N61 to a National Primary Route.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Naughten

SECONDED by Councillor Keogh

That a letter issue to the Department to the new Minister to request reclassification of the N61 to a National Primary Route.

16.14. CIVIC RECEPTION:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Kilduff

SECONDED by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** to adopt the List of participants for a Civic Reception as circulated.

17.14. A.O.B.

Public Participation Network (PPN)

Councillor Ward stated that there are only 2 members from South Roscommon on the Committee. Each District should elect community people and there is now an imbalance on the committee. Each Municipal District should be entitled to 5 representatives on the Committee.

Majella Hunt, Director of Services addressed the members. She confirmed that the process relating to the election of representatives on the committee started in August. 174 groups who registered were invited to the meeting and 99 groups attended. The groups were represented as follows; Athlone Area had 28 Groups registered and 15 attended the meeting; Roscommon Area had 67 Groups registered and 37 attended the meeting and Boyle Area had 79 Groups registered and 47 attended the meeting. Each Municipal District has one nominee to the secretariat. Nominees were required to be present on the night and address the meeting.

Members raised the following issues:

- It is important that there is adequate representation from the Athlone Area.
- The guidelines outlined the requirement for gender balance and democratic balance. It is important that the new structure would cover the whole county in order to have credibility.
- Roscommon County Council should write to the PPN secretariat outlining the concerns of the Athlone Municipal District members about balance on the Committee. If a vacancy should arise, it should be filled by a representative from south Roscommon.

Irish Water

Majella Hunt, Director of Services outlined the schedule of dates and times for Irish Water clinics with the members on 26th January 2015.

Irish Water

A document outlining proposed changes to area structure and the Engineers assigned to each area was circulated. Majella Hunt, Director of Services outlined the changes for the members.

Other Issues:

- Members requested that the Area Engineer for the Athlone Municipal District attend the meetings of the Athlone Municipal District.
- Members requested that the scheduling of the Municipal District meetings be re-examined so that meetings are not running into each other and there is not pressure for

the meeting to finish as another meeting is scheduled straight after. There is not adequate time to discuss issues.

- Members asked about the schedule of works for the Old Tuam Road.
- There are hoarding issues at the Pharmaplaz site. This should be followed up with the owner and a levy should be put on the site.
- The Parkway site in Monksland needs to be addressed.
- The Danesfort Estate on the Old Galway road should to be fitted with public lighting for safety reasons.
- The Cloonbrock Estate is not taken-in-charge and lighting needs to be arranged and footpaths are also required in the interests of safety.
- In Daneshill there was a discussion previously about installing a pedestrian crossing, lights and footpaths.

Majella Hunt, Director of Services responded to all the queries raised.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned