

MINUTES OF ATHLONE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD IN THE YEW TREE RESTAURANT, LECARROW, ROSCOMMON, ON THURSDAY THE 30TH APRIL, 2015. AT 2.30 P.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
Fiona ni Chuinn, Meetings Administrator.

20.15. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

Amendment to Minutes:

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council make a submission to the Department of Transport to have Local Road L2025-0 upgraded to a regional road.

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Athlone Municipal District held on 23.2.2015, as amended.

Matters Arising:

Members raised the following issues:-

- Level of funding for the Athlone Municipal District inadequate and method of calculation per kilometre of road is unacceptable – Leitrim County Council has calculation based on the population and this is proving more satisfactory.
- The Athlone to Ballinasloe cycle route should utilize bog roads and local roads with low traffic volumes.
- The disused railway line and the R466 (N6) could be used for the cycle route.
- Severing of small farms is a huge problem and is unnecessary.
- Can Roscommon County Council withdraw from the Section 85 Agreement with Westmeath County Council.
- A public meeting should be held to air the concerns of landowners and the public.
- Allocation of €400,000 for a cycle route on the old N6 was withdrawn.
- Speed limits were adjusted out to Cornafulla to accommodate the proposed cycle route.
- Update requested on Derrycahill bridge as the continued closure of this bridge is causing serious inconvenience to the local farming community.
- Update requested on the replacement of light bulbs in housing estates in the area.
- Clarification sought on the purchase of lands in Monksland adjacent to the Athlone Springs Hotel.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council carry out a traffic count on Road No. L2018 - Curraghboy – Curnaseer (N61 at Kiltoom) and make a submission to the Department of Transport to have this road upgraded to a regional road

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

That the Roads allocations for the Municipal District areas would be calculated on the basis of 50% population and 50% kilometres of road.

Majella Hunt responded to the issues raised-

- Roads allocations have always been on a kilometre basis and this has not changed.
- This matter will be re-examined by Corporate Policy Group and an analysis will be carried out by the Finance Officer - this will be a matter for consideration for Budget 2016.
- Further clarification will be sought on the issue of light bulb funding.
- Derrycahill Bridge requires extensive repairs and discussions are ongoing with regard to the financing of same.
- Confirmed that Roscommon County Council did purchase 3 acres of land in Monksland.

21.15. CUSTUME BARRACKS, ATHLONE:

Fiona ni Chuinn circulated to the members letters that had been received from the Department of Defence regarding the reinstatement of the 4th Western Brigade in Custume Barracks in Athlone and also the issue of Post 1994 Contract Soldiers.

Members raised the following issues:-

- 600 people lost their jobs in Athlone in 2012.
- 21 year rule – what measures have been taken to address this – if members are willing to serve they should be retained – needs to be addressed.
- Abolition of the 4th Western Brigade should never have happened.
- If committed to rural development rural regeneration needs to happen.

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

It was **AGREED** to issue a further letter to the Minister for Defence requesting that the 4th Western Brigade be reinstated in Custume Barracks, Athlone, in light of improved economic circumstances.

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

It was **AGREED** that a letter issue to the Minister for Defence seeking the review of the 21 year Rule so as to afford soldiers the opportunity to remain in the Army following a successful fitness test.

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

It was **AGREED** that the Athlone Municipal District members of Roscommon County Council write to all Ministers and Senators representing the people of County Roscommon requesting that they raise at Dail and Seanad level the reinstatement of the 4th Western Brigade in Custom Barracks in Athlone.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Connaughton
SECONDED by Councillor Kilduff

That the Athlone Municipal District members of Roscommon County Council write to each Party Leader seeking a commitment in relation to:-

- The 4th Western Brigade in Custom Barracks in Athlone.
- A. & E. Services at Roscommon County Hospital.
- St. Bridget's Psychiatric Unit in Ballinasloe – closure of 27 beds.
- Retention of maternity services at Portiuncula Hospital, Ballinasloe.

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

It was **AGREED** That Roscommon County Council write to all party leaders requesting them to submit their five year plan for Health services and Economic Development for the County of Roscommon.

22.15. SETTING OF DATE FOR MEETING WITH ANGUS LAVERTY, PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER, AN POST:

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

It was **AGREED** that the Meetings Administrator would revert back to Angus Laverty Public Affairs Manager of An Post with a view to setting up a meeting for the Athlone Municipal District members for the 8th or 15th May in the Monksland Area Office at 11.00 a.m..

23.15. QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO. 135.

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

24.15. NOTICE OF MOTION:

8. FIRE SERVICE – WATER HYDRANTS:

Notice of Motion from Councillor Naughten – 8/15.

“That Roscommon County Council review the number of water hydrants provided for the fire service particularly, in rural areas, throughout the Athlone Municipal District.

The Meetings Administrator read out the following reply:-

Roscommon Fire Service work closely with the water services section and group water schemes in relation to issues regarding fire hydrants. We attended a meeting with the Roscommon members of the Federation of Group Water Schemes on Tuesday the 27th January 2015 and the Chief Fire Officer gave a presentation on

the requirements for fire fighting water in rural areas. Group Water Schemes in the Athlone MA also attended this meeting. The Fire Service have now established contact with the Federation and are sharing information.

Roscommon Fire Service also liaise with the designers of all new commercial buildings to ensure adequate fire fighting water supplies are available.

Roscommon Fire Service have well established procedures for dealing with fires in rural areas as the availability of dedicated fire fighting water flows would be limited to areas served by trunk water mains of minimum diameter of 100mm or open water supplies (eg rivers etc).

For reported house fires 2 fire engines each carrying 1800 litres of water will be mobilised. If the availability of a local water supply is doubtful additional water is available from one of our two tankers which each carry 8,400 litres of water.

Members raised the issue of the fire that took place in the Brideswell area and which involved a 7 kilometre round trip to get an additional supply of water. The matter needs to be reviewed so that there is an adequate supply of water within a 1 kilometre distance from any development.

It was **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten
SECONDED by Councillor Ward

That Roscommon County Council review the location of water hydrants in the south of the county in particular hydrants on Group Water Schemes.

Majella Hunt, Director of Services, responded to the queries raised and confirmed that 4 inch pipes are required for connection to water mains pumps as there would be no pressure otherwise. Roscommon County Council know where all hydrants are located and all commercial premises are required to have the proper piping in place. With regard to a review of what is available in all areas this again is dependant on the 4 inch main. She confirmed that a reply will issue in the next few months on the matter as the information will have to be gathered. She continued that every effort is made by the Fire Brigade with regard to fires in rural areas.

25.15. A.O.B.

Miscellaneous Issues:

Members raised the following issues:

- Right-hand turning land urgently required at Carrowmurragh – request funding from the N.R.A. to address this serious issue – no additional land required.
- Signage required in the Purts area regarding ‘deer’ crossing.
- Queried the up to date position on the upgrading of road L2025 – Bealnamullia to Taughmaconnell.
- Consultation with householders on the New Tuam road is key to good communication.
- Signage required as a matter of urgency on the Drum road to alert motorists of ‘horse riding’ on this road.
- Fencing at the Park Way & Pharmaplaz developments in very bad condition.
- Light bulbs need replacing in public lighting in housing estates particularly in Cloonbrock estate.
- Road widening required at Esther Naughten’s cottage.

- Need for provision of pedestrian crossings for Knockcroghery, Cloonakilla and Mount Talbot.
- Need to lobby the Department of Social Protection and prevent the Department seeking social welfare recipients to give Bank details for payments.
- Highlight that Post Offices are cost effective and make rural Post Offices more viable by seeking new business i.e. Motor Tax - stop closing Post Offices which are important to the people of rural Ireland.

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

It was **AGREED** that the Athlone Municipal District members of Roscommon County Council write to the N.R.A. seeking the additional funding that is required to upgrade road L2025 to the required standard.

Members thanked Councillor Paddy Kilduff for hosting the meeting in the Yew Tree and complimented the staff of the Yew Tree for their hospitality.

Members also wished Maresa Fagan, a Reporter with the Roscommon Herald, all the best on her move to Dublin and thanked her for her courtesy and co-operation during the last few years.

Majella Hunt on her own behalf and on behalf of the executive wished Maresa Fagan the best of luck in her move to further her career and thanked her for all her reporting on Council business over the last number of years.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned