

Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of the Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones held on 20th April 2015 at 10.00am in The Courthouse, McCurtain Street, Clones.

Members present: The Leas-Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pat Treanor presided.

The following members were also present:- Cllrs. Cathy Bennett, Hugh McElvaney and Pat Treanor

In attendance: Aidge King, Director of Services, Kevin McNally, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Kieran Duffy, Executive Engineer, Angela Gallagher, Staff Officer, Ann Burke, Assistant Staff Officer, Monaghan County Council

Apology: Cllrs. Ciara McPhillips and Eugene Bannigan

1. Confirmation of minutes of monthly meeting

The minutes of the March monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr. Seamus Coyle and seconded by Cllr. Cathy Bennett.

2. Matters arising from previous minutes

Cllr. Pat Treanor referred to page 1 of the minutes regarding an update on public lighting. Mr. McNally informed him that Monaghan County Council had submitted a letter to the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government seeking/regarding an application for funding in the sum of €280,000.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle referred to page 2 of the minutes regarding the R190, Ballybay-Cootehill Road and he commended Mr. McNally and Mr. Duffy on the works carried out in this area.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle proposed the following:

“That this Municipal District write again to Paschal Donohoe, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to arrange a meeting to seek special funding for works on the R190, Ballybay-Cootehill Road, to alleviate the flooding at Corrybrennan, Cumry, Keenaghbane, Anney and Lisnalong which is the cause of great hardships for local residents and road users of this busy Regional route. This correspondence to be forwarded to all local Oireachtas members”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Hugh McElvaney and agreed by all.

Cllr. Pat Treanor referred to page 2 of the minutes regarding Seachtana Na Gaelige and he commended all those involved with this event. He congratulated the overall winners, Tina's Floral Arts Flower Shop, Ballybay and Largy College, Clones and he thanked the Northern Standard for their full page coverage of Seachtana Na Gaelige.

Cllr. Pat Treanor referred to page 2 of the minutes regarding an update on O'Neill Park. Mr McNally noted that staff from the Gateway scheme were undertaking works in the area.

A discussion took place in relation to Job Bridge / Gateway employment schemes and the potential for job displacement from within Council staff. Cllr. Pat Treanor enquired how long these schemes will be in operation for and will there be any full time employment opportunities arising from them? Mr. McNally informed Cllr Treanor that the Gateway scheme is for twenty-two months and will finish in July next year. Mr. McNally noted that there is a mechanism between the Council and the Trade Union to address any potential issues that may arise. A works schedule for the gateway staff has been submitted to Human Resources Section, Monaghan County Council and same is consulted with S.I.P.T.U. All Monaghan County Council procedures and policies have to be complied with and that the Gateway staff sign up to a contract which confirms this.

Mr. McNally informed the members that there are plans to take on more Gateway staff in Ballybay. Cllr. Seamus Coyle noted that names of Gateway staff are submitted by Department of Social Protection and then interviewed by Council staff.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle referred to page 3 of the minutes regarding the proposed closure of the Social Welfare offices in Ballybay. Mr. McNally informed Cllr Coyle that he had received an email this morning stating that a meeting will be held on Monday, 18th May 2015 with Minister Heather Humphreys, the Oireachtas and Municipal District members. Venue to be arranged.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle stated that it would be more preferable for the Department to examine the cost of renting premises in Ballybay as it would be more cost effective than renting in Monaghan.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle proposed the following:

“That this Municipal District expresses it’s serious disappointment at the failure of local Oireachtas members to meet the elected members of the Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones to discuss/update them on their progress on ensuring the retention of the Department of Social Protection, Public Services Card Section in Ballybay and to arrange an immediate meeting with Joan Burton, Minister for Social Protection and again calls on the Fine Gael Oireachtas members for County Monaghan, Heather Humphreys, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Sean Conlan TD to seek an immediate Minister Directive to retain the Department of Social Protection offices in Ballybay. This correspondence to be forwarded immediately to our members to arrange for above meeting”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Hugh McElvaney and agreed by all.

Mr. McNally noted that the delay in organising this meeting was due to the unavailability of Minister Heather Humphreys.

Cllr. Pat Treanor referred to page 4 of the minutes regarding the establishment of a Regeneration Committee in Ballybay and Clones and that same should be formed immediately.

Mr. McNally informed the members that Angela Gallagher had obtained names of various community groups in both Ballybay and Clones and these groups would be invited to nominate a representative to the respective committee.

Meetings have been arranged for the establishment of the Regeneration committees as follows:

- Clones - 13/05/15 at 6.00 p.m.
- Ballybay - 20/05/15 at 6.00 p.m.

Venues to be confirmed.

Cllr. Pat Treanor referred to page 5 of the minutes regarding Wifi for Clones and Ballybay. Mr. McNally informed Cllr Treanor that this issue will be put on the agenda for the forthcoming Regeneration Committee meetings.

Cllr. Pat Treanor referred to the recent closure of the Ulster Bank in Clones stating that there was scaffolding erected at the building on Saturday in order to remove signage. All members expressed their disappointment in the closure of the Ulster Bank.

Cllr. Pat Treanor proposed the following:

“That this Municipal District write to the Ulster Bank asking them to donate their disused building in Clones to the local community or the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District on behalf of the community”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Hugh McElvaney and agreed by all.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle referred to page 7 of the minutes regarding additional car parking spaces in Ballybay. Mr. Duffy informed Cllr Coyle that currently there was no funding in place for additional car parking spaces.

Cllr. Hugh McElvaney enquired if this Municipal District can investigate the abandonment of old vehicles at the Market House in Ballybay. Mr. McNally noted that the matter will be addressed.

3. Correspondence

Cllr. Seamus Coyle referred to letter received from Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport regarding permission being sought for the Magheraveely Football Club to train or play competitive matches in The Peace Link and he enquired if there was an issue with same. Mr. McNally informed him that this matter was raised at a Clones Erne East Partnership meeting as it had an impact on operation of The Peace Link. He noted that the Magheraveely Football Club is in another jurisdiction and approval for the Club to train/play outside Northern Ireland had to be obtained from the clubs governing body. Mr. McNally noted that letters had already been issued to the Irish Football Association in Northern Ireland in relation to this.

Cllr. Pat Treanor proposed the following:

“That this Municipal District write to Michael Ring, Minister of State requesting that he consult with the Irish Football Association to enable the Magheraveely Football Club to play matches at The Peace Link Sports facility”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Cathy Bennett and agreed by all.

Cllr. Cathy Bennett referred to phone and broadband services in County Monaghan stating that as yet repairs had not been carried out in particular areas. Mr. McNally referred to correspondence received from ComReg and noted that request for repairs should be relayed to the customer’s service provider. Cllr. Cathy Bennett encouraged the public to check their service provider contract and to ensure that each customer brought issues of poor service to their service provider.

4. Approval of members to attend Twinning event on 13/06/15 in Osterhofen, Germany

Cllr. Seamus Coyle proposed the following:

“That the Cathaoirleach, Leas-cathaoirleach and one Council staff member attend the Twinning event on 13/06/15 in Osterhofen, Germany”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Hugh McElvaney and agreed by all. Cllr Treanor noted that he was unavailable on those dates and that Cllr Cathy Bennett would attend on his behalf.

5. Report by Municipal District Co-ordinator

Mr. McNally outlined the following works since the last meeting.

Recently Completed Works in the Municipal District

- Drainage works on a number of roads under the 2015 Restoration Improvement Works
- Completion of Emergency road repairs on the L2120 - Harte Peat Road
- Installation and erection of new LED Public Lighting in Ballybay Town Park
- Provision of 2 no. Traffic Calming ramps on the LP2000 at Urbleshanny National School in Scotstown
- Ongoing road maintenance and patching works including major road repairs on the LP2230-0 at Lisarearke outside Scotshouse and on the LS-6012 at Allagesh outside Scotstown.
- Ongoing preparatory works on a number of roads for the upcoming surface dressing program
- Completion of fencing works on the R185 Threemilehouse - Newbliss Road
- Road lining works at various locations in the Municipal District

Works scheduled to start in Municipal District

- Further drainage works on remaining roads under the 2015 Restoration Improvement Program
- Erection of bus shelter in Newbliss - Awaiting approval from landowner for permission to install shelter
- Surface dressing program provisionally scheduled to start in mid May
- Completion of civil works and installation of public lighting in Hill Top Rockcorry

Retention of Department of Social Protection Offices in Ballybay

Mr. McNally stated that it was his understanding that the Department had not yet secured alternative accommodation in Monaghan Town. The Department had noted that they were willing to examine the proposal submitted by the Ballybay Development Association.

Mr. McNally noted that he had spoken with Eoghan Ryan on 26th March 2015 and was advised to contact Paul Dolan in the OPW. This correspondence was circulated to all members.

Mr. McNally noted that the Department had been seeking alternative accommodation for some time now - they had previously noted that one of the main reasons for relocating away from Ballybay was length of time it would take to obtain the required necessary statutory consents to refurbish existing buildings. The ongoing delays in securing alternative accommodation now meant that time for required works should not be a factor when considering options presented in Ballybay.

Bank of Ireland

Mr. McNally stated that the Clones Branch Manager Karen Shipley had confirmed that the bank is actively considering installing an ATM in their branch but that there was no timescale for completion of this project. The Municipal District will continue to follow this matter up.

Policy for General Municipal District Allocation

Mr. McNally noted that the Municipal District had received a General Municipal District Allocation of €200,000. This funding was additional to the €7,000 which Clones and Ballybay Town Council would have been allocated previously. It was noted that to date approximately €10,000 of this funding had been committed.

Mr. McNally noted that Ballybay-Clones Municipal District had received many requests for funding from community/sporting groups.

He noted that the County Council also had its own projects, for example it is currently working in conjunction with the residents of Smithboro Village to prepare and submit a funding application to the Department for enhanced playground facilities in the area. Mr. McNally noted that while there were many requests for playground facilities in the Municipal District, the proposal for Smithboro was very advanced and appeared to meet the requirements of the Department. The deadline for submission of the application was the end of April 2015.

In the event that the application was successful and depending on the amount of funding awarded Mr McNally noted that it was possibly that €20,000-€30,000 of funding will be required from the Districts General Municipal Allocation to complete the project.

Mr McNally noted that tenders had been received for works to address the acoustics issue in Clones Courthouse. While the Department had allocated €10,000 towards the works it is likely that a further €10,000 would be required from the General Municipal Allocation to complete same.

Mr McNally informed the meeting that Monaghan County Council separately operates a Community and Environment Grants Scheme.

This scheme provides funding for:

- Community Development Fund
- Environment Fund
- Tidy Areas Fund (restricted to local authority housing estates)

The call for submission to this scheme closed at the end of March 2015. These submissions were currently being assessed. Mr. McNally understood that some of the requests for funding that this Municipal District had received may be funded under this programme.

In conjunction with the Community and Environment Grants Scheme operated by the Council, the Municipal Districts of Monaghan and Carrickmacross/Castleblayney also operate separate Community grant schemes. It was noted that these schemes were a continuation of the schemes operated previously by Monaghan and Carrickmacross Town Councils.

Mr. McNally recommended that the District refrain for awarding funding from General Municipal Allocation in response to submissions that are received in an adhoc manner and that the Municipal

District establish a Community Grants Scheme similar to that operated by the Monaghan and Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Districts.

He noted that this scheme would be funded by an allocation of €15,000 from the District's General Municipal fund with proposals been formally invited to avail of funding by way of adverts etc.

Mr. McNally suggested that it would be prudent to retain as much of the General Municipal Allocation as possible so as to be in a position to provide match funding for possible schemes being submitted for Leader/Peace funding in the future.

Cllr Pat Treanor proposed that the Ballybay Clones Municipal District establish a Community grant scheme with a budget of €15,000, and in the event that the application for funding for Smithboro playground is successful that match funding of €30,000 be made available for this scheme.

Cllr Treanor also proposed that required funding of approximately €10,000 for the improvement to the acoustics in Clones Courthouse be made available from the District General Municipal Allocation. This proposal was seconded by Cllr McElvaney and approved by all members.

6. Questions

Cllr. Cathy Bennett asked:

1. Road Improvements

The road from Lislanley roundabout to Scotch Corner via Cremartin has had some sections resurfaced in recent times and these sections are currently in good condition. There are sections however which had not received attention at that time and are currently in a very poor state of repair requiring urgent resurfacing. This road is used by a lot of heavy vehicles accessing the landfill and recycling facility in Scotch Corner and this inflicts additional wear and tear on this road. Could Ballybay/Clones MD look into the possibility of undertaking additional surveillance and repairs on an ongoing basis on this road?

Reply: There is no money allocated in the 2015 Ballybay Clones Municipal District roads programme to strengthen the LP3411 Road from Lislanley roundabout however patching repair works were carried out on this road week ending 10th April 2015.

The road from Cremartin crossroads to Scotch Corner is in the Monaghan Municipal District apart from a 500 metre stretch close to Cremartin crossroads. We will request the Monaghan Municipal District to undertake repair works on the relevant sections of the road in their area.

2. Village Signs - Cremartin

Could village signs please be erected in Cremartin as it is important to establish a sense of place and community and useful information for visitors to the area? Although Cremartin is not listed as a village in the Development plan, Scotch Corner is also not listed as village in the Development plan either and has a village sign.

Reply: Ballybay Clones Municipal District will investigate the possibility of erecting this signage on the approaches to Cremartin.

3. Ballintra Junction (Off the Ballybay-Castleblayney Road)

Can Ballybay-Clones MD please investigate the possibility of creating a safer junction here? Presently cars are blinded mid-hill at this junction of oncoming traffic; this is causing very dangerous road conditions for road users.

Reply: Although there is no specific funding in place to carry out major works at this junction on the R183, the Ballybay Clones Municipal District can investigate the possibility of carrying out works to improve warning signage and road markings for road users at this location.

This junction can be considered for submission for funding under the Low Cost Safety Initiative Scheme in 2016.

3. Tossy Cross

- A. Can Ballybay-Clones MD please investigate the reason for the road collapsing at the Bridge on the Castleblayney Rd at this cross? This road collapse is in need of urgent repair works, presently two cars cannot meet on this section of road.
- B. Why is there a signpost for Ballybay erected at this junction coming from Carrickmacross? This signpost does not give directions to Ballybay? (it only leads to confusion, and misinforms the public that they have arrived in Ballybay)

Reply: Historically there have been issues with this section of the LP4210. Apart from the road failure at this location there is also an issue with an inadequate culvert which needs improvement works.

Ballybay Clones Municipal District is presently in the process of seeking approval from the landowner to facilitate the Municipal District in carrying out works at this location. The issue regarding the signpost at this location will also be reviewed.

4. McCaheys Corner (Carrickinare)

Can Ballybay-Clones MD please investigate the possibility of removing the corner on this very dangerous section of road in order to make it safer? (Approximately 2 miles from Ballybay on the Carrickmacross road? This corner has been the reason for many fatal accidents along this stretch of road.

Reply: There is no specific funding to carry out major works at this junction on the R180. Ballybay Clones Municipal District will assess the site to assess the possibility of carrying out works to improve warning signage and road markings for road users at this location.

This junction can be considered for submission for funding under the Low Cost Safety Initiative Scheme in 2016.

7. Chief Executive Orders

Chief Executive Order Nos. BCMD 12/15 - BCMD 13/15 were noted by the members.

8. Votes of congratulations/sympathy

The members extended a vote of congratulations to Michelle Caulfield on winning the Monaghan Rose competition and wished her good luck in the Rose of Tralee competition.

9. A.O.B.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle referred to the Anti-pylon meeting which is taking place in Aughnamullen Centre tonight and he encouraged the members to attend this event.

Cllr. Seamus Coyle proposed the following:

“That this Municipal District commend and compliment the members of the County Monaghan Anti-pylon Committee for their work on behalf of the communities of County Monaghan and this Municipal District write to Alex White, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Heather Humphreys, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and to the Government to direct Eirgrid to underground the North-South Interconnector at a cost of only 1.57 times the over ground options”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Cathy Bennett and agreed by all.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____
Meetings Administrator

Date: 18th May 2015