

## **Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones**

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of the Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 at 10.00am in Ballybay Civic Offices, Main Street, Ballybay Co Monaghan.

**Members Present** Cllr Hugh McElvaney, Cathaoirleach

Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr Cathy Bennett, presided

The following members were also present:-Cllrs:- Sean Gilliland and Pat Treanor

**In Attendance** Patricia Monahan, A/Director of Services, Kevin McNally, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Kieran Duffy, Executive Engineer, Angela Gallagher, Staff Officer, Colin Murphy, Assistant Engineer.

**Apologies** Cllrs:- Seamus Coyle, Ciara McPhillips,

At the outset Cllr Hugh McElvaney excused himself from the Municipal District meeting pending a special meeting of Monaghan County Council due to be held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and requested that Cllr Cathy Bennett as Leas-Chathaoirleach undertake the role of chair.

Before leaving the meeting Cllr Hugh McElvaney welcomed Cllr Sean Gilliland to the Municipal District and extended his sympathies to Cllr Seamus Coyle on the death of his mother.

### **1. Confirmation of minutes of Monthly Meeting**

The minutes of the November monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr Pat Treanor and seconded by Cllr Cathy Bennett.

### **2. Matters arising from Previous Minutes**

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to page 1, of the previous minutes regarding the Ulster Canal and proposed the following:-

“That Ballybay-Clones Municipal Office writes to Minister Heather Humphrey’s TD and Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, and seeks an update on their discussions in relation to expanding the existing Departmental Task Force to include elected representatives from each Local Authority along the Ulster Canal.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Cathy Bennett.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 1 of the previous minutes regarding the retention of the Social Protection Offices in Ballybay and referred to a meeting which took place last Thursday in Ballybay Civic offices. Cllr Cathy Bennett noted that the only TD in attendance was Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD despite all the TD’s being invited. Cllr Cathy Bennett wanted to thank Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD, Mr Kevin McNally and all the staff from Ballybay-Clones Municipal office for all the work undertaken to date to have the offices retained in Ballybay. Cllr Cathy Bennett confirmed that the Department of Social Protection had already made the decision to relocate the offices to Monaghan. Mr Kevin

McNally stated that the meeting was organised at the request of Ballybay Chamber of Commerce and although a formal agreement had not yet been signed, the OPW had confirmed that the fit out of the new premises will be going out to tender as soon as the contract for leasing the alternative premises in Monaghan is signed which the OPW anticipate will be in January 2016. Mr Kevin McNally also stated that as requested at the meeting of Thursday last, a letter will be issued to the Tánaiste, Joan Burton TD asking her to reconsider this decision and stated that this letter would be issued today.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to page 2 of the previous minutes regarding the Ulster Bank and asked for an update on this. Mr Kevin McNally stated that he will follow this up with Mr John McEntegart on his return to work.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 2 of the minutes regarding drainage works at Smithboro playground and asked if there was an update on this. Mr Kevin McNally stated that due to the adverse weather conditions work at the playground has not taken place, however works will be completed when the weather improves.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 3 of the previous minutes regarding the Village and Town renewal scheme and asked for an update on this. Mr Kevin McNally stated that this scheme has not been announced yet.

### **3. Correspondence**

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to correspondence received regarding the hard water in Ballinode, Scotstown and Smithboro and stated that this issue has been raised by the Council meeting in Monaghan. Cllr Cathy Bennett noted that correspondence has been received from Irish water confirming they will not be paying for a water treatment plant or consider blending the water in these areas. Cllr Cathy Bennett stated that a proposal was passed by the Council and further correspondence was issued to Irish Water and they are awaiting a response on this.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to Page 24 Item No 3.13 regarding flooding on the R190 and asked if there was any further update on this? Mr Kevin McNally referred to Items 3.51-3.52 confirming that a submission has been prepared and forwarded to the Office of Public Works for their response, however as per previous replies from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, additional funding was not available and Monaghan County Council would need to fund this project from within the overall Departmental road grant. Mr Kevin McNally also stated that this is not feasible and they would continue to request additional funding from the Department for this project.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 14 of the minutes regarding adding 18 year olds to the register of electors and asked if there was any update on this. Mr Kevin McNally referred to additional correspondence item No 3.76 from Mr Alan Kelly TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 34 of the correspondence regarding the public lights in Ard Na Gaoithe, Knockatallon and asked if these lights have now been fixed. Mr Kevin McNally stated that the lights have not been fixed and that the Planning Section of Monaghan County Council have been working with the receiver to have this issue addressed. Cllr Cathy Bennett stated that this has being ongoing now for a number of months leaving the residents on this estate in darkness which is a

Health and Safety issue and requested that these lights should be repaired as a priority. Mr Kevin McNally stated that he will speak to the Planning Section again regarding this to see if he can have this issue resolved.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to item 3.39 regarding the letter issued to Mr Gerry Finn and asked if there was any possibility that the areas specified would be getting bus shelters. Mr Kevin McNally stated that should funding be available to provide bus shelters the Municipal District would like them to consider the areas listed in the letter.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to items 3.42-3.43 regarding the respite beds and asked if the 70 respite beds were additional beds? Mr Kevin McNally stated that the 70 beds referred to in this correspondence were not additional beds but 70 beds which were refurbished. Cllr Pat Treanor stated that there were still not enough beds in County Monaghan to cover demand but acknowledged the additional 20 beds at St Davnets.

Mr Kevin McNally referred to item 3.55 regarding a request from Monaghan Search & Recovery unit looking for a donation from the Municipal Districts Allocation of €300. Cllr Pat Treanor stated that the work carried out by this unit is invaluable.

Cllr Pat Treanor proposed that the €300 be paid from the Municipal Districts Allocation; this was seconded by Cllr Cathy Bennett and agreed by Councillor Sean Gilliland.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to item no 3.59 regarding the Bunnoe River and asked what this related to? Mr Kevin McNally stated that a separate application had been made to the Department requesting funding to carry out works at this location which is prone to flooding. Mr Kevin McNally stated that the lands affected at this area are mainly agricultural and that they may need to look at the environmental problems the flooding is causing. Mr Kevin McNally also stated that in regard to the OPW Minor Works scheme that a cost benefit analysis determines the level of funding available under the scheme. Due to the fact that it is mostly agricultural lands that are affected it was not envisaged that this scheme would be applicable to the Bunnoe River. Mr Kevin McNally stated that this issue would be investigated further in the New Year. Cllr Pat Treanor welcomed this as the farming community is being badly affected by flooding.

Cllr Cathy Bennett enquired if there is any EU funding for these issues and is there dedicated staff within the Council looking at all the funding options available? Ms Patricia Monahan stated that there is nothing set up within the Council however staff within the Council look at all areas of funding to see if it can be utilised.

Mr Kevin McNally referred to the flooding on the R190 and stated that the draining and cleaning costs to deal with this issue is very expensive and that it could not come out of the Council's own resources as advised by the Department, therefore the Council will continue to request flood alleviation funding from the Department.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to item 3.71 a response from Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive of the Utility Regulator regarding the North-South interconnector and stated that the Council were right to raise concerns about what she may have said and how it could have been interpreted.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to item 3.84 from Brendan Smith TD and the response received from Minister Alan Kelly TD regarding Public Lighting. Cllr Pat Treanor expressed his disappointment at the response and queried if a programme of works had been drafted by the Municipal District previously? Mr Kieran Duffy stated that this area of works had been examined and noted that to install additional lighting in the areas requested was costing in the region of €500,000.

#### **4. Report by Municipal District Co-ordinator**

Mr Kevin McNally welcomed Cllr Sean Gilliland and new Assistant Engineer Mr Colin Murphy to the meeting.

Mr Kevin McNally confirmed the following:-

#### **Recently Completed 2015 Regional and County Roads Program Works:**

Ongoing and recently completed improvement works in District:

- Completion of footpath works on the R183 Clones Newbliss road.
- Safety improvement works at McCormacks lane on the R189 at Greenans Cross.
- Footpath works on the R183 Castleblayney road in Ballybay (works ongoing – should be substantially completed by Christmas).
- Redevelopment works at Fitzpatrick Square (Lining works to be completed this week)
- 2 no ramps in Ard Cluain (to be completed this week)
- Remedial works on Milltown Bridge and at Cormeen Bridge (both due to be completed by Christmas)
- Upgrade works on 2 No pedestrian crossings in Ballybay. Works completed at Ballybay college with new speed radar to slow approaching traffic.
- Removal of trees at Fairgreen, Ballybay.
- Patching works in the Municipal District.

#### **Clones/Ballybay Regeneration committee**

Mr Kevin McNally stated that the next meeting of the Clones Regeneration committee is due to take place on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Mr Kevin McNally confirmed that as advised at the last meeting the Municipal District are progressing the feasibility studies for a number of sites in Fermanagh Street. The proposed works have been costed and the Municipal District are in the process of arranging for a valuation to be determined for the sites in question. The Municipal District have identified a number of other properties in Clones that are derelict and these are being actively followed up the view to ensuring that they are no longer classed as derelict.

Mr Kevin McNally stated that the next meeting of the Ballybay regeneration committee is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Mr Kevin McNally stated that arising from an application submitted to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Monaghan County Council has received grant approval for various works to Castleblayney and Ballybay Towns. €8000 has been allocated to Ballybay from the funding received. Mr Kevin McNally stated that it was recommended that this funding was supplemented by a further €8000 from the Municipal Districts general allocation. This

funding will be earmarked for painting of particular buildings on Ballybay Main Street and also for the development of a website for Ballybay.

Cllr Pat Treanor proposed that the Municipal District allocate €8000 for the works proposed in Ballybay, this was seconded by Cllr Cathy Bennett and agreed by Councillor Sean Gilliland.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to the recent flooding which affected many areas within the Municipal District and wanted to thank all the staff who worked out of hours and over the weekend to try to alleviate the damage and inconvenience to home owners, businesses and people travelling from and to work.

Cllr Pat Treanor asked the Municipal District to provide the members with a report highlighting all the areas which were affected by the flooding such as the house in 98 Avenue. Cllr Pat Treanor stated that this house was flooded 6 years ago, flood alleviation work were carried out and queried why the area flooded again. Mr Kieran Duffy stated that one phase of works was carried out at 98 Avenue but he understood that additional works is required at this location.

Cllr Pat Treanor stated that there are also good examples of work that has been carried out to prevent flooding and mentioned the cleaning out of gulleys at Largy College which prevented flooding at this location. Cllr Pat Treanor stated that the Municipal District should have a programme of works planned in October/November to clear gullies after the leaves have fallen off the trees.

Mr Kieran Duffy referred to flood alleviation works which took place this year in Threemilehouse and Ballybay which was successful as these areas did not flood despite the exceptional amount of rainfall. Mr Kieran Duffy also stated that works need to be carried out at the River Finn and the Municipal District needs to look at their own resources to see if work can be done here. Mr Kieran Duffy also suggested setting money aside to deal with drainage works in the towns to prevent flooding in the future.

Cllr Cathy Bennett queried whether any of the properties affected by the recent flooding could apply for the €5m which was announced by the Department. Ms Patricia Monahan stated that this money is for businesses which were recently affected by the flooding and not domestic houses. Mr Kevin McNally stated that there is €450m made available by the Department over the next 5 years which is to address areas of flooding in the Country.

Cllr Pat Treanor also stated that there could be EU money available to Landowners and residents affected by flooding.

## **5. Questions**

### **Cllr Cathy Bennett asked:-**

1. In relation to road repairs on the road from Lislaney roundabout to Scotch Corner via Cremartin following my representations earlier in the year. Some sections were in a very poor state of repair and were dangerous and the remedial work is welcomed. It is however only a temporary measure and I would urge large scale resurfacing work on this road as a matter of priority. This road is used by a lot of heavy vehicles and additional traffic accessing the landfill and recycling centre in Scotch Corner and this inflicts additional wear and tear on this road. Can Ballybay-Clones Municipal District put this road on the roads programme please?

Reply: The vast majority of the road from Cremartin crossroads to Scotch Corner is actually located within Monaghan Municipal district. With regards the road from Lislaney to

Cremartin (i.e the LP3411) the majority of this road is located within the Ballybay-Clones Municipal district apart from a small section in the vicinity of Lislanley roundabout which is located within the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District. The LP3411 is not presently on the 2016-2018 draft restoration improvement program and based on the Pavement Management System survey Monaghan County Council is unlikely to receive a funding allocation to carry out large scale resurfacing works on the LP3411.

2. In relation to the junction at Greenfield eggs. When will safety measures be carried out there? This is a very dangerous corner and safety measures are needed immediately.

Reply: Monaghan County Council has submitted the junction at Greenfield eggs for inclusion in the submission to the Department for funding under the 2016 Low Cost Safety Initiative Scheme (LCSI). It is though highly unlikely that this scheme will be approved for funding. If funding is not received through the LSCI scheme, the Ballybay-Clones Municipal possibility will examine the possibility of carrying out some minor safety improvement works on this junction in 2016.

3. In relation to future plans for a footpath at Corlatt housing estate, Knockatallon and a footpath at the Ferns housing estate in Scotstown. Are timelines in place for their completion as yet?

Reply: With regards the proposed footpath from the Ferns to Scotstown village, the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District office has finalised a design and is presently negotiating with the landowners in the area. If agreement with the landowners can be reached it is the intention to commence works on the footpath in early 2016. With regards additional footpath works in 2016 it is hoped to carry out further footpath construction works in the Municipal District including at Corlatt. However, recent severe weather has highlighted issues with a number of bridges in the District which will require remedial works in 2016. These bridges are presently being assessed but it is possible that funding will need to be allocated to carry out these remedial works as a matter of priority thereby reducing the Municipal Districts ability to deliver additional projects such as new footpath construction.

4. In relation to the action plan in County Monaghan tourism strategy booklet. Can a breakdown please be provided of the works identified as Priority 1 in the Sliabh Beagh area? Residents in this area feel that not enough is being done by Monaghan County Council to promote this area as a tourist attraction. Promotion of this area would benefit County Monaghan significantly.

Reply: Priority one in the Tourism Strategy includes actions specifically relating to the further development of Sliabh Beagh. One key action is the identification of walks which require upgrading. This will be followed by the identification of other priority projects with a tourism focus (signage, interpretation, viewing points etc) for which funding will then be sought. The Tourism Officer will work in conjunction with the Heritage Officer and the relevant Municipal District staff to progress these actions.

With regard to the promotion of Sliabh Beagh, Monaghan County Council Tourism Unit develops and produces promotional materials on a *county* basis. All these

materials (website, brochures etc) include information on Sliabh Beagh. Several actions in the Tourism Strategy focus on Tourism Promotion and Sliabh Beagh will feature in these new initiatives as a matter of course.

5. Can Ballybay Clones Municipal District please examine the possibility of building a footpath from Ballybay town to the wetlands Centre? This would promote the use of the Wetlands centre and it would also encourage more pedestrians to discover the unique facility they have on their doorstep.

Reply: Ballybay Clones Municipal District will examine the possibility of constructing a footpath from Ballybay to the wetland centre and will prepare initial costings. Again though, recent severe weather has highlighted issues with a number of bridges in the District which will require remedial works in 2016. These bridges are presently being assessed but it is possible that funding will need to be allocated to carry out these remedial works as a matter of priority thereby reducing the Municipal Districts ability to deliver additional projects such as new footpath construction.

**Cllr Ciara McPhilips asked:-**

1. What is the up to date position with regard to the Cormeen Lane Bridge near Aughnamullen Church as it has been closed for a long period?

Reply: It is the intention that Cormeen bridge will be reopened prior to the Christmas break.

**6. Votes of Congratulations/Sympathy**

The members extended a vote of congratulations to the following:-

Rockcorry GFC on winning the Junior Ulster Championship Final.

Stephen McKenna, who won a silver medal at the recent European Youth Championships in Poland.

Cathy McKenna, Milltown, Co Monaghan on winning The Great Irish Bake Off.

The members extended a vote of sympathy to the following:-

Cllr Seamus Coyle on the death of his mother Rosie Coyle.

Cllr Ciara Mc Phillips on the death of her uncle John Jo O'Reilly

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Leas-Chathaoirleach

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Meetings Administrator

Date 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016