

Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of the Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones held on 18th January 2016 at 10.00am in Clones Courthouse, McCurtain Street, Clones Co Monaghan.

Members Present The Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr Cathy Bennett, presided

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

In Attendance Kevin McNally, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Kieran Duffy, Executive Engineer, Angela Gallagher, Staff Officer, Colin Murphy, Assistant Engineer.

Apologies Cllr Hugh McElvaney, Cllr Ciara McPhillips, Patricia Monahan, A/Director of Services

1. Confirmation of minutes of Monthly Meeting

The minutes of the December monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr Pat Treanor and seconded by Cllr Sean Gilliland.

2. Matters arising from Previous Minutes

Cllr Pat Treanor referred page 1, of the previous minutes regarding correspondence issued to the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD, and the Northern Ireland Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA regarding expanding the existing Departmental task force involved in the restoration of the Ulster Canal to include representatives from Monaghan County Council and asked if there had been any update on this. Mr Kevin McNally stated that no correspondence has been received, however the Municipal District would seek an update on this from both Ministers.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to referred to page 1 of the previous minutes regarding the closure of the Department of Social Protection offices (DSP) in Ballybay and proposed the following:-

“That the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District expresses its outrage and abhorrence at confirmation that the 30 plus and associated jobs at the Department of Social Protection public services card section are to be relocated in late March/April from Ballybay, its total disappointment with Fine Gael Oireachtas Members Heather Humphrey T.D. Minister for the Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Joe O’Reilly T.D. and former Fine Gael party member Sean Conlon T.D. and the Fine Gael party in County Monaghan to allow this catastrophic economic blow to be inflicted on Ballybay, its shops, restaurants, food outlets etc. at a time of attempting business and economic regeneration. This Municipal District immediately organises a meeting inviting all current Cavan/Monaghan Oireachtas Members and all declared General Election Candidates to outline their actions/inactions on this issue, which is disastrous for Ballybay, the remaining possibilities for its reversal, their failure to organise this Municipal District’s requested meeting with the Minister Joan Burton, T.D. and what Government assistance, can be given to Ballybay following its removal of the DSP office.”

This motion to be circulated to all of the above. Members of Ballybay Chamber of Commerce, Ballybay Development Association to be invited to attend the meeting.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Cathy Bennett and supported by Cllr Pat Treanor.

Cllr Cathy Bennett stated that the only T.D. to attend the last meeting in Ballybay was Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, T.D. and submitted the following proposal:-

“That all Cavan/Monaghan Oireachtas Members Ballybay Chamber of Commerce, Department of Social Protection, Ballybay Development Association are invited to discuss the closing of the Social Protection Offices in Ballybay. The Meeting will be held at 10am on 1st February 2016. An alternative solution needs to be found to keep these jobs in Ballybay. An option to centralise the New Intreo Centre for the County in Ballybay could be an alternative solution that would not alone keep jobs in Ballybay but it will also add to employment within a town that has had so many resources pulled already.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Seamus Coyle and supported by Cllr Pat Treanor.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to page 2 of the previous minutes regarding the Ulster Bank and asked for an update on this. The Members went into committee to discuss this item in more detail.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to page 2 of the previous minutes regarding the flooding on the R190 and proposed the following:-

“That the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District seeks the immediate full funding of the application of February 2015, to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and Minister Pascal Donohoe T.D. for the alleviation of flooding on the R190 Ballybay-Cootehill Road at Corrybrennan, Cumny, Keenoghbane and Lisnalong, if serious loss of life is to be averted. The suffering, inconvenience and loss of business to residences and road users is enormous, residents are marooned in their homes, businesses on the road cannot operate, farmers cannot have animals or milk collected or feedstuffs delivered. The R190 is the major link for Cavan Hospital, Schools, Colleges, Health Centres etc, yet it was closed for 13 day period from 28th December 2015 to 10th January 2016 at Keenoghbane. This is totally unacceptable for a Regional road and must be addressed immediately.”

This motion to be circulated to all Oireachtas Members.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Sean Gilliland and agreed by all.

Cllr Sean Gilliland submitted the following proposal:-

“That Ballybay-Clones Municipal Office write to the necessary offices C.F.R.A.M (Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management), OPW (Office of Public Works) and the RPS to consult together that while solving the problem in Ballybay Town as it is a Listed Area of AFA (area of further assessment) with CFRAM, does not compile the problem on the R190 at Cumry and surrounding areas.”

This was seconded by Cllr Seamus Coyle and agreed by all.

Mr Kieran Duffy circulated a report to the Members on the storm impacts in the Ballybay-Clones Electoral Area. Mr Kevin McNally stated that there is a public consultation due to take place on 15th February 2016 in the Wetlands in Ballybay regarding flooding in the Ballybay Area which is being examined by the C.F.R.A.M. study and requested that the public attend this to ensure that their concerns are addressed.

Cllr Pat Treanor asked if the Municipal District Engineering staff would consider meeting farmers and landowners to discuss the clearing of debris from lands etc to prevent flooding. Mr Kieran Duffy stated that he could not see any difficulty with this.

Cllr Seamus Coyle asked what additional costs were incurred regarding damage to roads caused by flooding and stated that the Municipal District could work with the IFA and farmers on the ground to identify roads damaged. Mr Kieran Duffy stated that he is currently preparing a report and costs regarding damaged incurred during the recent flooding events.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 2 of the minutes regarding the lights in Ard na Gaoithe and thanked the Municipal District staff for fixing the lights and stated that the residents have expressed their gratitude.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 2 of the minutes and correspondence item 3.5 and welcomed the letter from Minister Alan Kelly T.D. regarding a report from the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht following the Joint Oireachtas Committee public consultation on the paper that the Minister published last January on the establishment of an Electoral Commission. Cllr Cathy Bennett stated that she was looking forward to the outcome of this process.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to page 3 of the previous minutes regarding respite beds in Monaghan and proposed the following:-

“That the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District expresses its total disappointment at the provision by the Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar T.D. and the H.S.E. Dublin North East, of Respite beds for patients and their families in County Monaghan and seeks immediate additional respite care facilities and enhanced “Home Care Packages”. The current delivery of care in the Community needs huge additional resources financially and staffing to deliver care and support for the caring of individuals in their own home.”

Motion to be circulated to the Minister, H.S.E. Cavan-Monaghan Oireachtas Members, Monaghan MD, Castleblayney-Carrickmacross MD and Monaghan County Council.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Pat Treanor and supported by Cllr Cathy Bennett.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to page 4 of the previous minutes regarding the response from Minister Alan Kelly T.D. regarding public lighting and also referred to additional correspondence item No 3.27 from Killeevan Sarsfields GAA club’s request for additional public lighting and proposed the following:-

“That Ballybay-Clones Municipal Office formulates a funding application regarding public lighting projects in this area based on the danger to pedestrians and other road safety issues.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Seamus Coyle and supported by Cllr Cathy Bennett – therefore the proposal was carried.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 6 of the previous minutes, question 2 regarding required work at junction close to Greenfield Eggs and stated that she has been approached by residents in this area asking for works to be carried out. Mr Kieran Duffy confirmed that the Municipal District Office has looked at this area again with a view to carrying out small remedial works at this location using funding from the Municipal District’s own resources.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to page 6 of the previous minutes regarding the footpath works at Corlatt in Knockatallon and asked that the Council reconsider its decision not to carry out this work. Mr Kevin McNally stated that due to a restricted budget there are further demands on the Council to alleviate areas affected by flooding but a final decision regarding the timing of the works had not been made. Approval will be sought from the elected members for the 2016 programme of works in due course – once the Departmental grants are known.

Cllr Sean Gilliland referred to damage caused to bridges due to the recent flooding events and asked if the Municipal District would be making a case for additional funding. Mr Kevin McNally stated that there is a large network of bridges within the area and that an application will be made to the Department for additional funding for damage caused to roads and bridges due to the recent flooding.

3. Correspondence

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to item 3.1 in correspondence regarding a letter received from Eirgrid and proposed the following:-

“The Ballybay-Clones Municipal District totally reject your correspondence of 11th December 2015 citing the “technical challenges” of undergrounding, yet the Chief Executive Officer of Eirgrid has stated it is “technically feasible” to underground the project - the North South 400kw Interconnector. The Ballybay-Clones Municipal District understands that the cost of undergrounding would be 1.58 times the cost of overgrounding and requests Eirgrid to refrain from misleading, inaccurate and untrue spin as a Semi-State body.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Pat Treanor and agreed by all.

Cllr Sean Gilliland proposed the following:-

“That all information including further relating to the planning process regarding the North South 400kw Interconnector be made available to the public via the County Council Website and An Bord Pleanna website and by other media sources.”

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

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to item 3.9 regarding funding received from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and welcomed the €5000 received from Minister Heather Humphrey’s Department for the reprinting of ‘A Time of Desolation: Clones Poor Law Union 1845-1851 by Brian MacDomhnaill as part of the larger project to undertake the construction of the Famine Workhouse Memorial Archway. Cllr Pat Treanor asked for an update on this project.

Mr Kevin McNally stated that the Municipal District was working very closely with the Famine Committee and stated that APB had made a substantial financial commitment towards the project. A consultant has been appointed and it is hoped to go to tender in the coming weeks.

Cllr Cathy Bennett referred to item 3.13 regarding Irish Water's response to issues raised regarding hard water and proposed the following:-

"That Ballybay-Clones Municipal District call on Irish water to investigate the on-going problem of hard water in the Scotstown, Smithboro and Ballinode areas of County Monaghan. It is unacceptable that Irish water write irrelevant responses continuously to the elected members of Monaghan County Council. The County Council is aware that hard water is not considered a health risk by the World Health Organisation.

The issue that Monaghan County Council have in relation to the water is relating to the unusable condition of the water because of the hardness levels. Residents and businesses in these areas are subjected to replacing appliances, pipes, boilers on a regulate basis. The Municipal District would also like to note that Irish water have also recently admitted that softening water by using a salt filter can be dangerous to babies and certain people with health complaints. We therefore call on Irish water to step up to the mark and supply residents of these area's with soft water. A softer water could be acquired by purchasing water from a group scheme or blending water from different sources."

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Seamus Coyle and agreed by all.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to additional correspondence 3.26 regarding funding received from The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to supply seating in Clones Courthouse. Cllr Pat Treanor welcomed this funding and enquired if it had been accepted.

Mr Kevin McNally confirmed that the Municipal District in conjunction with the Clones Film Festival prepared a submission to the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht for the installation of a retractable seating system for the former Clones Courthouse. The estimated cost of the project is €38,000.

Minster Heather Humphreys has agreed to provide funding of €26,336 towards this project and Mr McNally recommended that the Municipal District provide the required match funding of €11,500 to the project. Mr Kevin McNally stated that this project will mean that the building is suitable for use by many other local community groups – the work will compliment the recently completed works to improve the acoustics of the building – which was also part funded by the Minster Heather Humphreys Department.

Cllr Pat Treanor proposed that €11,500 be made available to the Municipal District from the General Municipal Allocation to ensure the completion of the project.

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

4. Report by Municipal District Co-ordinator

Mr Kevin McNally complemented the efforts of all the Municipal District staff who responded so quickly to the recent flooding events over the Christmas holiday period.

Mr Kevin McNally confirmed the following:-

Ongoing and recently completed improvement works in District:

- Emergency works at Cormeen bridge on the LT30002 in Latton
- Remedial works on Milltown bridge on the LP2331 following recent storm damage.
- Completion of safety improvement at McCormicks corner on the R189.
- Provision of 2 no ramps in Ard Cluain in Clones.
- Repair works to a number of county roads badly affected by recent storms.
- Ongoing patching works.

Upcoming works

- Additional flood relief works in Threemilehouse village which are due to commence by end of January.
- Completion of remedial works on roads damaged in recent storms.
- Preparatory works for the upcoming roads restoration program.

Clones/Ballybay Regeneration committee

Mr Kevin McNally stated that the next meeting of the Clones Regeneration committee is due to take place on 28th January 2016 and confirmed that the Municipal District was progressing the feasibility studies for a number of sites in Fermanagh Street. The proposed works have been costed and the Municipal District are currently in the process of arranging for a value to be determined for the sites in question.

Mr Kevin McNally confirmed that the Municipal District have identified a number of other properties in Clones that are derelict – these are been 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 due to take place on 20th January 2016 and confirmed that Monaghan County Council has received grant approval from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government for various works to Castleblayney and Ballybay Towns.

Mr McNally stated that it was agreed at last meeting that this funding would be supplemented with €8000 from the Municipal Districts general allocation. The funding will be earmarked for painting of particular buildings on Ballybay Main Street and also for the development of a website for Ballybay – both items that the Municipal District are currently progressing.

The Municipal District at the request of the Clones Erne East Partnership is organising a further meeting of community groups in the Municipal District and the Erne East area of Fermanagh – this meeting is planned for 8th February 2016 at 8.00pm in Knockatallon.

The meeting will be facilitated by Carol Lambe

- The purpose of the meeting is to provide a platform for information sharing regarding projects/ services the various actors are providing presently, and new projects they are working to get off the ground,
- To discuss how CEEP/ the partner Local Authorities might support the project promoters to advance their ideas & prepare for upcoming funding opportunities.

5. Questions

Cllr Bennett asked:

1. In relation to safety measures at Kilmore football grounds, Scotstown can Ballybay-Clones Municipal District please investigate the possibility of installing a crash barrier?

Reply Ballybay-Clones Municipal District will investigate the possibility of installing a crash barrier at Kilmore and are in the process of seeking quotations but the provision of the barrier will be subject to the availability of funding. Recent storms have highlighted the need to set aside some monies to carry out remedial works on a number of local bridges and county roads as well as the need to carry out routine drainage works on a number of watercourses in the vicinity of Clones town. It is likely that these required works may inhibit the Municipal District's ability to deliver other minor projects such as the provision of the crash barrier at Kilmore.

2. In relation to new safety measures recently added on the Castleblayney Road, out of Ballybay. Can these ramps please be made visible by adding more adequate lighting and signposts to indicate their presence to oncoming traffic?

Reply The recently installed ramps on the R183 Castleblayney road were constructed in compliance with the specification for round top ramps and their location was selected taking into consideration the existing public lighting on the Castleblayney road to maximise ramp visibility. Permanent signs on the approach to the ramps were erected in December.

3. Can repairs works please be carried out on the footpath between Scotstown and the Bridge? It is presently in a very dangerous state.

Reply Ballybay-Clones Municipal District proposes to carry out remedial repairs on the existing footpath between Scotstown village and the bridge. It is proposed to carry out these works whilst construction works on the new stretch of footpath on the Roslea road is taking place.

4. Does the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District have a schedule in place to unblock drains and table roads? If so, how often are drains and how often are the roads tabled to ensure that water escapes? In light of recent flooding events, it should be a top priority that these actions do take place on a more regular basis and that a schedule is set and adhered to.

Reply Although the tabling of roads/opening of outlets is work that the Municipal District undertake in the area particularly on roads prone to flooding, there is no specific schedule presently in place. However, having a designated schedule is something which Ballybay Clones Municipal District is currently considering in the Municipality particularly for the regional road network.

5. Has Ballybay-Clones Municipal District, commenced the cleaning of road signs as yet? Is there presently a schedule in operation?

Reply Ballybay-Clones Municipal District did commence a programme of sign cleaning and repairs on a number of regional roads in the area before Christmas but again the progression of these works was greatly impacted by the recent storms.

6. Votes of Congratulations/Sympathy

The members extended a Vote of Congratulations to the following:-

Monaghan Garda Traffic Unit on receiving an award from the Road Safety Authority for their annual Road Safety Day initiative.

Garda Johnny McEvoy wishing him all the best on his retirement

Councillor Ciara McPhillips on her recent engagement to Mr Stephen Driver

The members extended a Vote of Sympathy to the following:-

The Mulholland Family, on the death of Owen Mulholland, Chairperson of the Monaghan Regional Games Committee from 1995-2016

The Vance Family on the death of William (Billy) Vance, Senior Hunt Master from 1963-2016 for the Fermanagh Harriers.

7. AOB

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to the recent wi-fi installed in Cavan Town can proposed the following;-

“That the Municipal District ask Paul Treanor to contact Kieran Hever, Head of IT at Cavan County Council and re-investigate the installation of wi-fi in Clones and Ballybay Towns.”

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Seamus Coyle and agreed by all.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to the current conditions of roads on rural roads in the Municipal District and proposed the following:-

“That Ballybay-Clones Municipal District demand special funding in 2016 for the restoration of roads in the Municipal District, as road conditions in the area are in an atrocious condition, causing enormous damage to vehicles, additional cost to business etc.”

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 15th February 2016