

Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of the Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones held on 17th November 2014 at 10am in Ballybay Civic Offices, Main Street Ballybay.

Members Present The Cathaoirleach, Cllr Ciara McPhillips, presided

The following members were also present:-Cllrs:- Eugene Bannigan, Seamus Coyle, Hugh McElvaney and Pat Treanor

In Attendance Dympna Condra, Tourism, John McEntegart LEO, Oliver Mulligan, Acting Senior Executive Engineer, Water Services, Kevin McNally, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Roisin Moore, Assistant Engineer, Angela Gallagher, Staff Officer, Frances Matthews Senior Staff Officer, Eileen McManus, Clerical Officer,

Apologies Cllr Cathy Bennett, Adge King, Director of Services, Kieran Duffy, Executive Engineer

1. Confirmation of minutes of October monthly meeting

The minutes of the October monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr Seamus Coyle and seconded by Cllr Pat Treanor.

2. Matters arising from Previous Minutes

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to paragraph 2 under matters arising regarding the bridge on Scotshouse/Treehoo Cross and the weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes. Was there an update? Mr McNally confirmed that work was taking place at the moment, that they had spoken to Cavan County Council and they hope to have the weight restriction lifted shortly.

Cllr Hugh McElvaney referred to paragraph 5 on page 1 of the minutes in relation to Threemilehouse Flood Relief Works and stated that something had to be done right away especially after the flooding which took place last week. Mr McNally confirmed that staff had attended on site, that a pipe was blocked and this had been dealt with at around 8pm last Thursday. He also confirmed that this was not part of the contract which was awarded however they would look at this issue when they are on-site. Ms Moore confirmed that work would commence this week.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to paragraph 6 on page 2 of the minutes in relation to footpaths in Boyher Rockcorry, additional car parking spaces and a road crossing for the school children and asked that these items remain on the agenda. Mr McNally stated that consultation had taken place with the Housing Section of Monaghan County Council regarding the additional car parking and concerns were raised regarding the proximity of additional parking spaces to the playpark however they would look at this again.

Cllr Hugh McElvaney, referred to paragraph 8 on page 2 of the minutes regarding the ramp and signs at the secondary school in Ballybay and asked if there is an update? Ms Moore confirmed that new signage for the ramps would be installed and these were being relocated. She also stated that in

relation to the electronic signs, that they are currently having consultation regarding this about having the traffic signals changed.

Cllr Ciara McPhillips referred to page 3 Notice of Motion from Carrickmacross-Castleblayney and stated that she had been informed that The Department for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has awarded the maximum grant of €10,000 to upgrade the acoustics in Clones Courthouse and congratulated the Clones Film Festival on their award.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to page 4 of the minutes regarding Ballybay Chamber of Commerce and stated that they had recently introduced a voucher scheme which would mean that money would be spent locally.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to question 2 on page 5 of the minutes regarding Clairemount Rise Housing Estate being taken in charge and asked what enforcement can be taken? Cllr Pat Treanor also referred to the same issue for an estate in Scotshouse where the developer has gone and asked if the majority of residents get together can they ask the Council to take in charge the estate they are living on? Cllr Coyle advised that there are also estates in Carrow Barra, Smithboro and Wylies Hill in the same situation and they should not be left in limbo. Mr McNally stated that he would check this with planning.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to question 5 on page 5 of the minutes regarding works on the Sra Bridge and asked when this work will be completed. Ms Moore advised that this work should be completed shortly.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to page 7, question 11 of the minutes regarding checking the street lights. Cllr Treanor believed that there was a commitment in place with ESB for the lights in the Towns and Villages to be checked. Mr McNally stated that he would check this out with Airtricity and report back at the next meeting.

Cllr Seamus Coyle referred to page 8 of the minutes on the Notice of Motion which he raised at the previous meeting. He asked if there had been any response back from Minister Humphreys regarding organising a meeting with the Tánaiste Joan Burton. Cllr Ciara McPhillips stated that she had received an email from Minister Humphreys who has brought it to the attention of the Tánaiste and she is now looking at this. Cllr Seamus Coyle expressed his disappointment that this is only on the Agenda now. He understood at the last meeting that Minister Humphreys was going to organise a meeting with the Tánaiste. Cllr Coyle proposed that the Members of Ballybay-Clones MD request Oireachtas Members for Cavan/Monaghan to immediately honour their commitment to arrange an immediate meeting with An Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton TD seeking her personal assurance on the continuance of the Dept of Social Protection offices and all future employment in Ballybay. This was seconded by Cllr Pat Treanor and agreed by all.

Mr McNally confirmed that he met with representatives from the Office of Public Works along with John McEntegart and had identified two possible sites within Ballybay including the Ballybay Enterprise Office.

Cllr Hugh McElvaney expressed his disappointment with the response from the Tánaiste Joan Burton, he thanked the staff for their assistance and John McEntegart for his help with identifying suitable properties.

Cllr Pat Treanor referred to question 14 on page 7 of the minutes regarding construction of the new houses on McCurtain Street. He asked how long this work is likely to take. Mr McNally advised that the project is due to be complete in 9 months time and advised that the Housing Section were in charge of this project.

3. Correspondence

3.1 Response from John McGrath – Winter Maintenance

With regards to the letter received from John McGrath, Cllr Hugh McElvaney asked that a letter be issued to the Strategic Policy Committee and ask them to include the salting of the Bog Road and the road from Courtney's Cross to Brennan's Cross. Mr McNally stated that this would be done.

3.3 Response from Community Regulator

Cllr Pat Treanor stated that he was not happy with the response from Com Reg regarding mobile phone services provided and stated that they need to keep the pressure on them. Mr McNally stated that Paul Treanor, Head of Information Systems from Monaghan County Council will be attending next month's meeting.

4. Presentation by John McEntegart, Local Enterprise Office

Mr McEntegart circulated a handout which outlined the mission statement and structure of the Local Enterprise Office. He also advised the Members of the services available and types of support offered, he confirmed that they have a remit to deal with up to 10 employees however they have dealt with bigger businesses in the past. He advised that they have run some cross border projects , they sit on the 'smart ego hub' and have premises in both Clones and Ballybay. They received funding of €140,000 for the kitchen in the premises in Ballybay and are now trying to recruit a business person who works with food.

5. Presentation by Dympna Condra, Tourism

Ms Condra circulated a report which detailed projects which had taken place in the past and where the funding came from. She also advised the Members of future potential sources of funding which will be available and stated that new projects should be worked up now. A survey on Tourism within Monaghan is on-line at the moment and feedback from this survey will be used to work up new projects within the district. With regards the Diaspora funding, Ms Condra confirmed that when this funding becomes available this information will be made public in the local newspapers.

6. Water Services Issues within the Ballybay-Clones MD

Cllr Seamus Coyle and Cllr Hugh McElvaney asked what Water Services are doing about the bad smell which is affecting businesses and residents in the Ballybay Area?

Mr Mulligan advised the Members that Monaghan County Council representatives have met with and spoken to a local business within the town regarding odours from their discharge to the town sewer. The company currently add a chemical to their discharge which

neutralises odours. We advised the company that there is still an issue with odours from the discharge despite the chemical being added. We requested that they increase the quantity of chemical being dosed. We have not received any new complaints regarding this issue, however we will continue to monitor it closely.

Cllr Hugh McElvaney asked what is Monaghan County Council's role with Irish Water and how are complaints dealt with?

Mr Mulligan advised the Members that there is a contact telephone number for a call centre in Cork, where complaints are logged on an electronic system. These complaints are then taken from the electronic system by the relevant Monaghan County Council staff to address.

Cllr Seamus Coyle stated that he had attended a presentation some time ago by Irish Water and was given a telephone number which was specifically for Councillors to get through to them however he later discovered that this number was the same as the one issued to the public.

Mr Mulligan stated that he understood that there was another number, however he would look into this and get back to the Members.

Cllr Pat Treanor stated that there was a project to relocate the existing reservoir at Carnroe closer to Clones and asked what had happened to this project?

Mr Mulligan stated that he was unaware of a project to upgrade the reservoir in Clones, but would investigate same.

Cllr Ciara McPhillips referred to the new sewerage system on the Castleblayney Road in Ballybay and asked when will the public get connected to this system?

Mr Mulligan stated that connection letters will be sent to all residents that can connect within the next couple of weeks.

Cllr Seamus Coyle stated that he felt the new sewerage systems does not go far enough down the Keady Road and can this be considered?

Mr Mulligan advised that to continue this further along the Keady Road would require major investment including a pump station and the excavation of large quantities of rock, while only picking up a relatively small number of properties.

Cllr Hugh McElvaney asked if there was any plans to deal with manholes in the area which have sunk and are now causing problems?

Mr Mulligan stated that they have commenced a programme of manhole replacement/repair works.

Cllr Ciara McPhillips asked if there were plans to extend the sewerage system on the Monaghan Road outside Clones?

Cllr Pat Treanor confirmed that two groups have been/are being set up one for the Monaghan Road and another on the Newbliss Road outside Clones and two applications have been submitted to the Department.

7. Report by Municipal District Co-ordinator

Update on Peace Link

Mr McNally confirmed the Peace Link is operational now and is accepting applications for membership. The Management Committee are satisfied that the current confirmed application numbers are in accordance with their business plan. For the next two weeks the facility is organising taster days for the schools in the Clones Erne East Area. Three schools per day have been invited to the Peace Link in order to see and experience the facilities first hand. The facility is also operating a full range of fitness classes suitable for all ages and he encouraged everyone to participate where possible.

Engineers Update

Mr McNally confirmed the Municipal Districts Roads Programme for 2014 is now complete. Works are outstanding on some of the Districts Low Cost Accident reduction schemes – these will hopefully be completed shortly.

There are still some footpaths works to be completed within Clones Town. The removal of the timber hoarding and its replacement with a new wall at the traffic lights in Clones will hopefully commence this week.

Threemilehouse works

Mr McNally stated that unfortunately Threemilehouse village was again subjected to flooding on Thursday last. A number of properties including the pub and chip shop were affected. This flooding appears to be caused by a blockage in a pipe to the rear of the properties on the Monaghan Road. We hope to address these issues in conjunction with the proposed flood alleviation scheme which is due to commence shortly. The contract for these works has been awarded to the local contractor Sammy Wilkin & Sons Ltd. Mr McNally acknowledged the efforts of Kieran Duffy and Roisin Moore in ensuring that this scheme progressed to site. Ms Moore in particular had liaised at length with the Inland Fisheries Board, and local landowners to ensure that their concerns were addressed.

Ballybay Town Twinning

Mr McNally advised further to the meeting in Ballybay last month during which a subcommittee for the twinning of Ballybay with Osterhofen / Bavaria was established , it was planned to meet with Karl Heinz Herzegger after the meeting to discuss how best to continue and develop this relationship further.

Ballybay Chamber of Commerce

Mr McNally stated that the Ballybay Chamber of Commerce launched their town voucher scheme on Monday last. The Town Voucher system operates by the businesses providing a Town Voucher rather than cash bonuses to their staff. The town vouchers are then spent in Ballybay in participating shops. Mr McNally noted that the one of the major employers in the town had committed to purchasing €9,000 worth of vouchers. Mr McNally went on to complement the Chambers Organising Committee for the time and effort they have devoted to developing and organising this scheme

The Chamber is receiving financial assistance from Monaghan County Council. Mr McNally stated that Ballybay Chamber of Commerce are also working on a programme of activities for the next 12

months which will range from hosting a Christmas Market, St Patricks Day parade and an Oktoberfest which will tie in with the Towns twinning arrangement with Osterhofen in Germany.

8. Questions

Cllr Cathy Bennett asked

1. With reference to the planned footpath at Gola Crest, Scotstown. Is there any further update on this much needed footpath?.

Reply It is intended that work on a 50 metres stretch of the footpath will commence before the end of the year. Negotiations regarding securing lands to facilitate further works on the footpath are ongoing. Completion of this footpath is dependent on available funding in 2015.

2. In relation to Corlatt housing estate, Knockatallon and the lack of parking there. Has there been any further developments in regards to the possibility of changing the green there into some car spaces?.

Reply Since the last Municipal District meeting consultations have taken place with the Council's Housing Section on the possibility of providing additional parking within the estate. Housing Section have no objections to such a proposal. The provision of a footpath and carparking at Corlatt though is dependent on funding being available in 2015.

3. In relation to the footbridge at Scotstown Bridge, when will repair works be carried out here?

Reply It hoped to carry out repairs on this section of footpath at Scotstown footbridge before the end of the year.

4. Has Ballybay-Clones MD received a specific date when essential upgrades will occur to broadband service in the Ballybay-Clones MD.

Reply The Municipal District office has written to the Commission of Communication Regulation (ComReg) highlighting lack of broadband and mobile phone coverage in the Municipal District.

ComReg have responded noting that the provision of such services is undertaken by telecommunication service providers who operate in a fully liberalised market under licences provided by ComReg.

ComReg have noted that they have requested the relevant telecommunication service providers to contact the Municipal District office to provide any explanations or reasoning that they may have on the issue.

5. Can this MD please start to investigate suitable premises in Ballybay town that would be of adequate size to ensure expansion and retention of the social protection office in Ballybay. These suggestions could then be passed onto the Department of Social protection for their consideration?.

Reply As was agreed during the meeting on 31st October 2014 in Ballybay, the Ballybay Clones Municipal District office is happy to assist the Ballybay Chamber of Commerce in identifying suitable premises for the Department of Social Protection and providing details of same to the Office of Public Works (OPW) for their review and consideration.

Details of one potential option have been provided to the OPW. The OPW will make direct contact with the property owner concerned.

9. AOB - Urgent Business

Cllr Seamus Coyle submitted the following proposal:-

“That Monaghan County Council immediately seek special funding and have priority works carried out on the R190, Ballybay to Cootehill (Dundalk – Cavan) Road to alleviate the regular flooding, road closure at Corrybrennan, Cumry, Keenoghbane and Lisnalong as this is a vital work/travel route. Residents are marooned in their homes, farmers are unable to have feed deliveries, milk/animal collections, business people are unable to operate their business haulage, taxi’s etc with the road totally closed to travel, ie 2008 (7days) 2009 (7 days), 2011 (10 days) and 2014”

This was seconded by Cllr Eugene Bannigan and agreed by all.

Cllr Ciara McPhillips suggested that Ms Moore & Mr Duffy to contact OPW, Inland Fisheries Board and John McGrath regarding this.

Cllr Pat Treanor submitted the following proposal:-

“That we write to Eircom and seek an explanation for phones and internet being out in the Knockatallon, Scotstown, Ballinode and Tydavnet areas on the 6th and 14th November 2014. Phones are also out at Cloncallick, Clones on 15th August 2014. What plans does Eircom have to compensate local businesses who rely on these services for losses during these outages?”

This was seconded by Cllr Ciara McPhillips and agreed by all.

10. Votes of Congratulations

The members extended Votes of Congratulations to the following:-

Aaron McKenna & Terry McEntee, attending & winning Silver(Aaron) at European Schoolkeys Boxing Championships

Derek Mackeral, Stonebridge, crowned National Autocross Champion

Martina Crudden on her award on World Remembrance Day for Road Traffic Victims

Aoife Hastings, Stonebridge who won the competition to design the album cover of Joss Stone’s forthcoming album

Community of Clones (Clones Community Forum) on receiving a Special Award at the Pride of Place Awards

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed _____

Cathaoirleach

Signed _____

Meetings Administrator

Date 15th December 2014