

Ceantar Bardasach Carraig Mhachaire Rois – Baile Na Lorgan

Comhairle Contae Mhuineachain



The Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblayney

Monaghan County Council

Minutes of proceedings of MD monthly meeting held in Castleblayney Enterprise Centre, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan on Monday 27th July 2020 at 11:00am

Present : Cathaoirleach Aidan Campbell

Cllrs. Aoife McCooey, PJ O’Hanlon, Colm Carthy, Noel Keelan

Apologies: Cllr. Mary Kerr Conlon

In Attendance: Paul Clifford, Director of Service, Gareth McMahon, District Co-ordinator, Matthew Lambe, District Engineer, Amanda Murray, Staff Officer, Julieann O’ Reilly, Clerical Officer

Cathaoirleach Campbell opened the meeting by welcoming all to Castleblayney Enterprise Centre. He also mentioned the recent opening of the Patrick Kavanagh Centre in Inniskeen and how it was unfortunate that not all of the members could attend because of Covid-19 restrictions.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. McCooey the minutes of the June A.G.M. meeting held on Monday 22nd June 2020 were adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. O’Hanlon the minutes of the June monthly meeting held on Monday 22nd June 2020 were adopted.

2.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Keelan asked if contact has been made regarding works at Close Drummond? He also voiced concern about the length of time it is taking to hand over the keys to residents.

District Engineer Matthew Lambe advised that he has met with the developers. Works are due to commence soon. He is due to meet them again this week.

Cllr. Keelan commented on the poor state of repair that Breffni House is in.

Director of Services Paul Clifford informed the members that a Derelict Notice was served to the owner.

Cllr. Keelan asked if it may be possible to place a taxi rank and coach parking space adjacent to Paddy Power's on Main Street, Carrickmacross?

District Co-ordinator Gareth McMahon advised that AECOM have been asked to look into this. It will be part of their report which will be ready by the end of the month.

Cllr. O'Hanlon wished to confirm that the letter was sent re: Block Grants?

Staff Officer Amanda Murray confirmed same.

Cllr. Campbell requested an update regarding Traffic Wardens in Castleblayney.

The members were advised that a new rota for both towns is currently being compiled. There should be an increased presence from August onwards. The Gardaí have also agreed to help enforce the 2-hour parking regulation in Castleblayney.

Cllr. O'Hanlon suggested that a letter should be sent to the Chamber of Commerce for both towns to help raise awareness about this issue.

The Municipal District Office will organise this.

Cllr. McCooey asked for an update on the crash barrier on the Oram Road, District Engineer Matthew Lambe provided same.

Cllr. Carthy spoke about his concerns about excessive speeding on Ross Road and stated that it will only be a matter of time before there is an accident. Cllr. Carthy asked that it is prioritised for works urgently. Cllr. O'Hanlon echoed these sentiments.

District Engineer Matthew Lambe advised that the application for LCS1 was unsuccessful for 2020 but we will try again for 2021.

Cllr. Carthy asked that it be put forward on its own to guarantee the funding. It was agreed by all that instead of putting it forward for sole funding that it will be prioritised.

3.0 Correspondence

- (i) Letter of acknowledgment from An Garda Síochána, Carrickmacross District.
- (ii) Letter from Ballybay – Clones Municipal District re: Proposed Greenway along the former Ballybay to Castleblayney railway line. After a brief discussion Cllr. McCooey proposed, Cllr. Carthy seconded and it was unanimously agreed to support a scoping/feasibility study on the proposed route and assist with the funding of same.
- (iii) Letter from Carrickmacross Festival Committee requesting the use of the Drummond Etra/Super Valu Carpark on Saturday 22nd (evening) and Sunday 23rd (all day) of August 2020. On the proposal of Cllr. Carthy and seconded by Cllr. O'Hanlon it was unanimously agreed to give permission.

4.0 Municipal Coordinators Report

Cllr. Carthy:

Can the sewerage smell located at the corner on Monaghan Street be investigated?

Response - this will be investigated.

There is an issue with a large amount of pigeons on the Market Square, they are defecating in the area and it is unsightly. Can a mechanism be looked into to discourage nesting?

Response – this will be investigated.

Can the footpaths in Carrickmacross be reviewed? There are a lot of loose slabs.

In York Street, Castleblayney there is a tree with roots that are causing a major trip hazard on the footpath.

Cllr. McCooey:

Is there an update on signage for the Big Tom area?

Response – Options are currently being explored.

There is rust on the new flowerpots. Can this be cleaned/prevented from happening in the future?

Response – The MD is in contact with the supplier as we were assured that they would not run. Arrangements have been made to organise cleaning them.

Cllr. Campbell:

Wished Darren McCreesh, Manager of the Patrick Kavanagh Centre, the best of luck and spoke about what a great asset the centre is to the M.D. Asked that the M.D. support the centre in any way we can.

Response – The M.D. will support the centre and District Co-ordinator Gareth McMahan has already met with Darren McCreesh.

Asked for an update on the Rural Regeneration Fund. Response – The process is on-going. Tenders are being examined and processed at present.

The following motion was unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Campbell, seconded by Cllr. Keelan:

“In light of over €1m being spent to bring the Patrick Kavanagh Centre into the 21st century with new state-of-the-art visitor centre in Inniskeen, this MD write to the Minister for Education to look at the options to include Patrick Kavanagh’s poetry on the curriculum again”.

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Noted the importance of the facilities and roads around the vicinity of The Patrick Kavanagh Centre.

Cllr. Keelan:

Wished to acknowledge the comments made about The Patrick Kavanagh Centre and welcomed the upcoming Inniskeen Public Realm meeting.

Implored Monaghan County Council to put funding in place for proper walking routes in the Inniskeen area, extra traffic calming measures in the village and a pedestrian crossing to access the new Centre.

5.0 Motions

The following notice of motion was unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. O’Hanlon, seconded by Cllr. Keelan:-

“Following the failure to provide funding for the CTec2 in Carrickmacross under the Rural Regeneration Fund 2018 and 2019 and the Border Stimulus Fund 2020, can we write to the new Minister for Social Protection, Rural Affairs and the Islands Deputy Heather Humphreys of the urgent need for this facility which will accommodate new enterprises and new employment in the town”.

The following notice of motion was unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Keelan, seconded by Cllr. Carthy:-

“That this Council writes to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Mr. Darragh O’Brien T.D. calling for the reinstatement of the block grants to former Town Councils, specifically roads block grants and that we seek the support of the Oireachtas members for this constituency in this endeavour”.

It was agreed by all members to hold off sending this letter until a response is received concerning the previous letter sent.

6.0 Questions

Questions raised by Cllr. Colm Carthy for July 2020 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

1. When is it expected that works will conclude on the Carrickmacross Workhouse interactive project and the Market Square phase two project?

Response:-

Construction work at the Market House building is substantially complete, with some fitout work outstanding. Works at the Workhouse building are due for completion in August with opening of the new visitor experience due in September.

2. Can the executive confirm if an application has been sent, or in preparation, for (rural amenity) funding for a slipway onto Rahans Lake, Carrickmacross?

Response:-

This project will be considered for the next call of outdoor recreation funding.

3. Has any further progress been made in developing a strategy to deliver the Hilly Way route between Carrickmacross and Kingscourt and has there been any further updates on our proposed route from Carrickmacross to Inniskeen to Dundalk?

Response:

The proposed commencement date of works on the Hilly Way is September 2020.

4. When is it expected that works will begin on the proposed Enterprise Hub for Castleblayney?

Response:-

This project is at tender evaluation stage. Tender award is subject to approval from the Department. The contract duration is expected to be 16 months.

5. Has consideration been given to establishing a Town Team for Carrickmacross?

Response:

Town Teams have been established in towns that do not have in place a Chamber of Commerce & Industry as a point of contact for the Local Authority. In the case of Carrickmacross; Carrickmacross-Castleblayney MD meet regularly with representatives from the Chamber to discuss relevant issues and ensure open lines of communication”.

Questions raised by Cllr. Aidan Campbell for July 2020 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

6. With the recent funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund for works at the Gate House to the Hope Castle in Castleblayney of over €2.5 million and work due to commence shortly on the first phase of this with regard to the overhead ESB cables in the Market Square
- a) What is the exact scope of work to be carried out?
 - b) Where will the new decorative lights be situated?
 - c) How many new lights will there included in this project?
 - d) When will this work commence?
 - e) How long will the contractor be on site?

Response:-

- a) Phase 1 of the project works which involves undergrounding of ESB overhead cables and the installation of new decorative public lighting and the removal of existing ESB poles and wires in the Market Square
 - b) Due to the location and type of works final location of the public lighting will be agreed on site once this has been agreed a copy of the design can be forwarded to the elected members.
 - c) A Total of 9 new lighting columns will be erected
 - d) It is anticipated that the Phase 1 construction works will commence the first week of August
 - e) It is anticipated that the Phase 1 construction works will be completed in mid September.
7. With the recent successful launch of the new Community Plan for Oram and welcoming all the recent enhancements to the village of Oram and the surrounding area and having regard to the amount of visitors that have been coming to the Oram area (Prior to Covid) to see the late Big Toms Grave and his homestead.
- a) What is the update on the new Big Tom Memorial Garden
 - b) When will work commence on this project?
 - c) When will this project be completed and opened to the public?

Response:-

This MD with Monaghan County Council Horticulturist and local development committee have been in consultation regarding a design, layout, planting and use of construction materials for the remembrance garden in Oram. An initial design has been presented to the committee and this MD are awaiting a response to this proposal. On receipt of a response the procurement process can commence. It is envisaged that the construction of this garden will be completed by the end of Q3 2020.

8. With the successful launch of the Community Plan for Oram and with the area now having a number of projects in place that the Council will work with the community to put a shape on and plan for future projects. After a public meeting held in Donaghmoyne regarding a Community Plan for the area there was some discussion around having separate plans for each of Lisdoonan, Broomfield and Donaghmoyne. These plans are to assist the community to carry out a (SWOT) strengths, weakness opportunities, threats) and an analysis on the area. What is the update on these plans?

Response:-

Monaghan Co. Council is currently working on a plan for Ballinode, where the public consultation on local needs was completed in March. Due to current restrictions, it is difficult to engage with large groups of people, so progress on the Smithboro and Donaghmoyne work

has slowed. However, with the loosening of restrictions, it is hoped that works will recommence soon.

9. Castleblayney being one of the six towns in the country to receive funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the remit of Micheal Ring T.D. to develop innovative proposals to encourage more people to live in rural town centers and with the recent work carried out by Shaffrey Architects under the “Revitalization of a town Centre for living well “ in Castleblayney. This project having looked at a number of town centre clusters in Castleblayney and having engaged with a number of stakeholders/land and building owners that are in need of revitalization with a priority to attracting people to live in and use the town centre particularly with vacant and derelict property. With Shaffrey Architects taking on board the previous works carried out in Castleblayney under the Public Realm and Economic Plan of 2019 and indeed going back to the Historic Landscape Characterization document which was carried out back in 2012 which identified the principle factors that influenced the evolution of the towns and its hinterland and also established a details record of the elements that contribute to the character of the town.
- a) When will this report be published?
 - b) What are the next steps in terms of bringing the proposals of this report to the next stage?
 - c) When is the proposed next consultation process with all the stakeholders who have been involved in the different workshops including Castleblayney Regeneration Town Team, Castleblayney Sustainable Energy Group and the individual property owners?
 - d) When will the findings of this report be used to go back to the Department to look for funding to progress the plans in Castleblayney?

Response:-

Michael Ring TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, on 22 June 2020 published a report on the pilot “Town Centre Living Initiative” which examined how to encourage more people to live in rural town and village centres.

Under the Initiative, the Minister provided funding of up to €100,000 to each of 6 rural towns to explore how to encourage increased residential occupancy in those towns while addressing the issue of vacant properties. The initiative was delivered by the relevant Local Authorities in collaboration with the local communities.

The independent report, prepared by Space Engagers, outlines the approach taken by each town under the pilot to encouraging increased town centre living. It sets out the key issues identified in repurposing vacant properties for modern living, and the key findings which emerged. The report concludes by identifying a range of 15 suggested actions for further consideration.

In the case of Castleblayney, the report recommended a number of specific actions including:

- 1. Continue engagement with a selected cluster of property owners with the most potential
- 2. Appoint a dedicated person/resource to coordinate the town centre living initiative at a local level in Castleblayney
- 3. Create an Action Plan to deliver the following projects:
 - a. Restoration & reuse of Market House
 - b. Restoration of Gate Lodge II as a new library
 - c. Restoration of Hope Castle, Hope Castle Annex and wider landscape
 - d. Deliver of the Public Realm and Economic Plan

- e. Continue and enhance engagement with citizens, property owners and stakeholders
- f. Review approach to town centre zoning and management at local authority level
- g. Maintain Momentum

10. a) What is the expected completion date of the works at the Market House in Carrickmacross?
 b) What plans are in place for the opening of this new project?

Response:-

The proposed date for completion of construction works on the Phase2 of the Market House is weekending the 31st of July 2020. Discussions are continuing with proposed tenant regarding the opening of this building.

Questions raised by Cllr. Noel Keelan for July 2020 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

11. What is the up to date position in relation to the provision of much needed traffic calming measures including extra signage and road markings at the very dangerous Essexford junction on the Dundalk regional road (R178) and the main access route into to Inniskeen Village?

Response:

This Essexford junction was placed on the Low-Cost Safety Improvement Scheme list for consideration for 2020. Although this area did not receive funding for 2020 a further application will be made again for 2021”.

This MD will examine the main access route to Inniskeen Village, carry out preliminary investigation works and prepare preliminary designs to ascertain the feasibility of installing traffic calming.

12. In relation to Inniskeen Village, what is the up to date position regarding the provision of safe walking routes / footpaths links throughout the village including linking the newly refurbished Kavanagh Centre out to Magee’s shop and beyond?

Response:-

The MD is procuring consultants to develop a public realm plan for Inniskeen. Part of the brief for this plan is to address accessibility issues for the village.

13. What is the up to date position in relation to the provision of a CCTV camera system for Carrickmacross town and its environs in order to help prevent and detect crime and antisocial behaviour in our town?

Response:-

This MD office is exploring options for the provision of a CCTV system for the town.

14. In relation to Clar and Town and Village renewal funding opportunities what projects have been submitted by this Council for funding throughout the Carrickmacross/Castleblayney area?

Response:

There have been several applications made for the Clar Scheme in the district under Measure 1,2 & 3. At present the application are been analysed.

With reference to the Town and Village funding at present this MD is investigating possible suitable projects.

15. In relation to road safety when will this Council commence its hedge trimming / cutting programme throughout the area including insuring our footpath network are clear to walk on safety?

Response:-

Hedge cutting/trimming is restricted during nesting season which concludes on the 30/08/2020. During this period, only works considered necessary are carried out.

Questions raised by Cllr. Aoife McCooey for July 2020 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

16. Can the MD make suitable provisions in the upcoming budget for Christmas lights for Oram in 2020?

Response:-

Budgets for 2020 have already been allocated at year end 2019. There has been no provision made for Christmas lights in Oram.

17. Can the MD provide information on the area at Lough Muckno currently being developed, as to the work being carried out there and a timeline for the works?

Response:-

This MD is carrying out resurfacing works, with the provision of park and picnic benches which will also include planting at Lough Muckno. It is envisaged that works will be completed by the end of Q3 2020.

18. Can the MD investigate the possibility of street cleaning with suitable disinfectant, in the coming weeks as we have begun to see a rise in the "R" number, similar to what has been done across Europe? Can we have a costing of this for both Castleblayney and Carrickmacross to identify its viability.

Response:

This MD will investigate the possibility and seek advice from the public health experts in the HSE in relation to the merits of spraying disinfectant on public streets to combat the spread of Covid 19 in our towns.

7.0 Director of Service Orders

Orders 10/2020, 11/2020, 12/2020, 13/2020 and 14/2020 were duly noted.

8.0 Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

Votes of sympathy were passed with the following:

To Ann Costello and Family on the death of Liam Costello, Paddy Daly and Family and Roseann McHugh and Family on the death of Rose Daly and to the family of Jack Charlton on the death of Jack Charlton.

9.0 AOB

Cllr. Keelan:

Wished to organise meeting with Chamber of Commerce, Tidy Towns and Regeneration Team of Carrickmacross and Castleblayney to discuss how to increase business due to Covid-19. There is a need to look at using outdoor areas / covering outdoor areas.

Stated that there is a weed problem in Carrickmacross and asked that the M.D. look at the footpaths.

Cllr. Carthy:

Noted that the M.D. put in place designated parking areas in front of pharmacies due to Covid-19. Perhaps this should be extended and publicise the service.

Stated that there have been reports of broken glass at Gallows Tower and the Convent Lands playing pitch.

Reply – The M.D. will investigate same.

Asked that Gallows Hill is maintained as it currently looks unsightly and overgrown.

Commented that Linear Park is currently overgrown and there is broken glass in the car park. This area needs a dog bin. It needs a good tidy up.

Asked if there is an update on the Dog Park in Carrickmacross?

Reply – No update at present.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Commented that smaller shops are getting extra business due to people not wishing to travel because of Covid-19. Asked if signage can be placed to highlight these shops?

Reply – There is a facility in place where signs can be rented from MCC.

Can a survey be done on signposts in the District? There seems to be a lot broken or dirty.

Reply – A survey is in progress.

Proper signage needs to be in place around the vicinity of The Patrick Kavanagh Centre.

Cllr. Campbell:

Notes that there are broken signs in various areas which looks very bad. One example is on the Keady Road, Castleblayney.

The members and Director of Services Paul Clifford expressed their best wishes and thanks to District Co-ordinator Gareth McMahon as he will be leaving the post in the near future and wished him all the best in his new role.

The meeting concluded at 12:30pm.

Cathaoirleach

Date

Meeting Administrator