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Minutes of the Ballinamore Municipal District online information meeting held via zoom on Monday, 25 May 2020 at 11.00 am

Members Present: Councillor Paddy O'Rourke (Cathaoirleach)
Councillor Brendan Barry
Councillor Gerry Dolan
Councillor Caillian Ellis
Councillor Enda McGloin
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn

Officials Present: Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Cultural Services
Sinead Flynn, Meetings Administrator Ballinamore Municipal District
Darragh O'Boyle, Senior Executive Engineer

BMD.37.20 **Minutes of the meeting of Ballinamore Municipal District held on Monday 24th February, 2020**

The Minutes of the meeting of Ballinamore Municipal District of 24th February, 2020 were noted by the Members. The formal adoption of the Minutes will be approved at the next Statutory meeting.

BMD.38.20 **Vote of Sympathy**

The Members proposed the following Votes of Sympathy:

1. Brendan Meehan, Moherevogue, Drumcong, Leitrim.
2. Bernard (Bernie) Cunningham, Corriga, Aughavas, Leitrim.
3. Michael Reilly, Aughawillan, Carrigallen, Leitrim.
4. Barry Ward, Main Street, Carrigallen, Leitrim.
5. Conor (Joseph) Campbell, Drumshanbo, Leitrim.
6. John Joe McGirl, Listermacrone, Drumcong, Leitrim.
7. Kathleen McMorow (née O'Callaghan), Fahy, Ballinaglera, Leitrim.

BMD.39.20 **To receive an update from Mr. Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action & Emergency Services in relation to the current situation regarding the COVID 19 National Emergency.**

Mr. Vincent Dwyer provided an update to the Members in relation to the current operating procedures of Leitrim County Council arising from the COVID 19 Pandemic. Mr. Dwyer provided an over-view existing service provision and the roadmap for the phased re-opening of all Local Authority Services. Mr. Dwyer provided a detailed overview on the Rates Restart Grant Scheme for ratepayers impacted by COVID 19.

This update was noted by the Members and the following items were raised:

- The Members expressed their unanimous support for the Restart Grant Scheme. They also expressed concerns for the business community arising from the COVID 19 Pandemic and the lockdown restrictions that have been in place since March, 2020.
- Councillor Enda McGloin sought clarification in relation to any proposed Rates Waiver for 2020 Rates and the position in relation to the 25% Rates Liability for Vacant Commercial Properties.

Mr. Dwyer advised that new legislation may be required to enable Local Authorities to apply a Rates Waiver Scheme for businesses forced to close in response to the Lockdown restrictions put in place by the Government. He also advised that the 2020 Budget for Leitrim County Council was formulated having regard to a maximum vacancy write off of 75% for vacant commercial dwellings.

- Councillor Brendan Barry queried if a funding commitment has been provided to the Council by the Department to bridge the projected loss of revenue from commercial rates arising from the Pandemic to fund Local Authority services.

Mr. Dwyer stated that until the details of the Waiver Scheme are available, the full financial impact on revenue collection from commercial rates cannot be determined.

- Councillor Ita-Reynolds Flynn noted the phases for re-opening identified by Government, however, she noted that some businesses may decide not to re-open until later in the year and this may pose a difficulty if the scheme is closed to applications later in the year.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer confirmed that the scheme will remain open to accepting applications until 31st August, 2020 and that it is a condition of the award of the grant that the business commits to re-opening

BMD.40.20 **To approve proposed Tidy Towns Allocation under the General Municipal Allocation for noting subject to formal approval at the Statutory Meeting.**

Mr. Vincent Dwyer provided an overview of the proposed allocation of funding under the Tidy Town's Allocations. The report as circulated to the Members appears as Appendix I to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book. The Members provisionally approved the allocation as detailed in the report pending formal approval of the allocation at the next

Statutory meeting.

BMD.41.20 **Meeting Correspondence.**

Letter from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine with regard to the Bovine TB Eradication Programme.

This update was noted by the Members.

BMD.42.20 **Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"I ask that Leitrim County Council consider resurfacing works and replacement of damaged kerbs at the 'Furnace Hill' estate, Drumshanbo alongside the erection of 'Children at Play' warning signs at the entrance to this small estate, where in recent times, families have moved into this area."

Report by Roads - General

"The Furnace Hill estate is in public ownership. While we do not have any funding for resurfacing this estate, we will dispatch the patching unit to repair the potholes and we will endeavour to erect the appropriate 30kph signage.

It should be noted that The Community Involvement Scheme gives the local community funding towards road resurfacing, and this option could be considered, by the local Community Group or Residents Association."

BMD.43.20 **Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Enda McGloin;

"I call on Leitrim County Council to present a final outline of the car parking plan around the resurfaced car park facilities on the Mart Road, Drumshanbo and in particular the location of the designated disabled parking spot which is important considering the relocation of the local Post Office recently."

Report by Roads - General

"Leitrim County Council commenced works at the car park opposite the mart which was developed in conjunction with the local community group and partly funded under an Outdoor Recreation Scheme. The plans were discussed with the local community and agreed in February. The funding will allow for a footpath to be constructed on the river side of the carpark, allowing pedestrians to amble along the river side. The funding also allows for fencing at the riverbank and for the erection of bike stands and two public seats within the car park. This funding does not allow for surfacing of the car park. However, if additional funding can be sourced, approximately €20,000, the surfacing and road-markings of the carpark will be completed. If this proceeds, two number parking bays for people with disabilities, will be provided at the Post Office side of the public car park. The height restrictions will remain in place."

This Notice of Motion was also supported by Councillor Gerry Dolan.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer agreed to review if the additional €20,000 could be sourced to complete the outstanding works.

Councillor Brendan Barry requested consideration be given to the relocation of the disabled persons car parking space to the opposite side of the car park as the current location is on a steep gradient. This proposal was also supported by Councillor McGloin.

BMD.44.20 **Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:**

"I ask that Leitrim County Council have road markings reinstated where the Old Creamery is situated at Longfield, Killegar (Road No. L15282-0 adjoins the L15281). Following the completion of road surfacing some time ago, the road markings were erased."

Report by Roads - General

"The district engineers office will include these requested works on our line marking schedule. We hope to carry out works in conjunction with Carrigallen pedestrian crossing. There are a number of local road junctions that require, either a stop sign or, stop line to identify the junction priority."

BMD.45.20 **Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:**

"I ask that Leitrim County Council carry out repairs on Road No. L55452 which serves a considerable number of families in the townland of Druminchin."

Report by Roads - General

"We will dispatch the patching unit to this public road."

BMD.46.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council write to the Court Services requesting they replace the windows in the Court House in Ballinamore and to establish what they intend to do with this historic building in the middle of the town."

Councillor Caillian Ellis called for the support of the Members to write to the Court Service to seek an update on the status of the building. Councillor Ellis stated that the building has potential to be used as a tourist attraction if the building could be acquired by the Council under a long-term lease.

This proposal was supported by all Members and it was agreed to write to the Court Service to seek an update on the Court House in Ballinamore.

Councillor Enda McGloin queried if a feasibility study has ever been carried out to consider the future use of the building.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer confirmed that the Council had previous engagement with the Court

Service regarding the building as it is a Protected Structure. Mr. Dwyer outlined that a report had been completed a few years ago with a Conservation Architect and that he would review the matter with Mr. Bernard Greene, Senior Planner and provide an update to the next meeting.

Councillor Ita Reynolds- Flynn also supported the Notice of Motion. She also referred to recent contact between the Ballinamore Tourism Office and the family of the late John McGahern. Councillor Reynolds-Flynn stated that perhaps the building could be used in some way to pay tribute to Mr. McGahern's contribution to the Arts.

BMD.47.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose Leitrim County Council approve a grant on Local Road Number L1487 in the townlands of Ballycalleen, Lawderdale and Fenagh."

Report by Roads - General

"Leitrim County Council carried out a Road Improvement Grant on 1km of this road 2 years ago. The remaining section also requires a Road Improvement Grant, however this is not scheduled in the current 3- year plan. We will maintain the public road with our Patching Unit and will endeavour to include in the next 3-year roads programme for RIG's."

Councillor Caillian Ellis referred to the road and stated that the road is unusual as it falls under two GSS's, and that the second section of road urgently requires a Roads Maintenance Grant.

The Notice of Motion was supported by Councillor Barry.

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle agreed that the road is a popular walking route and that the road will be prioritised for inclusion in the next Road Improvement Grant Programme.

BMD.48.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"Can I get an update as to when Leitrim County Council will take responsibility for the public lighting in the Dun na Bo Estate, Willowfield Road, Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim."

Report by Planning

"The Dun na Bo estate is not in charge of the Council and so the street lighting cannot be taken into charge. As has been previously advised the Council cannot undertake works to, or responsibility for, any lights or services that are not taken in charge through the statutory procedure set out in Section 180 of Planning and Development Acts, 2000 (as amended). Should we do so then the Council risks exposure to being held responsible for any public liability claim that arises.

In the case of Dun na Bo, as previously advised, the Council is pursuing a claim on the Bond that was put in place in respect of this development. This claim is currently in the hands of our legal representatives. Until this matter is concluded the Council cannot take

in charge any aspect of Dun na Bo as doing so could jeopardise its claim. It is not therefore possible to give an indication of when the Council will take responsibility for the street lighting within this development."

Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn acknowledged the reply to her Notice of Motion, however, she stated that she would like to see progress in resolving the matter, notwithstanding the legal issues referred to in the reply.

This Notice of Motion was supported by all Members and they expressed their concern in relation to the lack of progress in resolving the matter.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer agreed to review the issue with the Planning Department and to provide an update to the next meeting.

BMD.49.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"Can I seek an update as to when the Roads Maintenance Crew will be returning to work."

Report by Roads - General

"All outdoor staff are now trained and inducted on how to carry out works safely with respect to the Covid 19 virus. This process took three days to complete and all crews have now returned to work. Some of the processes may result in a reduction of productivity as all work tasks they must be Covid risk assessed prior to commencement. All staff will continue to maintain the high level of health and safety awareness along with personal social distancing during all activities. We are glad to be back in business and we will endeavour to maintain this."

BMD.50.20 **Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"I request that Leitrim County Council provide pedestrian crossing signage beside the entrance to Lock 5 on the R202 Ardrum, Ballinamore."

Report by Roads - General

"Unfortunately, we cannot place a pedestrian crossing sign where there is no crossing. We have placed speed bars on the road surface to indicate this issue to motorists at the Canal Bank Walk at Ardrum. We can erect a pedestrian walking sign at this approach."

Councillor Barry acknowledged the reply to his Notice of Motion and stated that while he welcomed the provision of signage that in the future, he would hope to see a Pedestrian Crossing being provided at this location.

BMD.51.20 **Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"Can I ask Leitrim County Council for an update on the Local Improvement Scheme. On what date was it closed to new applications, the details of the last lane on the list, which was completed, how many are still on the list and which lanes are possibly going to be done in 2020?"

Report by Roads - General

"There is currently a total of 124 No. applicants on the LIS Waiting List. The last scheme completed in 2019 was reference number 3020, but it should be noted that there are two applications prior to that which are still on the list as they were deferred last year, and these may be completed in 2020. Due to the economic downturn, the scheme stopped being funded in 2011 /2012. No further funding was received until late 2017, and the priority was to deal with applicants on the existing LIS Waiting List. While new applications have been received in recent years, these have not been added to the existing LIS waiting List. The LIS Allocation received in 2019 amounted to €250,000 and this enabled a total of 10 number LIS's to be completed in 2019. In 2020, we have been notified of an allocation of €250,000 and this will enable a further 10 No. Schemes approximately to be completed. We have contacted the next 10 -12 applicants on the LIS Waiting List requesting them to update their application aorm and details in order to access their continued eligibility for this scheme in accordance with the terms and conditions. These 124 applications are processed in chronological order and the 2020 Allocation should allow us to process the remaining 2007 Applications on the LIS Waiting List. It should also be noted that, in April 2019, this office submitted details of our full LIS Waiting List to the Department including approximate costing's. This detailed the LIS Waiting List having an estimated total cost of completion of €3,940,506 giving a grant requirement of €3,632,433. We requested maximum funding from the Department in light of the large LIS Waiting List here in County Leitrim."

Councillor Barry sought clarification in relation to the number of applications where the applicants 'dropped out' or were excluded.

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle advised that he did not have that information to hand, however, he agreed to forward the information to Councillor Barry.

BMD.52.20 Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:

"I would like to ask Leitrim County Council for a time frame of the works that are due to be carried out on the Drumderg Road, Drumshanbo where serious flooding has occurred in the past."

Report by Roads - General

"The RIG specific to the link road at Drumderg (L-3378), is scheduled for 2021. The District Engineers office carried out small remedial works at the location where flooding occurred last year and should help the situation until we get full restoration grant in 2021. The grant attached for this public road will allow us to restore 1km of this road."

Councillor Gerry Dolan outlined that this road is prone to flooding and that there was a serious road traffic incident on this section of road last year.

Mr. O'Boyle requested that details of the exact accident location be provided to the District Engineer's Office.

BMD.53.20 Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:

"With this year's Tidy Towns competition cancelled due to Covid-19 I would ask that Leitrim County Council help and liaise with local Tidy Town Committees to help to have works carried out this year. Which would include with assisting with the cleaning of the High St, Drumshanbo. Possibly having a point of contact for committees to get work done or approved."

Report by Roads - General

"The District Office have always liaised with all tidy towns committees and will continue to do so, and all these groups have contact details for District Engineers office.

While the Council is very much aware and appreciative of the town and village enhancement works undertaken by Tidy Towns groups, and will continue to support this work, the Council are not in a position to expand their programme of works to encompass the works traditionally undertaken by these community groups. The Council have already committed to an expansive works programme which now has to be delivered with a vast level of restrictions to prevent the spread of Covid 19, this may redefine the level of service that can be delivered in 2020.

However, the Council will continue to work with these groups, as they have done in the past, including working with the groups on projects such as the Car-park footpath along the riverside amenity at the Mart Link Road, in Drumshanbo.

It should also be noted that the allocation proposed for the Tidy Towns committees have increased by 25% from last year, and a program of works have been agreed."

Councillor Dolan welcomed the reply to his Notice of Motion. Councillor Enda McGloin also supported this Notice of Motion.

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle advised that support will be provided to the Tidy Town's Committee's by assisting with the provision of machinery and plant, however, the Council do not have the resources to complete these works.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 12.30 pm.

SIGNED: _____
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn
Cathaoirleach
Ballinamore Municipal District

SIGNED: _____
Sinead Flynn
Meetings Administrator
Ballinamore Municipal District

Date: Monday, 28 September 2020

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