

Minutes of the Ballinamore Municipal District Meeting held in the online Information meeting on Monday, 22 June 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
Darragh O'Boyle, Senior Executive Engineer
Sinead Flynn, Meetings Administrator Ballinamore Municipal District
Mary Reynolds

BMD.55.20 **Minutes of previous meetings for noting.**

The Minutes of the meeting of Ballinamore Municipal District of 2nd June, 2020 were noted by the Members. The formal adoption of the Minutes will be approved at the next Statutory meeting.

BMD.56.20 **Matters arising from the minutes**

1. The Court House, Ballinamore

Mr. Dwyer confirmed that a letter had issued to the Court Services regarding Ballinamore Court House arising from the Meetings Correspondence from the May meeting of Ballinamore Municipal District. Mr. Dwyer also outlined that works to repair the roof of the building were completed last year.

Councillor Ellis stressed the importance of the Court Service providing an update on the building and queried what the future use of the building may be. He also queried if the Court Service have any plans to upgrade/replace the windows in the building.

Councillor Reynolds-Flynn also supported the Notice of Motion. She stated that the building is a major landmark in the town of Ballinamore and she expressed her concern that the building may not be maintained as it should be.

It was agreed to again follow up with the Court Service and to provide an update to the members at the next meeting.

2. Dun na Bo Estate, Ballinamore

Mr. Dwyer outlined that there are complex legal issues involved in the resolution of the issues with this estate. He advised that the Council have engaged with their

Legal Advisors E.C Gearty & Co. in order to progress the matter. Mr. Dwyer advised that he will keep the members informed of progress in this regard.

Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn welcomed the update provided. She stated that the costs of the public lighting in the estate is a significant cost for the residents to finance from their own personal resources.

BMD.57.20 To receive update from Mr Vincent Dwyer, Director of Services, in relation to the current situation regarding the COVID 19 National Emergency.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer gave a brief update on the Council's response to the COVID 19 Pandemic. He outlined that in line with Department recommendations, that the Council will be re-opening a number of public offices on Monday 29th June, 2020 and that the appropriate social distance measures will be put in place to protect staff and the public. Mr. Dwyer also outlined that the Civic Amenity Centres had re-opened to the public over the last two weekends. This update was noted by the members and the following items were raised:

Councillor Enda McGloin queried if the next meeting of Ballinamore Municipal District will be held with the members attending in person in an appropriately sized meeting room to facilitate social distancing requirements or if the meetings will continue to be held remotely via the online platform.

Mr. Dwyer advised that this item will be reviewed by the Corporate Policy Group at their meeting on Friday 26th June, 2020.

Councillor Brendan Barry queried if the Council has received any notification from the Department in relation to additional funding being provided to the Local Authorities to compensate for the projected loss of revenue streams arising from the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Mr. Dwyer advised that details in this regard are awaited. He outlined that details of a Waiver Scheme for ratepayers that were forced to close their business arising from the Lockdown is expected in the coming weeks. Mr. Dwyer also advised that the Finance Department are currently processing applications for the Rates Restart Grant Scheme. He advised that the scheme opened on 22nd May, 2020 and that approximately 250 applications were submitted to date. Mr. Dwyer encouraged the members to promote the uptake of the grant amongst the business community. He outlined that the closing date for receipt of applications for the scheme is 31st August, 2020 and that additional information and the application form for the scheme is available on the Council's website.

Mr. Dwyer also outlined that the annual Roads Work Programme is progressing and that crews returned to work with the easing of the lockdown restrictions on 18th May, 2020 under Phase I of the roadmap for re-opening businesses.

Mr. Dwyer also advised that the Council continue to monitor income and expenditure. He

advised that in order to assist Local Authorities with cashflow that the Department have released the funding available under the LPT earlier than normal.

Mr. Dwyer concluded by stating that the Council will have a more accurate summary of the fully impact of COVID 19 of the Council's finances when the details of the Rates Waiver Scheme are available.

BMD.58.20 **Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to consider repairing the L8299-2 road from Aughrim town land to Tullynaha/Tullyveacan as this road is currently in a very poor state."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"There was a surface dressing grant on this public road in 2019 for 1km. We can dispatch our Maintenance Crew to fill any potholes on the remainder of this road"

Councillor McGloin welcomed the reply to his Notice of Motion, however, he stated that this road is in poor condition and he requested that the road be included in the Roads Programme later in the year.

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle advised that a Roads Maintenance Grant was included on this road last year and that the road is currently subject to a Community Improvement Scheme. Mr. O'Boyle agreed to review if there is capacity/materials to black top this section of the road.

BMD.59.20 **Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to engage with Cavan County Council to allow the road sweeper cross the bridge and cover the Leitrim side of Dowra Village and arrange some monetary agreement for this service."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"We can liaise with Cavan County Council on this issue. Leitrim County Council can get our Contract Sweepers to visit Dowra during the summer months. This will be on an irregular basis."

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle advised that he contacted Cavan County Council and that he is awaiting a response on the request. He confirmed that he will put the necessary arrangements in place to have the Road Sweeper attend Dowra 2-3 times per year.

BMD.60.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"I wish to raise concerns about the junction at Main Street, Ballinamore beside the Supervalu Store and the Aughnasheelin Road. There has been a number of accidents at this junction and quite a serious accident occurred last Tuesday. Gardai filed a report and an individual was sent to hospital. Ballinamore Fire Brigade were also on the scene. I request that this junction be accessed by the Council for safety as soon as possible."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The Road Design Office will monitor the traffic and pedestrian movements/behaviour at this junction and will assess the accident history and they will also liaise with the Gardai. This will determine if an intervention is required and if so, funding will be sought under a future Low Cost Safety Scheme, if eligible for same."

Councillor Reynolds-Flynn welcomed the reply to her Notice of Motion.

Councillor Caillian Ellis supported the Notice of Motion.

BMD.61.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"I wish to request that the zebra crossing opposite Ballinamore Community Hospital be remarked as the exiting markings on the crossing are very faded and one of the lights is not working."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"We will get the crossing lines redone when our Lining Contractor is in the vicinity."

Councillor Reynolds-Flynn welcomed the reply to her Notice of Motion.

BMD.62.20 **Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:**

"I wish to ask what is the Irish Water Policy on repairs to the water network, i.e. the acceptable turnaround time from when a leak is reported, to when it is repaired. During the hot weather in the end of May, a period of peak demand, we had a number of leaks which were left unattended for up to 5 days. Is it, as I suspect that the weakness in this entire system is at Irish Water's centralised system of administration rather than at Local Authority level?"

Report by A/Senior Engineer, Water Services

"Since the Covid-19 lockdown started on 27th March this year Irish Water decided that in order to protect essential workers certain minor works would not be undertaken. These included minor leaks not effecting supplies. Irish Water customer services prioritised only those impacting supplies and I believe that all major bursts and leaks were repaired without delay. Now that the lockdown is in phase 3 and we are returning to normal working all minor leaks that were reported in the last three months will be attended to in due course. In contrast to some other parts of the country we have not seen a significant peak in the water demand in Leitrim during the last 4 months."

Councillor O'Rourke welcomed the reply to his Notice of Motion, however, he stated that if the demand for water was not reduced due to the closure of a number of hotels and business premises, that significant shortcomings of supply could have impacted on households. Councillor O'Rourke stated that the response time to leaks is too long and that this matter should be raised with Irish Water directly. He stated that it was unfortunate that restrictions on supply had to be put in place.

Councillor's Brendan Barry, Caillian Ellis and Ita Reynolds-Flynn also supported the Notice of Motion.

Mr. Dwyer referred to Mr. Gaffney's reply and confirmed that during these unprecedented times it was very difficult to address all leaks in a timely manner. Mr. Dwyer confirmed that a meeting between officials from the Council and Irish Water is due to take place on Tuesday 23rd June, 2020 and that the matter will be discussed as part of the business of the meeting.

BMD.63.20 Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:

"I ask what plans does Leitrim County Council have regarding the cutting of roadside vegetation at junctions and dangerous corners this summer? Many of these are greatly overgrown especially since the break in the weather which has seen a period of vigorous growth."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The District Office will cut verges on the regional road junctions only. This is usually completed in June, however, the Covid restrictions have delayed our programme of works and we will endeavour to have these works completed in July. Any local road junctions should be carried out by the land owners in accordance with their civic duty."

Councillor O'Rourke stated that there has been a lot of growth over the last number of weeks and that the works to the vegetation at the junctions needs to be prioritised.

BMD.64.20 Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:

"I request that Leitrim County Council carry out resurfacing works on the L4297 in the townland of Slievenakilla close to the junction with L8299-2."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The surface dressing grant on the L-4297 was completed this year for a distance of 1km in accordance with the funding. We have a short section of blacktop to complete when our Contractor becomes available and we will endeavour to include this section as part of the works. There is also a CIS in the vicinity of this junction."

Councillor Barry welcomed the reply to his Notice of Motion.

BMD.65.20 Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:

"I request that Leitrim County Council pipe a short piece of watertable which was recently cleaned along a dangerous bend prior to resurfacing works in the townland of Mullaghsallagh, Kilclare. These small works could make this corner much safer."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"This Road Maintenance Grant on the L-7389 is in the Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District and the works are complete which ties into the LCS works of 2019. Under the

Roads Maintenance Grant Scheme, widening of roads is not possible, however currently there are sufficient lay-bys along this road, to allow traffic numbers to move safely."

Councillor Brendan Barry stated that for a small outlay of costs that the matter could be addressed.

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle advised that as the road is in the Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District, then the decision on the road would be a matter for the Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District members to consider.

BMD.66.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council extend the footpaths from Keshcarrigan Village out to the Fr. Michael Judge Amenity Area at Keshcarrigan Lake."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"While the Council acknowledges the merit of this proposal, there is no provision for new footpaths within the budget. If other funding streams can be identified, the matter will be reviewed. An alternative source of funding may come from Town and Village or CLAR schemes, which will need local community input. This office is more than happy to meet and discuss such a funding application with these community spokespersons."

Councillor Ellis welcomed the reply to his Notice of Motion.

Councillor Barry enquired if Walks and Trails or ORIS funding could be sought for this project.

Mr. Dwyer agreed to review if the project is eligible for these funding streams and agreed to revert to the members with an update.

BMD.67.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council clean the roads signs in the Ballinamore Municipal area, as some are very dirty."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The District Office are currently behind schedule on the Road Works Programme, due to the Covid 19. It should be noted that we intend to carry out full replacement of signage on the R201 from Cloone to Carrigallen and replace signage at Aghoo. If time allows, we will carry out signage cleaning on the Swanlinbar Road and the Newtowngore Road."

Councillor Caillan Ellis stated that the cleaning of the signs will enhance the presentation of the county particularly for tourists.

Mr. O'Boyle outlined that Mr. Lar Power, Chief Executive is also supportive of these measures to enhance the presentation of the county particularly for tourists.

BMD.68.20 **Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to resurface the Hilly Road Drumshanbo as there has been many repair works done over the last few years and has left the road in need of full resurfacing."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The Hilly Road in Drumshanbo is programmed for a Restoration Improvement Grant in 2021"

BMD.69.20 **Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:**

"I call on Leitrim Council to have the Greaghaguillaun back road chipped and tarred between the sections that are currently being black topped at the minute until it can be completed in black top at a later stage"

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The old Dowra Road at Greaghaguillaun has an Improvement Grant later this year."

Councillor Dolan stated that the road is busy with a lot of tourists using the road and that sections of the road have not been included in the current works.

Councillor McGloin supported the Notice of Motion. Mr. Darragh O'Boyle agreed to do an inspection to review the position on the ground.

BMD.70.20 **AOB**

1. Councillor Caillian Ellis welcomed the re-opening of the Bank of Ireland branches in Drumshanbo and Mohill. He questioned if the banks had used the Pandemic as an opportunity to remove day to day banking services from the public given that the Credit Unions had remained open.

The Members unanimously agreed that access to banks is critical to rural towns.

2. Councillor Ellis also raised the issue of a three day delivery service proposed by An Post for postal services. He stated that there is a fear that up to nine jobs may be lost in the Carrick-on-Shannon Office.

All members expressed concern in relation to the change in service delivery to An Post and the potential loss of jobs in Carrick-on-Shannon. It was agreed to issue a letter to An Post to seek clarification on the matter.

Councillor O'Rourke thanked the Members, staff and press for their co-operation in the meeting conducted via zoom.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 12.15 pm.

SIGNED: _____
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn
Cathaoirleach
Ballinamore Municipal District

SIGNED: _____
Sinead Flynn
Meetings Administrator
Ballinamore Municipal District

Date: Monday, 28 September 2020