

Minutes of the Ballinamore Municipal District Meeting held in the online Information meeting on Monday, 27 July 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

BMD.75.20 **Minutes for noting and subject to approval at the next Statutory meeting at a later date**

The Minutes of the meeting of Ballinamore Municipal District of 22nd June, 2020 were noted by the Members. The formal adoption of the Minutes will be approved at the next Statutory meeting.

BMD.76.20 **Matters arising from the Minutes**

1. Ms. Sinead Flynn outlined that a further letter issued to the Courts Service regarding the Court House in Ballinamore following the last meeting of Ballinamore Municipal District. Ms. Flynn further outlined that Mr. Brendan McDonald had contacted the Council and he apologised for the delay in responding to the correspondence. Ms. Flynn stated that Mr. McDonald confirmed that the Court Service had incurred a cost of €70,000 in repairing the roof of the Court House in Ballinamore and that a written response will be provided to the Notice of Motion in the coming days.

This update was noted by the Members.

2. Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn sought an update on the Dun na Bo Estate, Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer outlined that a meeting had taken place between the Planning Department and residents from the estate. He also outlined that the Council are currently consulting with their Legal Advisors in relation to the matter.

Councillor Reynolds-Flynn noted the update.

BMD.77.20 **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 a detailed update on the Rates Restart Grant Scheme in terms of the activity to date in relation to the scheme in Leitrim. He advised that the Rates Team have been working to process the grant applications to provide direct financial support to businesses that had been negatively impacted by the Pandemic. Mr. Dwyer also outlined that as part of the July Stimulus Package recently announced by Government, the terms of the scheme have been expanded with a broader set of eligibility criteria under the Restart Grant Plus Scheme. Mr. Dwyer stated that the uptake for the scheme in Leitrim was less than anticipated to date, however, he encouraged the members to bring the scheme to the attention of any ratepayers to avail of the supports available.

Mr. Dwyer also provided an update on the Commercial Rates Waiver Scheme and the methodology that will be applied to the accounts of ratepayers that satisfy the eligibility criteria for the scheme. He outlined that unlike the grant scheme an application for the Rates Waiver Scheme will not be required and the account will be assessed in accordance with the Department guidelines for the scheme. Mr. Dwyer also provided an over-view of the categories of ratepayers that may not qualify for the waiver and the appeals mechanism that is available to them.

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

1. Councillor Enda McGloin queried if the Government will fund the full cost of the Waiver Scheme.

Mr. Dwyer advised that the Finance Department will be assessing all 1,090 rate accounts having regard to the criteria to qualify for the waiver as set out in the Circular. He outlined that an application process will not be required from individual ratepayers. Mr. Dwyer advised that the Rates Team will be reviewing the accounts and applying the waiver as a credit (from 27th March to 27th September, 2020) on the accounts and the ratepayer will be notified of their revised balance once the waiver has been applied in October, 2020.

2. Councillor Brendan Barry queried if the costs associated with works required to Council Offices and Libraries will be eligible for Central Government Funding.

Mr. Dwyer advised that there has been a reduction in income sources for the Local Authority as a direct result of the Pandemic e.g. parking fees, planning fees etc. He also advised that the Council are currently in the process of quantifying the costs arising from Covid.

BMD.78.20 **Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"Some great work has been carried out around Drumshanbo by the very active Tidy Towns

Committee in recent weeks. What would compliment this work would be the painting of the town Library which needs to be painted. Can I get a commitment from Leitrim County Council to paint the building before September?"

Report by Director of Services, Housing, Community, Corporate and Cultural Services

"The painting of the Library in Drumshanbo would be desirable and will be included in a future Maintenance Programme however, there is currently no budgetary provision for painting of Libraries."

Councillor Enda McGloin expressed his disappointment with the reply to his Notice of Motion. Councillor McGloin stated that several businesses in the town had painted the exterior of their properties and that the Library is a public building in the town that needs to be painted. Councillor McGloin requested that consideration be given to power housing the building this year and then including the building in a future Maintenance Programme.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer agreed to review this request with Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services.

BMD.79.20 Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:

"I propose for new markings and further signage to be installed to identify the Mart Link Road as a one-way system. Numerous incidents of motorists driving up the wrong way from Laird House direction towards the Gala store have occurred. An accident will happen at this location unless action is taken."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"Leitrim County Council have erected no right turn signs on poles at the junction. We have also placed similar road marking signs on the pavement. The issue is the private sign erected on the gable of the wall which inadvertently direct visiting traffic down the wrong direction of the one-way system.

We will advise the proprietor of same and we can meet to discuss on site."

Councillor McGloin welcomed the reply to his Notice of Motion. Councillor McGloin agreed that the second sign is causing confusion to motorists and he welcomed the fact that the matter will be addressed.

Councillor Brendan Barry also supported the Notice of Motion and welcomed the reply.

BMD.80.20 Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:

"I ask that Leitrim County Council extend the public lighting at St. Mary's Church, Carrigallen, to provide lighting along the route to the graveyard carpark. Recent improvements in that area has seen an increase in visitors to the cemetery which necessitates the need for additional lighting to be provided for pedestrian safety."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"The public road from the town of Carrigallen has public lighting. The road leading to the graveyard is not in public ownership and in the ownership of the St. Felim's Diocesan Trust. There are funding streams available to these Committees to apply for such schemes."

Councillor O'Rourke acknowledged the reply to the Notice of Motion and asked if the option outlined in the reply can be progressed.

Mr. O'Boyle advised that he is available to help St. Felim's Diocesan Trust to apply to finance the cost of the works if a suitable funding stream is available.

Councillor O'Rourke welcomed this response.

BMD.81.20 **Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:**

"I ask that Leitrim County Council take action to deal with the blocked underground culvert (adjacent to Doyle's property) on Road Number L1589 in Gortermone. This work was promised some time back and the recent downpours have caused major flooding issues."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"We will investigate this drainage issue on the L-1589. If the issue is on public property, we will endeavour to carry out necessary works."

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle confirmed that the matter will be attended to as soon as possible. He outlined that the scheduled Road Works Programme is approximately two months behind schedule due to the suspension of works earlier this year arising from the Government Restrictions.

BMD.82.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council reline the junctions in Ballinamore town and Fenagh Village."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"The District Office will organise these works when our contract liners are in the locality."

BMD.83.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council fix the footpath and the railing on the Ballinamore Road out of Cloone Village."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"We will place the footpath repair works on our schedule and will endeavour to repair once our Road Works Programme is complete. The current Covid restrictions have delayed our MD Schedule of Works by two months."

BMD.84.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"I am calling on the Local Authority to provide an update on an application made by Ballinamore Childcare with regard to funding awarded to the community from the Department of Justice. It is my understanding that the funding is in the region of €45,000 to €50,000."

Report by Director of Services, Housing and Community and Cultural Services

"An application is currently being assessed against the guidelines issued by the Department of Justice and a decision will be communicated to the Group in due course"

Mr. Dwyer agreed to revert to Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn in the coming days with an update on the funding request.

BMD.85.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

Councillor Ita Reynolds outlined that she had submitted the following Notice of Motion as she considered that the policy is an attack on rural Ireland, particularly, at a time when more employees are working remotely and possibly looking to relocate to counties like Leitrim given the increase in remote working arising from the Pandemic. Councillor Reynolds-Flynn called on the support of her colleagues to write to the Minister to convey their concern about the proposed charges.

"I am calling on the support of Ballinamore Municipal District members to contact the Minister for Climate Action, Communication, Networks and Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan to retract recent comments made by him in relation to a new broadband connection charge to those living in rural Ireland. Recent reports suggest that the Minister is encouraging, that a charge be imposed on those building new houses in rural Ireland of up to €5,000 for a connection to the National Broadband Plan. I feel this charge is unfair and is discriminating against those who wish to live rurally e.g. in the county of Leitrim."

Proposed by Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn, seconded by Councillor Paddy O'Rourke and unanimously supported that:

"Ballinamore Municipal District members contact the Minister for Climate Action, Communication, Networks and Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan to retract recent comments made by him in relation to a new broadband connection charge to those living in rural Ireland. Recent reports suggest that the Minister is encouraging, that a charge be imposed on those building new houses in rural Ireland of up to €5,000 for a connection to the National Broadband Plan. I feel this charge is unfair and is discriminating against those who wish to live rurally e.g. in the county of Leitrim."

BMD.86.20 **Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"I request that Leitrim County Council carry out works to reduce traffic speed in Keshcarrigan and install a 30km speed limit in Ceis Lawns Estate, Keshcarrigan."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"We have scheduled this "taken in charge" estate for erection of 30kph speed signage within the estates. These works will be carried out later this year."

Councillor Brendan Barry acknowledged the issue of excessive speeding in Keshcarrigan and he acknowledged that the issue is largely due to driver behaviour, however, Councillor Barry queried if any engineering solution could be provided.

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle advised that the matter can be referred to the Joint Policing Committee and perhaps the Gardai can arrange for speed vans to be located in the village as a deterrent.

BMD.87.20 **Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"I request that Leitrim County Council meet with the Selton Hill Commemoration Committee and work to secure funding to upgrade the monument at Selton Hill in advance of the 100th anniversary in March 2021."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"The District Office has met with the local Committee on site and have agreed to assist in the significant repair works to the monument. We have advised the Committee that Leitrim County Council will assist them in any road closures which may be required for the organised celebrations in March, 2021."

BMD.88.20 **Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to have works carried out to stop the flooding of the lower Annagh Road towards Dowra and also local farmlands in conjunction with the ESB."

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"The District Office has met with residents on site and have agreed to rebuild the parapets on the low-level bridge on the L-4294 at Dowra. The landowners either side of this bridge have carried out drain cleaning, however the issue is the River Shannon level at this point. The District Office can include for a Road Improvement Grant on this road which would allow it to be raised a foot and this would be significant enough to allow vehicle and pedestrian movement during wet winter conditions."

Councillor Dolan stated that the flooding issue at this location is serious and he welcomed the proposed works to be carried out by the Council as referenced in the reply to the Notice of Motion.

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle also advised that the Council could write to the ESB requesting that the lower the water levels at this location.

BMD.89.20 **Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to have a footpath put in place from Ballinamore out to Knockaroe in conjunction with the plaque being proposed to be erected there"

Report by Roads - South Leitrim Area

"The District Office has no funding for new footpath construction. There are funding streams available to the local Communities to allow these projects to be constructed. Clar and the Town & Village Schemes are advertised every year in spring. Local communities have been very successful in accessing these funds. I am happy to meet with any local community to discuss this process."

Mr. Darragh O'Boyle advised that he is available to meet with residents to progress a funding application under an appropriate funding stream.

Councillor Dolan welcomed this response.

BMD.90.20 **AOB**

1. Councillor Caillian Ellis raised the issue of Irish Water outages in the South Leitrim area and called on the Council to raise the issue with Irish Water.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer agreed that there has been more than 50 leaks and bursts on the watermains to date in Leitrim this year. He advised that this is putting significant pressure on resources and that Irish Water do not have the funding available to finance the necessary works. Mr. Dwyer suggested that the members raise this issue with their party colleagues and that political support may achieve an outcome whereby funding for necessary capital works will be provided in Leitrim.

2. Councillor Enda McGloin raised the issue of the format of the Municipal District Meetings for the rest of the year. Councillor McGloin queried if meetings can be facilitated in the Council Chamber in Carrick-on-Shannon with the appropriate social distancing measures in place.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer advised that the Corporate Policy Group will be considering the format for the Council and Municipal District meetings at their meeting in September, 2020.

3. Councillor Brendan Barry welcomed the appointment of a Rural Recreation Officer to Leitrim. Councillor Barry stated that some farmers have missed out on the Summer Scheme Payment and queried if this could be raised by writing to the Department.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer advised that the Council had no direct role here and that he

would raise the issue with Mr. Brian Smyth and revert to Councillor Barry with an update on the matter.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 12.15 pm.

SIGNED: _____
Councillor Paddy O'Rourke
Cathaoirleach
Ballinamore Municipal District

SIGNED: _____
Sinead Flynn
Meetings Administrator
Ballinamore Municipal District

Date: Monday, 28 September 2020