

**Minutes of the Ballinamore Municipal District Meeting held via zoom on Tuesday, 27
October 2020 at 11.00 am**

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

Apologies: Councillor Gerry Dolan

Officials Present: Lar Power, Chief Executive
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, Clerical Officer, Finance Department

Ms. Sinead Flynn, Meetings Administrator welcomed the members to the meeting. Ms. Flynn outlined that the use of recording equipment is not permitted for the duration of the meeting as per the Standing Orders for the Municipal District meetings.

BMD.106.20 **Approval of the Minutes of the meeting of 28th September, 2020**

Proposed by Councillor Caillian Ellis, seconded by Councillor Brendan Barry AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

“That the Minutes of Ballinamore Municipal District meeting held on 27th September 2020 be adopted”.

BMD.107.20 **To consider the General Municipal District Allocation for Ballinamore Municipal District**

Councillor Ita Reynolds – Flynn welcomed Mr. Lar Power, Chief Executive to the meeting for provide an overview of the 2021 Budgetary Process and the General Municipal Allocation (GMA).

Mr. Power stated that 2020 was a difficult year for business and society in general arising from the impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic. He welcomed recent clarification from the Department that funding will be provided to Local Authorities for the Rates Waiver Scheme. Mr. Power outlined that a nine-month waiver of commercial rates will be applied to eligible ratepayer's accounts, which is a significant financial support to businesses that have been directly impacted by the Pandemic. Mr. Power also referred to the other

supports that have been provided by Government to support the business community e.g. the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP), the Wage Subsidy Scheme and the Rates Restart Grant Schemes.

Mr. Power acknowledged that there will be a negative impact on the finances of the Local Authority arising from the Pandemic with a projected loss of income across a number of service areas together with COVID-19 related costs which will have to be financed by the Council. Mr. Power outlined that expenditure is being closely monitored and that a financial report will be provided at the Annual Budget meeting in November 2020. Mr. Power stated that it is his intention to present a balanced Budget to the members for their approval. He cautioned against the Council increasing their over-draft facility as the fees are punitive.

Mr. Power then invited Mr. Vincent Dwyer to give an overview of the GMA Allocation for 2021.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance provided an over-view of the proposed General Municipal District Allocation (GMA) for Ballinamore Municipal District for 2021. The report as circulated appears as **Appendix 1 of the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book**. Mr. Dwyer provided an overview of the proposed General Municipal Allocation for 2021 and he invited any questions from the members.

The update by the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance was noted by the Members and no issues were raised.

Proposed by Councillor Brendan Barry, seconded by Councillor Caillian Ellis and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

‘The Ballinamore Municipal District adopts the General Municipal Allocation for 2021 in accordance with the provisions of Section 102 (4A) (a) of the Local Government, Act, 2001 as inserted by Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014’.

BMD.108.20 **To approve the declaration of public roads in the Ballinamore Municipal District**

Mr. Darragh O’Boyle referred to the report circulated to the Members with the details of the roads to be declared as public roads in the Ballinamore Municipal District. The report as circulated to the members appears as **Appendix 2 to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book**.

Proposed by Councillor Brendan Barry, seconded by Councillor Caillian Ellis AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

“That the declaration of public roads as detailed in the report circulated to the members for the Ballinamore Municipal District be approved”.

BMD.109.20 **To receive a presentation on Locallink in Leitrim**

The Chairperson, Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn welcomed Ms. Fiona O'Shea, Manager of Local Link to the meeting. Ms. O'Shea welcomed the opportunity to deliver a presentation on the role of Local Link in Leitrim. A copy of the presentation is included as **Appendix 3 to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book**.

Ms. O'Shea concluded her presentation by thanking the members for facilitating her presentation and she invited any questions from the members. A number of items were raised in terms of the operation of Local Link in Leitrim. Ms. O'Shea responded to the queries and she also referred to proposals to develop the service in the future.

BMD.110.20 **Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"Can I ask Leitrim County Council to consider safety works at St Patrick's Church, Drumshanbo to include an elevated pedestrian crossing from the Church to the car park and the replacement of some damaged footpaths. I am confident that a local contribution can be provided to support any application."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The District Office can assist the community and/or church in applying for Clár funding early next year. These funding streams are targeted at issues similar to this."

Councillor McGloin welcomed the reply to his Notice of Motion. He requested clarification on when the Clár Scheme will be available to accepting new applications.

Mr. O'Boyle stated that the Scheme will most likely re-open to accepting new applications in Spring, 2021.

BMD.111.20 **Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"I again ask Leitrim County Council to erect directional signs at the Mayflower/Furness Hill roundabout, Drumshanbo. There is consistent confusion from people unfamiliar with the area who are travelling on to north Leitrim from Drumshanbo."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"We will review the signage at this Roundabout to determine its compliance with the Traffic Signs Manual, and make appropriate amendments, if required."

Councillor McGloin stated that additional signage is required at this location to avoid driver confusion, particularly with motorists that are unfamiliar with the area. Councillor Brendan Barry also supported the Notice of Motion.

Mr. O'Boyle agreed that the signage at the roundabout will be reviewed having regard to the issues raised.

BMD.112.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"I request that the issue of the lighting in Ballinamore town be resolved. As recently as last week, the lights have gone out yet again. Over the past number of months since March 2020, the lights have been unlit on at least four to five occasions."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The District Engineer has requested a full report from our Public Lighting Contractor to include required works necessary to correct the current public lighting situation in the town of Ballinamore"

Councillor Reynolds-Flynn outlined that the public lighting in Ballinamore Town has had several outages over the last number of months and requires immediate attention.

Councillor Caillian Ellis also supported the Notice of Motion.

Mr. O'Boyle acknowledged that there is an ongoing issue with the public lighting and that once the report from Electric Skyline is available to identify the underlying issue, that measures can then be considered to resolve the matter.

BMD.113.20 **Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"I respectfully request that housing adaptation grant applications for works to provide a ceiling hoist be prioritised. There is a great need for hoists to be approved for grant-aid under the scheme, especially in these challenging times."

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

"The Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability is available to assist in the carrying out of works that are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability who is a member of the household.

The maximum grant available is €30,000 or 95% of the total cost of the work approved (whichever is less).

The types of works allowable under the scheme can be varied and can include the provision of:

- access ramps;
- stair lifts;
- downstairs toilet facilities;
- accessible showers;
- adaptations to facilitate wheelchair access; extensions (typically a bedroom and/or bathroom) Any other works that are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability

The Grant is applicant led and subject to approval, confirmation of works and a technical

site inspection, payment of the grant will issue. There is no prioritisation of applications at present - all applications received are assessed in line with the provisions of the scheme."

Councillor Reynolds-Flynn acknowledged the reply to her Notice of Motion. She stated that if hoists could be provided for Housing Adaptation Grant applicants that it would alleviate pressure on the number of carers/home-helpers required to assist persons with their daily living tasks with perhaps one carer being required with the use of hoist rather than two carers.

Ms. Flynn referred to the reply to the Notice of Motion, which states that the nature of the works for which grant-aid is sought must be for works that are considered reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability. She advised that the provision of a hoist would have to be recommended for the applicant by an Occupational Therapist.

Councillor Reynolds-Flynn also referred to the delay in progressing Housing Adaptation Grant applications from the initial application stage until the grant is approved for payment.

Ms. Flynn advised that applicants should contact the Housing Department directly to seek an update on the status of their application.

BMD.114.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council repair the roads which have been left in a terrible state by Irish Water after they repaired burst pipes on the Fenagh to Keshcarrigan and Ballinamore to Mohill roads."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The poor condition of the roads mentioned is due to repairs to burst watermains by Water Services on behalf of Irish Water. The permanent reinstatement of these is the responsibility of Water Services/Irish Water and I understand that contracts have been prepared, by them, to have these done. The District Engineers Office will continue to pursue IW to repair all damaged roads."

Councillor Ellis expressed his concern with the condition these roads have been left in, following completion of repairs to burst pipes by Irish Water. Councillor Ellis queried if the Council could arrange to repair the damage to the roads and invoice Irish Water for the associated costs.

Mr. Dwyer advised that Irish Water are the body with responsibility for these works and in this regard, the Council would not be recouped any costs from Irish Water if they carried out the necessary works.

Councillor Brendan Barry and Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn also supported the Notice of Motion.

BMD.115.20 **Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council put public lights in place from Ardrum to Edentenny in Ballinamore."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"Leitrim County Council have liaised with the Local Ballinamore Committee and will assist them to submit an application for funding for the above project. If unsuccessful, the District Engineer will continue to apply for these funds in next year's Community Schemes and Smarter Travel Schemes."

Councillor Ellis stated that this area is a popular walking route and that the provision of public lighting at this location should be prioritised. Councillor Ita Reynolds-Flynn also supported the Notice of Motion.

BMD.116.20 **Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"To ask the Chief Executive the financial position of Leitrim County Council with regard to the COVID-19 crisis and if the CEO will state the amount of revenue lost to the Council due to the crisis, the additional expenditure incurred and the central Government additional funding received to date."

Councillor Barry noted the update provided by the Chief Executive under the agenda item on the GMA Allocation. Councillor Barry also welcomed that a report on the Council's financial position will be provided at the Budget meeting in November.

Councillor Barry queried if additional communication could issue to the business community with regard to the Rates Restart Plus Grant.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer outlined that over €3 million had been paid out by the Council to the business community in Leitrim under the Rates Restart Grant Schemes since the scheme commenced. Ms. Sinead Flynn advised that the original Restart Grant was closed on 22nd July 2020 and that the Restart Grant Plus Scheme was then launched by the Government. She outlined that the Rates Team continue to process all applications including top-up applications that are available arising from the most recent restrictions on businesses. Ms. Flynn stated that the closing date for receipt of applications for the Restart Plus Scheme is 31st October 2020 and advised that an appeals mechanism is in place for applicants that failed to apply for the original Restart Grant.

BMD.117.20 **Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"I request that Leitrim County Council carry out repairs to local road L33061 in the townland of Roscunnish, Drumshanbo. The verge has subsided from the side of the road and needs to be repaired."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"We will dispatch our maintenance crew to repair any potholes or drainage issue along

this public road. This road is not included in our current Road Maintenance Grant or Road Improvement Grant Schemes."

As Councillor Gerry Dolan was not in attendance, it was agreed, that Councillor Paddy O'Rourke would move Councillor Dolan's Notices of Motion.

BMD.118.20 **Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to upgrade the jetty at Cleighranmore, Ballinaglera or possibly have a new jetty erected closer to the village of Ballinaglera, to make it more attractive to tourists to come to the area and Lough Allen."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"This jetty and surrounding grounds are not in Leitrim County Council ownership. Any request for upgrade works will need to be made to Waterways Ireland."

BMD.119.20 **Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to have the Hilly Road, Drumshanbo resurfaced before Christmas."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The Hilly Road in Drumshanbo has a full Restoration Grant in 2021. We will be carrying out Smarter Travel works along the Hilly Road in November which will include new footpaths and two pedestrian crossings. This will allow safer pedestrian movements and will slow down traffic in this area."

BMD.120.20 **Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to have a streetlight put in place between the recently constructed Pedestrian Crossing and the entry to the Vocational School on the Mohill Road, Carrigallen. Since the new lighting was put in place on the village side of the crossing, pedestrians find themselves entering a very dark area as they approach the school entry, an area where a great deal of traffic is moving."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"The recent pedestrian crossing at this location has increased the existing public lighting in this area.

We are unlikely to dig up the new footpath to install a new public light at this location.

We will ask our PL Contractors to carry out an assessment of the area in question."

Councillor O'Rourke acknowledged the reply to his Notice of Motion, however, he requested that some level of works be facilitated to improve the lighting in this area. Councillor O'Rourke also requested that the branches of the trees be cut back as they are blocking the light of two of the new lights recently provided.

Mr. O'Boyle confirmed that he would request the Contractor to replace the lighting in the

older light's with LED lighting and that arrangements can also be put in place to cut back the trees.

BMD.121.20 **Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke:**

"I ask that Leitrim County Council carry out the necessary improvements to Road Number L16041 at the Glebe at Cloone. This is a public road used by many and is in need of urgent repair."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads

"This public road runs directly behind the football pitch at Cloone. The District Engineers Office has continuously asked the landowner to cut back the hedges to allow our Patching Unit to carry out maintenance to this road. Once the hedges are cut along this public road, as is what is required by landowners, we can consider it for a full Restoration Grant."

Mr. O'Boyle stated that this issue has been frequently raised and that he had written to the landowner requesting that they cut their hedges. He confirmed that once the landowner has complied with the request to cut the hedges that an application for a Road Maintenance Grant or Road Improvement Grant can be considered.

Councillor O'Rourke stated that this location is a popular walking route and he agreed to liaise directly with the landowner to progress the matter.

BMD.122.20 **AOB:**

With the consent of the Chairperson, Councillor Ita-Reynolds Flynn, the following items were raised under A.O. B.

1. Mr. Dwyer updated the members regarding Ballinamore Court House and outlined that other third parties are interested in purchasing the building. Mr. Dwyer agreed to update members of progress in this regard.
2. Mr. Dwyer outlined that following receipt of correspondence from Ms. Anita Harte on behalf of 'The Concerned Citizens of Ballinamore' that the matter was referred to the Directors of Housing and Planning to co-ordinate a response to the Group.
3. Ms. Flynn outlined that as the Budget meeting is due to be held on Monday 23rd November 2020, that it will be necessary to move the Ballinamore Municipal District meeting. It was agreed that the Municipal District meeting could be held on Friday 27th November 2020 at 11.00 a.m.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 12.25 pm.

SIGNED: _____
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn
Cathaoirleach
Ballinamore Municipal District

SIGNED: _____
Sinead Flynn
Meetings Administrator
Ballinamore Municipal District

Date: Monday , 23 November 2020