Minutes of the Carrick on Shannon Municipal District Meeting held Via MS Teams on Monday, 10 May 2021 at 10.00 am

Members Present: Councillor Paddy Farrell (Cathaoirleach)

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire

Councillor Des Guckian Councillor Sean McGowan Councillor Thomas Mulligan Councillor Enda Stenson

Officials Present: Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development,

Planning and Infrastructural Services

Darragh O'Boyle, Senior Executive Engineer

Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer

Justin Fannon, Senior Executive Officer Housing Capital

CMD.58.21 Adoption of Minutes of 12th April 2021

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Enda Stenson **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finola Armstrong McGuire

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of Meeting of 12th April 2021.

CMD.59.21 <u>Meeting Correspondence</u>

The Meetings Administrator stated that there was no meeting correspondence.

CMD.60.21 Consider CE's Report pursuant to Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) in respect of the

proposed development of 2 No Dwellings at Breffni Crescent,

Carrick-on-Shannon

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finola Armstrong McGuire **SECONDED** by Cllr. Enda Stenson

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council proceed with the works in accordance with the approved plans.

Councillor Des Guckian sought clarification on the following: -

- Who owns the site?
- Is Leitrim County Council the planning applicant?
- Who is the builder?
- Commencement Notice and required fee who does the fee go to?

Mr Joseph Gilhooly replied to the queries raised as follows:

- Leitrim County Council owns the lands and is the applicant.
- The proposal must go through the part 8 planning process for approval before it goes to tender. Following the submission of tenders, a builder will be appointed in line with the public procurement process.
- The Council will be complying with the Part 8 Planning requirements, should the proposal be approved by the members, as set out in the documentation, no further approval will be necessary.

Councillor Des Guckian supported the proposal and wished it well as Carrick-on-Shannon needs more social housing and infill of vacant sites.

CMD.61.21 <u>To approve Tidy Town Allocations under the General Municipal</u> Allocation.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructural Services gave a report on the General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for Tidy Towns in 2021 as set out in **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of this meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr.Sean McGowan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finola Armstrong McGuire

It was **AGREED** to approve the Tidy Town Allocations under the General Municipal Allocation 2021.

Councillor Sean McGowan said it was a pity that more funds weren't available for allocation, as even during the Covid pandemic, Tidy Town Committees were still working to upkeep their towns and villages.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire said the work carried out by Tidy Town Committees cannot be measured in terms of funding alone based on all the work they do.

CMD.62.21 Note date & time of Annual Meeting of Carrick-on-Shannon MD

Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructural Services informed the members that the Annual Meeting of Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District meeting will take place at 9.30 am on Monday, 14th June 2021. This will be prior to the monthly meeting of Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District at 10.00 am and will be online via MS Teams.

This was noted by the Members.

CMD.63.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Des Guckian- Special Grants</u>

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Des Guckian;

"That we urge the government to give special grants to publicans and to restaurant owners to help them get their businesses up and running again. This is especially important for publicans in very rural areas, such as in the Carrick Electoral Area, as the pub has always been a key social centre and some publicans have indicated that, without a grant, they will not be reopening."

Report by Director of Services for Economic Development, Planning, Environment and Transportation.

"Leitrim County Council paid out a total of €4.2 million in funding to businesses in the county under the Restart Grant Scheme and the Restart Grant Scheme Plus in 2020. A significant number of those grants were paid to businesses in the hospitality sector including pubs and restaurants. These grants were paid to businesses to assist them with the cost of re-opening their premises following the initial 'lockdown' restrictions that were in place arising from the Pandemic in 2020. Furthermore, this business sector also benefitted from the Rates Waiver for 2021 which provided for a 75% Rates Write Off for 2020. In recent weeks, the Finance Department has applied a 3-month commercial waiver of rates for all eligible businesses under the Rates Waiver Scheme for Quarter, 1, 2021. The Hospitality sector including pubs are eligible for the 2021 Rates Waiver Scheme and a further 3-month waiver will be applied to these accounts in due course for Quarter, 2, 2021. In addition, the COVID-19 Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS) was introduced in the Finance Act 2020 and is operated by Revenue. The CRSS was introduced to support businesses significantly affected by restrictions to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The support was available to eligible businesses who carried on a business activity that was impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. Eligible businesses could make a claim to Revenue for a payment known as an Advance Credit for Trading Expenses (ACTE). An ACTE is payable for each week a business is affected by the restrictions. The CRSS is expected to continue until 30 June 2021.

In addition, the Council is administering the Outdoor Dining Scheme which provides up to €4,000 grant aid (at 75% funding) to support businesses in the hospitality sector to adopt their dining service to the outdoors."

Councillor Des Guckian said pubs in rural areas must be supported to enable them to continue trading. Councillor Des Guckian said he has been advised that some will be closing unless some supports are put in place, and he proposed that the Government must give a major start-up grant to publicans and to restaurant owners to help them get their businesses up and running again. Councillor Des Guckian said the reply he received in this regard referred to history and the recovery from this covid pandemic is going to be a long recovery of 2 years or possibly more.

Councillor Paddy Farrell supported the motion and pointed out that country pubs are badly needed and play and important role in the social lives of people in rural areas.

Councillor Sean McGowan supported the motion and said the country pub is synonymous with rural Ireland. Councillor McGowan said there are country and town pubs that may not re-open again, and these businesses need financial support and he agreed that Covid will be here for some time yet. Councillor McGowan welcomed the funding of up to €4,000 which is available for Tourism & Hospitality businesses under the Outdoor Dining Enhancement Scheme.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan queried the amount of Restart Grants paid to pubs in 2020.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly agreed to pass Councillor Mulligan's quey to the Finance Section for reply.

On the **Proposal** of Cllr Des Guckian **Seconded** by Cllr Paddy Farrell

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council urge the government to give special grants to publicans and to restaurant owners to help them get their businesses up and running again. This is especially important for publicans in very rural areas, such as in the Carrick Electoral Area, as the pub has always been a key social centre and some publicans have indicated that, without a grant, they will not be reopening.

CMD.64.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Des Guckian - Homelessness</u>

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Des Guckian;

"That, in light of the recent tragic death of a young homeless man inside the Costello Memorial Chapel, Carrick-on-Shannon, we urge Leitrim County Council Housing Department to do a survey of the number of homeless youths in the Carrick Electoral Area and to cater appropriately for them."

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

"It is inappropriate for the Housing Department to comment on the speculated personal circumstances surrounding the recent tragedy referred to in this Notice of Motion.

With regard to the issue of homelessness in Carrick on Shannon, the Housing Department has engaged with all homeless presentations to date and has provided temporary accommodation solutions where required to address their needs. The housing department at all times provides a responsive service to persons presenting as homeless."

Councillor Des Guckian gave the background to his motion and expressed his concern in relation to another unidentified young person in Carrick-on-Shannon who may be homeless.

Councillor Des Guckian said the emergency accommodation fund most be drawn down or other tragedies will occur.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said it is inappropriate for the Housing Department to comment on the speculated personal circumstances of an individual case and offered his condolences to the family of the deceased person.

Mr Gilhooly said there is an Emergency Accommodation fund, and he appealed to homeless persons to present themselves to the Housing Department of the Local Authority and they will be dealt with fairly and compassionately.

Councillor Des Guckian said this is a topic that nobody wants to look into and if there are more people out there, the Council needs to be proactive in dealing with such people.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said if anyone has concerns about individuals being homeless, they should pass this information to the Housing Department of the Local Authority. It is however up to the people concerned to decide on how they wish to be dealt with or if they wish to engage with the support services that are available.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said if Elected Members need any advice in relation to available homelessness services and supports to contact the Housing Office of the Local Authority.

CMD.65.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Enda Stenson - Walkway joining the villages</u> of Drumsna and Jamestown

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

"It is great news for tourism in the area with Roscommon County Council having secured funding for a walkway joining the villages of Drumsna and Jamestown. May I

ask, that to further enhance the area, that we apply for grand aid to re surface the road from Belmont to Drumsna bridge."

Report by Roads - General

"The district office has funding for improving the old N4 pavement. In 2021, we have gotten funding for Jamestown approach from the N4. We will endeavour to spend any remaining funding on the pavement in Drumsna. If further funding for the old N4 pavement is forthcoming in 2022, we will endeavour to resurface the main street in Drumsna. The village of Drumsna has a very wide main street, which formed part of the N4 up to 1996. We would recommend that an urban renewal design of the village main street is required, which should narrow down traffic and provide a more attractive aspect to this historic village."

Councillor Enda Stenson welcomed the funding secured for a walkway joining the villages of Drumsna and Jamestown. Councillor Enda Stenson said Main Street in Drumsna is badly in need of resurfacing and this would enhance the area.

Councillor Paddy Farrell supported the motion and said this funding is badly needed.

Councillor Sean McGowan paid tribute to Roscommon County Council for the funding they had secured for this project and referred to a motion he had raised previously about linking the 4 Shannonside villages and this funding may be a way to address this.

Councillor Des Guckian said the resurfacing of Main Street, Drumsna should have been done without the elected members begging for it. Councillor Guckian said he was against the narrowing of the street as this is the main feature of Drumsna and gives the village its character.

Councillor Enda Stenson said members were not begging but are representing the citizens. The resurfacing works being requested in Drumsna will not narrow the street but will enhance the streetscape and will slow traffic through the village.

Mr Darragh O'Boyle said that the TII has provided funding for improving the old N4 pavement. Funding has been received for Jamestown approach from the N4. Leitrim County Council will endeavour to spend any remaining funding on the pavement in Drumsna. If further funding for the old N4 pavement is forthcoming in 2022, the Roads Department will endeavour to resurface the Main Street in Drumsna. Mr O'Boyle said the challenge with Drumsna is the width of the road. An urban renewal style design or softening of the streetscape is required to address the safety concerns of pedestrians.

CMD.66.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Enda Stenson - Mohill Public Realm Works</u>

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

"May I say how delighted I, and most others, are with the funding secured for Mohill public realm works. Very welcome news indeed. I really believe, to properly enhance Mohill, we need funding immediately secured to connect the town with the international rowing facility at Lough Rynn. A proper, fully lit up, walkway is essential here, and we must secure funding to put this in place."

Report by Roads - General

"The district office has applied for NTA active travel funding which will allow us to continue the existing footpath to continue to the rowing facility. If funding allows, we can consider lighting this existing and proposed asset."

Councillor Enda Stenson said efforts must continue to complete the enhancement of Mohill. Funding is needed to connect the town with the international rowing facility at Lough Rynn and fully light up the walkway from the Caravan Park back into Mohill town and he insisted that this be pursued.

Councillor Sean McGowan supported the motion.

Councillor Des Guckian referred to a radio interview that took place recently on Shannonside radio with Head of the Local Enterprise Office, Mr Joe Lowe, on behalf of Leitrim County Council, where he was reluctant to give a timescale for the implementation of the Mohilll Public Realm works. Councillor Des Guckian said he was in favour of the walkway linking Mohill to Lough Rynn and he proposed that a bus service be made available from Mohill to Lough Rynn.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan also supported the motion and said the Caravan Park and rowing facility are amazing amenities and it would be a pity not to connect the existing walkway with the junction into the wood on the Rynn road.

Councillor Paddy Farrell and Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire supported the motion.

Mr Darragh O'Boyle confirmed that funding has been received to continue the existing footpath to the rowing facility. This work will hopefully commence later this year and low-level lighting will be provided if project costs allow.

Councillor Enda Stenson warmly welcomed the funding for the footpath.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said the part 8 planning for the Mohill Public Realm has been approved and currently the Council is working on the preliminaries of the formal funding contract with the Department. When the formal contract for funding is

agreed with the Department, tender documents for the detailed design of the project will be published. As a result of these factors, it is difficult to put a timescale on the work.

Councillor Des Guckian sought clarification on whether it is still planned to interfere with the parking on Main Street Mohill as part of the Public Realm works.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said this project has gone through the planning process which has been approved, and for which funding has been secured and that is the basis on which the project will progress.

CMD.67.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire - Roadside</u> <u>Drainage</u>

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Finola Armstrong-McGuire;

"Roadside drainage on Leitrim Road out of Carrick near Liscara entrance is open and / or poorly fenced. Drains vary from shallow to deep and the area is heavily populated with small children. I ask that attention is given to roadside drainage in the area of Liscara entrance as a matter of priority."

Report by Roads – General

"The open drainage system along this development was created as part of the housing estate development. Leitrim County Council (with the help of tidy towns) are maintaining the existing fencing.

There is a proposed department of health development at this location, and we can consider the boundary treatment once this development is complete."

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire said the roadside drainage is on the right-hand side as you leave Carrick-on-Shannon on the Leitrim Road. Councillor Armstrong McGuire said the existing fence posts are rotting and as a number of children are playing around this area, people are concerned.

Councillor Enda Stenson supported the motion and said timber fencing is not appropriate at this location due to the ground conditions.

Councillor Des Guckian and Councillor Paddy Farrell also supported the motion.

Mr Darragh O'Boyle said drainage at Liscara is difficult due to swales that have not been completed by the developer. These swales need to be piped and this will work will incur a significant cost and these works remain with the developer.

Mr O'Boyle said Leitrim County Council with the help of Tidy Towns Committee, are

maintaining the existing fencing.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire expressed the concerns of people with the remaining open drain.

Mr O'Boyle said fencing replacement is only a backstop and he outlined the development is not completed and the property developer would have to be involved in a permanent solution. Mr O'Boyle said he would continue to maintain the fence in conjunction with the Tidy Towns Committee.

CMD.68.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire - Residents</u> <u>Associations</u>

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Finola Armstrong-McGuire;

"Households in many urban estates benefit from residents' associations being formed. How many houses in Oaklands and Oaklands Manor combined are owned by Leitrim County Council? As landlord of a number of houses in an estate, how can Leitrim County Council contribute to encourage the engagement of residents with residents' associations? Is this being done in Oaklands area? If not, can it be led by Leitrim County Council under some of the schemes or partnerships already in place?"

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

"In relation to private estates it is generally a matter for residents themselves to form a residents association. Leitrim County Council has an estate management programme in place for LA owned estates and under this programme provides support to 18 Residents Associations across the county. The Council has acquired 13 no. houses in Oaklands and Oaklands Manor. While it would primarily be a matter for the residents themselves to form a residents association, Leitrim County Council will explore options available to support the establishment of a residents association with Leitrim Development Company."

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire asked that the Council liaise with the residents to form a strong residents association.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said the Council will engage with Leitrim Development Company to progress the issue raised and will revert back to the Councillor.

Councillor Des Guckian supported the motion and said Leitrim Development Company must show some leadership in this regard.

Councillors Enda Stenson, Sean McGowan and Paddy Farrell supported the motion.

Councillor Paddy Farrell queried the level of vetting that is carried out on Housing clients before they move into estates.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said that council properties are allocated to clients based on the Housing Allocation Scheme. He advised that he will pass Councillor Farrell's query to the Housing Department for reply.

CMD.69.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Sean McGowan - Old Factory & Stores at</u> Corrascoffy

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sean McGowan;

"I seek the support of the members of Carrick on Shannon Municipal District in calling on Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services Economic Development, Planning & Infrastructure, to have the old factory & stores at Corrascoffy Dromod declared dangerous and that he takes immediate steps to have all the buildings there demolished."

Report by Director of Services for Economic Development, Planning, Environment and Transportation.

"The former factory and stores premises at Corrascoffy Td. has previously been declared a 'dangerous structure' by the Council and was the subject of a successful enforcement action with the Owner of the property being directed by the Court to secure the property against unauthorised third-party entry in order to ensure it did not continue to be a dangerous structure. The property was subsequently secured and, consequently, was no longer considered a 'dangerous structure' within the meaning of the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964. Since early 2018, following the completion of the enforcement action, the Council has undertaken periodic inspections of the property to ensure that it remains secure against unauthorised third-party entry: such inspections, however, have been significantly restricted due to COVID over the last year. On foot of this Motion, an inspection of the premises was carried out. The Council is satisfied that the property remains secured against unauthorised third-party entry as all gates are secured and locked and the boundary fencing is intact. It was noted that an entry has been forced through one section of the fence and the Council shall communicate with the Owner to request repairs. (The Council also notes that the property is currently being offered for sale)."

Councillor McGowan said this old factory and stores is unsightly looking, and he noted it is for sale. Councillor McGowan said he hoped someone would buy it and create employment.

Councillor Paddy Farrell and Councillor Thomas Mulligan supported the motion.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said quite an amount of work has been done to make the property secure against unauthorised entry and to ensure it did not continue to be a dangerous structure. The property has been secured and is no longer considered a 'dangerous structure' within the meaning of the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964. The Local Authority carry out periodic reviews of the property and have noted that an opening has been forced through one section of the fence and the Council will contact the owner regarding the breach in the fence.

Councillor Des Guckian said he didn't think the Council can call for this structure to be demolished as this is private property.

CMD.70.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Sean McGowan - Junction of the Rosmore</u> Road

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sean McGowan;

"I ask Mr Darragh O'Boyle, South Leitrim District Engineer, to have a look to see if the hedge could be removed and replaced with a timber post & rail fence at the junction of the Rosmore road No. L-5641-1 leading onto the Farnaught- Drumlish Road No. L1055-2 at Beihy bridge. There is a very limited view back towards Beihy and it's extremely dangerous for motorists exiting from the Rosmore road and heading towards Drumlish."

Report by Roads - General

"The hedges along this public road are in private ownership. If the landowner wishes to remove the hedge and replace with post and rail fencing, the local authority have no objection. Alternatively, we can place this junction on our low-cost safety application list."

Councillor Sean McGowan expressed his disappointment with the reply received. He asked if the hedge could be removed and replaced with a timber post & rail fence or erect appropriate signage at the junction of the Rosmore road No. L-5641-1 leading onto the Farnaught- Drumlish Road No. L1055-2 at Beihy bridge as there is very limited view back towards Beihy and it is very dangerous.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan and Councillor Des Guckian supported the motion.

Mr Darragh O'Boyle, Senior Executive Engineer said the landowner is responsible for the hedge and he notify to the landowner, under the Roads Act, to cut the hedge. If the landowner wishes to remove the hedge and replace it with post and rail fencing the Local Authority would have no objection. This road can be listed for a restoration improvement grant.

Councillor Sean McGowan asked for a road grant works to be carried out at this location. He pointed out that if a motorist is coming off a public road and going onto another public road it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure safety is in place.

Mr Darragh O'Boyle said Leitrim County Council do not cut hedges on local road junctions. He will write to the landowner in question under the Roads Act to cut the hedge and all legislative signage is in place at this junction.

CMD.71.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Paddy Farrell - Traffic Congestion at Community School, Carrick-on-Shannon</u>

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Paddy Farrell;

"Is there anything the Council can do to alleviate the traffic congestion during morning drop-offs and evening pick-ups at the community school in Carrick on Shannon."

Report by Roads - General

"Leitrim Count Council have provided the infrastructure to the school. There are ample ways to combat the congestion at the school gates in the morning. Parents who drop their children to school gate can alternatively drop them on the link road or at Summerhill and get their children to walk the last 100m. Pedestrian infrastructure is in place and is safe. Another option would be for the school to stagger starting times which has been successful in other districts."

Councillor Farrell said the traffic congestion at school drop off/pick up times pose a particular difficulty for bus drivers.

Mr Darragh O'Boyle said there is very safe infrastructure in place. Parents do not need to drop their children at the school gate and can alternatively drop them on the link road or at Summerhill and get their children to walk the last 100m. The school could consider staggering their opening and closing times to ease the traffic congestion.

CMD.72.21 <u>Motion from Councillor Paddy Farrell - 2 Crossings on the Blueway</u> between Keonbrook and Kilclare

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Paddy Farrell;

"There are two crossings on the Blueway between Keonbrook and Kilclare (R-209-4)

which are met with speeding vehicles resulting in very dangerous conditions for pedestrians who are walking this very popular route. There is no signage in place to warn oncoming traffic that there are pedestrians crossing. Additionally, there is a carpark off one of the crossings (at lough 13), which has become very popular, and upon exiting this car park there is very poor visibility for drivers getting out onto the main road."

Report by Roads - General

"The ownership and responsibility of the Blueway and the carpark lies with Waterways Ireland. We will carry out an inspection, to determine if additional warning signage is required and we will inform Waterways Ireland of any additional measures that is necessary."

Councillor Paddy Farrell said there are two road crossings on the Blueway between Keonbrook and Kilclare (R-209-4) which result in very dangerous conditions for pedestrians who are walking this very popular route.

Councillor Enda Stenson said the Blueway has become such a popular walkway and it is a "victim of its own success".

Councillor Des Guckian said signage needs to be reviewed and visibility issues need to be resolved.

Mr Darragh O'Boyle said this is a great piece of infrastructure and the ownership and responsibility of the Blueway and the carpark lie with Waterways Ireland. Waterways Ireland carry out a safety audits on this walkway, and they have erected warning signs. Leitrim County Council will carry out an inspection and determine if additional warning signage is required.

The carpark is lower than the road and he acknowledged it is difficult to exit the carpark. Mr Darragh O'Boyle said he is in contact with Waterway Ireland and he will come back with proposals either to setback the fence or carry out hedge cutting.

CMD.73.21 Any other Business

Councillor Sean McGowan expressed his disappointment that the Local Link Service contract has been lost by Wrynn's in Ballinamore who have operated the service since its inception. The contract has been awarded to a company in Kilkenny under the public procurement process. Councillor Sean McGowan said this issue has been raised at the Ballinamore Municipal District Meeting.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan said the same degree of local service to the community will not be provided under this new contract.

Councillor Enda Stenson expressed his disappointment with the public tendering

process and said this is a blow to this part of Leitrim.

Councillor Des Guckian thanked Councillor Sean McGowan for raising the issue and he stated that the awarding of this contract is at odds with the idea of local link, with a local bus service and its obliging service. The members were to meet Local Link previously and this did not take place. Councillor Guckian proposed that contact be made with Local Link to setup a meeting with the elected members.

Councillor Paddy Fa	arrell sup	ported	this.
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This concluded	the business of	f the meeting	at 11.17	am

SIGNED:		SIGNED:	
	Cathaoirleach, Carrick on		Kieran Brett
	Shannon Municipal District		Meetings Administrator

Date: Monday, 14 June 2021