

**Minutes of the Manorhamilton Municipal District Meeting held in the on Monday, 31
January 2022 at 2.30 pm**

Members Present: Councillor Justin Warnock (Cathaoirleach)
Councillor Frank Dolan
Councillor Sean McDermott
Councillor Mary Bohan
Councillor Pdraig Fallon
Councillor Felim Gurn

Apologies:

Officials Present: Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services,
Community and Cultural Services
Nicola McManus, Meetings Administrator Manorhamilton
Municipal District
Ray Flynn, Clerical Officer
Sean Rynn, Executive Engineer

MMD.1.22 Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of meeting held on 13th December 2021,

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Frank Dolan
SECONDED by Cllr Mary Bohan

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of meeting of 13th December 2021.

MMD.2.22 Meeting Correspondence

Members noted correspondence from HSE in relation to the provision of services at the Health Centres in Glenfarne and Kiltyclogher.

The correspondence outlined that the Health Centres would not be attended by a GP currently as due to Covid-19, the centres' layouts do not lend themselves to providing a safe place for both patients and staff.

The correspondence also detailed that the broadband connections at both sites are unstable, and that Hygiene/Infection Control upgrades are required at the Kiltyclogher Health Centre.

Cllr Sean McDermott noted the correspondence and expressed his desire to see the Health Centres reopened shortly.

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, informed members that an acknowledgement

email had been received from the Department of Health in relation to this matter, and that it had been referred to the HSE for response.

Cllr Justin Warnock expressed his concerns that the Health Centres in Glenfarne and Kiltyclogher might not reopen, and that the situation must be monitored. Cllr Mary Bohan agreed with this sentiment, and that a respective timeline in relation to the reopening should be sought from the HSE. Cllr Gurn stated that he would bring the matter up at the next HSE Forum.

Cllr Felim Gurn informed members that the HSE have confirmed funding for aftercare services for a number of people with intellectual disabilities whose housing need will be met under a voluntary housing project to be delivered by Newgrove Housing Association. All members welcomed the announcement.

MMD.3.22 Motion from Councillor Felim Gurn:

"I ask the Area Office to review sections on the Manorhamilton side of the R280 at Gortinar, Hope and Benson. The sign coming into the bad bend ahead is too late for drivers using the road. There is also too much of a drop down from the road when accidents happen, a crash barrier is needed to warn drivers of the bad bend ahead and to prevent fatalities. A number of accidents happened over a 3-week period including a young driver, an ESB worker and a postal worker. Urgent preventative work is needed."

Report by Roads - General

"The bend in question, is on the R280 Gortinar, is on an 80kph section of the road. There have been some accidents recently. Signage will be increased to see if this will help to reduce speed at this location.

The Council shall also pipe a section of the roadside drain. There is a very narrow road margin along the drain. This will allow us to increase the margin and form an earth mound off the road edge."

Cllr Felim Gurn outlined the issue with the bend, and the recent accidents that have taken place at the location. Cllr Gurn welcomed that the issue would be tackled.

Cllr Justin Warnock and Cllr Frank Dolan supported the motion.

MMD.4.22 Motion from Councillor Felim Gurn:

"January sees a lot of people taking up walking in our towns and villages and it is important to have as much street lighting as possible for walkers, many of whom during the day are at work and go out at night for a walk and in many cases are using the demonstration stretch of SLNCR. With that in mind when funding becomes available for the entire SLNCR project I ask that lighting be put in place from the town boundary on Ramooney to the bridge at the Carrick Road. This is very important for the health and wellbeing of all users."

Report by Roads - General

"Currently the public lighting extends as far as the 50kph speed limit R280 Carrick Road. As part of the footpath works carried out last year, the existing public lighting will be upgraded as part of the under grounding of overhead power lines. It would not be uncommon from a road safety aspect to extent the public lighting if funding was available to the start of the 60kph speed limit zone. This would be approx. 300m, it would take another 250m to go as far as the bridge, but this would not serve the road. There are several existing walking routes within the town that are served by public lighting and footpaths that walkers can use over the winter months that are safe."

Cllr Felim Gurn stated that extra lighting on the demonstration stretch would make it safer. Cllr Sean McDermott supported the motion.

MMD.5.22 Motion from Councillor Padraig Fallon:

"I ask what is the Local Authority's responsibility with regard to surface water from public roads flowing on to private lands or in and around private dwellings."

Report by Roads - General

"Under the Roads Act 1993, Section 76, A road authority may—

- a) construct and maintain drains in, on, under, through or to any land for the purpose of draining water from, or preventing water flowing onto, a public road,
- b) use any land for the temporary storage or the preparation of any gravel, stone, sand, earth or other material required for the construction or maintenance of a public road.

In general, surface water from public roads is directed to the local drainage system. Due to changing weather patters, some of the existing drains must be increased in size or extra gullies or openings constructed. The drainage systems require constant maintenance and upgrading. This is normally carried out with the roads programme."

Cllr Padraig Fallon welcomed the response.

MMD.6.22 Motion from Councillor Padraig Fallon:

"I propose that Mary Quinn, Director of Services Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services, give a brief overview of changes as per the circular with regard to Tenant Purchase Scheme to members of this Municipal."

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

"The Housing (Sale of Local Authority Houses) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 which come into effect on 1 February 2022 include changes to (a) minimum income criteria

for applicants and (b) the period of time applicants must have been receiving social housing support to be eligible under the scheme. The amendments come into effect from 1st February 2022.

Specifically, the changes are as follows –

1. Minimum income requirements: The minimum income required for an applicant to be eligible to apply under the scheme has been revised downward from €15,000p.a. to €12,500 p.a.

This change will ensure persons whose pension is their primary source of income can now apply under the scheme. The change only applies to pensions – other social welfare payments may only be regarded as secondary income.

2. Time receiving social housing supports: The period of time tenants will be required to be in receipt of social housing support to be considered eligible under the scheme has been changed from one to 10 years.

In the case of joint tenancies, both tenants must be in receipt of social housing support for at least 10 years before being eligible to apply."

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, informed members that further guidance in relation to the scheme is expected and that the matter would also be discussed at the Housing SPC scheduled for the 9th February.

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, outlined the changes in relation to income thresholds for the scheme, and in circumstances where a pension is the primary source of income for a household, 15% of household income is no longer required to come from employment.

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, proposed that the matter be further discussed at the Housing SPC, as there are further issues under the Tenant Purchase Scheme which require discussion.

Cllr Pdraig Fallon welcomed the changes to the minimum income thresholds.

Cllr Mary Bohan, welcomed the changes in relation to people who are receiving pensions, however outlined that it is still quite restrictive in relation to people receiving other social welfare payments.

MMD.7.22 **Motion from Councillor Sean McDermott:**

"I again raise the issue of the green bollards with white stripes along the N16 at road exit locations. These bollards are very important to drivers for exit points but they are easily damaged especially at grass and hedge cutting times. Could I ask the Area Office to review what's in place and ensure the bollards remain visible at all times."

Report by Roads - General

"Repairs will be logged to the National Roads Signage Maintenance Contract."

Cllr Sean McDermott outlined the issues with green bollards, and the importance they play in road safety.

MMD.8.22 Motion from Councillor Sean McDermott:

"I ask for an update on the taking in charge of Rockview Drive, Housing Estate, Manorhamilton."

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

"The Council has not yet determined the number of estates that it proposes to take in charge this year. In determining the estates that are to be taken in charge the Council has to have regard to both its own resources and those of Irish Water and discussions on the available resources and capacities of both organisations have yet to be concluded. In addition to the resource capacities, issues relating to any necessary wayleaves that also have to be obtained will also have to be finalised in respect of any estates that are to be considered for taking in charge before they can be finalised. As a consequence, the Council will not be in a position to advise the exact number of estates that may be taken in charge until such time as it is in a position to initiate the statutory declaration of public roads public consultation process for the estates, which should take place at the end of the year. While the Rockview Drive estate will be considered, the Council can give no guarantee that it will qualify for inclusion in the estates that may be advertised at the end of the year."

Cllr Sean McDermott expressed his concern in relation to the proposed timeline for taking in charge of Rockview Drive, Housing Estate.

All members supported the motion.

MMD.9.22 Motion from Councillor Justin Warnock:

"Covid19 has had a devastating impact on many of our rural communities but none as profound as in the village of Kiltyclogher, including the closure of a number of businesses and local services e.g. the library, health centre etc. Therefore, I ask our CE Lar Power with his executive to facilitate and participate in an in-person meeting with our four Oireachtas members, the Councillors for the Manorhamilton MD and the local community of Kiltyclogher as a matter of urgency now that Covid restrictions are being lifted."

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

"There has been significant investment in Kiltyclogher over the past 15 years under various funding programmes such as PEACE, Interreg, and Leitrim County Council investment in relation to projects such as access to Sean MacDiarmuida homestead and annual Sean MacDiarmuida Summer School. The impact of Covid 19 on all communities across the County including Kiltyclogher is fully acknowledged by Leitrim County Council.

With regard to the request for a special meeting with the Kiltyclogher community, it is considered this request is premature. Leitrim County Council will in 2022 be commencing preparation of the next 6 year Local and Economic Community Plan which will involve a significant consultation opportunities and engagement with all communities. Furthermore under the PEACE Plus programme a Local Action Plan will be prepared and again this will be based on a community consultation process to identify actions/projects to be implemented under the programme. It is considered that both consultation processes will provide every opportunity for local communities including Kiltyclogher to engage with the members and the executive. Members of the Oireachtas will also be advised of the consultation processes and will also have the opportunity to participate should they wish to do so."

Cllr Justin Warnock expressed his dissatisfaction and disappointment with the response. Cllr Warnock stated that a proposed plan is not sufficient to ensure the survival of the village, and that the issues facing Kiltyclogher needs further action. Cllr Warnock outlined the historical significance of the village, and its prominent connection to Seán Mac Diarmuida. Cllr Warnock stated that if the school closes in Kiltyclogher it will be the death knell of the village.

Cllr Sean McDermott informed members of his personal connection to Kiltyclogher, and while acknowledging that there is always room for improvement, Cllr McDermott highlighted some of the actions that Leitrim County Council have taken to support Kiltyclogher, namely:

1. In 2007, Leitrim County Council purchased artifacts belonging to Seán Mac Diarmuida.
2. In 2008, Cllr Sean McGowan proposed that a summer school be held in Kiltyclogher, with the support of fellow council members. The following year the Summer School opened.
3. In 2012, negotiations commenced to purchase three acres of land around Seán Mac Diarmuida's homestead.
4. A plan was drafted for a Heritage Centre, improvements to local roads, and a car park. Works were completed by 2016.

Cllr McDermott outlined the effort that was required by himself and the community in achieving these initiatives. Cllr McDermott stated that Leitrim County Council was not found wanting, and made special note of the effort of Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, in regards to these projects.

Cllr McDermott outlined that the Heritage Status for the village should be pursued, and that Peace Funding should be sought to achieve this.

Cllr McDermott suggested that Kiltyclogher should link up with Rossinver and Glenfarne to prepare a Community Plan that would cover all three areas, as they face similar challenges. Cllr McDermott stated that by working together improvements can be achieved.

Cllr Frank Dolan agreed with the sentiments of Cllr Warnock's motion. Cllr Dolan states that the issues facing Kiltyclogher are not unique and that all rural villages are facing similar challenges. Cllr Dolan acknowledged the effort and work that Cllr Sean McDermott has done for Kiltyclogher. Cllr Dolan stated that all avenues of funding must be pursued to support these villages and referred to the efforts of the Council in adopting a rate increase to ringfence funding to provide match funding requirements under different funding avenues to achieve projects in towns and villages across the County. He noted that Cllr Warnock had not supported the rate increase for 2022.

Cllr Mary Bohan agreed with the sentiments outlined by Cllr Dolan in relation to the challenges facing all small rural villages, outlining one of the challenges, is that people have changed the way they do business. Cllr Bohan outlined how Government Departments are also encouraging all enquiries/interactions take place online.

Cllr Bohan acknowledged the fantastic voluntary effort from Kiltyclogher, and that all members supported any projects that were proposed for Kiltyclogher. Cllr Bohan outlined that all funding avenues that are available must be pursued.

Cllr Felim Gurn supported Cllr Warnock's motion. Cllr Gurn outlined the efforts that Kiltyclogher Community have put into keeping their school open. Cllr Gurn acknowledged the work Cllr McDermott has done in respect of Kiltyclogher.

Cllr Felim Gurn stated that a plan is required for Kiltyclogher to evaluate any proposals for the town. Cllr Gurn stated that tourism is main activity that can benefit Kiltyclogher. He referred to one off planning permission issues which are making it difficult for any person who wishes to return to Kiltyclogher and build a home.

Cllr Gurn outlined his view that a meeting between TDs, Councillors, Leitrim County Council's Executive, and the local community should take place after a plan has been drafted.

Cllr Padraig Fallon agreed with Cllr Gurn's point that a plan is required for the development of the village. Cllr Fallon outlined the advantages North Leitrim has, including its natural beauty and excellent community spirit.

Cllr Justin Warnock stated the reason he opposed the rates increase was due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Cllr Warnock outlined that he submitted the motion as the matter had been raised with him and that as Chairperson of the Municipal District that he should raise the issue.

Cllr Warnock stated that the value of the homestead of Seán Mac Diarmuida and

Heritage Centre are not being fully utilised, especially in comparison to Pádraic Pearse's replica Homestead in Galway.

Cllr Warnock stated that he was disappointed with the response from Leitrim County Council and that he would raise his concerns with the Chief Executive.

Cllr Mary Bohan outlined that the rate increase was not the reason for any shops or pub closures, it is the change in the ways people carry out their business that is threatening these enterprises.

Cllr Sean McDermott stated that all members will work together to improve the situation of Kiltyclogher, and that one of the issues facing the town is that the Council have no landbank in Kiltyclogher.

Cllr Frank Dolan stated that Heritage Status should be explored for Kiltyclogher, and that as Cllr Bohan stated how people do their business has changed as well.

Cllr Felim Gurns outlined the increased costs that local businesses have faced over the last two years, and the staff crisis that businesses are facing. Cllr Gurn reiterated that a plan is required for Kiltyclogher, which has buy-in from the local community.

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, detailed the consultation mechanism that will take place under the Local Economic and Community Plan across the County over the next nine months, which will afford local communities including Kiltyclogher an opportunity to put forward their views on the issues being faced.

Ms. Quinn stated that the idea of linking Kiltyclogher, Glenfarne, and Rossinver in regard to a community plan was worth exploring.

MMD.10.22 Motion from Councillor Justin Warnock:

"A number of families in Kinlough on the Council's housing waiting list have been served notice to vacate their rented accommodation in the coming months. Therefore, I ask Leitrim County Council to purchase more houses in Kinlough in the interim until such time as they have sourced land to build their own houses."

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

"Over the past three years Leitrim County Council have purchased four properties through direct acquisitions and a further 5 properties through a Turnkey Acquisition in Kinlough to meet the general need based on the Housing List.

Circular 20/2021 which has been recently issued by the DHLGH indicates that the delegated sanction allowing local authority to acquire properties without prior approval from the DHLGH no longer applies. Acquisitions in 2022 and going forward will therefore now require prior DHLGH approval and must be focussed on the following

priority areas:

- One-bedroom units to deliver on Housing First and meet the short supply in this category
- Other properties that allow persons/families to exit homelessness
- Specific housing required for/suitable for individuals with a disability or other particular priority needs

Notwithstanding this restriction on acquisitions Leitrim County Council Housing section is committed to delivering additional properties in Kinlough that meet the both above the above criteria and the needs of those on the Housing List in the Kinlough area.

Leitrim County Council is acutely aware of the need to develop an appropriate landbank in Kinlough on which future social housing projects can be developed. An Expression of Interest seeking the provision of zoned land suitable for residential development including for Kinlough was advertised locally and on e-tenders in July 2021 but unfortunately no potential lands were submitted for Kinlough. A further Expression of Interest seeking land in the Kinlough area will be advertised in February 2022 and the council will remain proactive in its effort to secure land in Kinlough for direct build projects."

Cllr Justin Warnock outlined that a number of people have received notice to quit their leases within Kinlough and they are not in a position to move to another area. Cllr Warnock stated that there are not enough suitable properties for rent within Kinlough.

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, outlines the proposals under the recently announced Housing for All Plan, in relation to housing solutions for Kinlough. Ms. Quinn stated that anyone who has been given notice to quit should make immediate contact with Housing Section to receive support.

Cllr Mary Bohan stated that any family who receives a notice to quit should contact the Housing Section of Leitrim County Council immediately, to see what supports are available.

Cllr Felim Gurn gave details of the difficulties in securing rented accommodation within Manorhamilton.

Cllr Pdraig Fallon supported the motion, and acknowledged the difficulties in securing rent accommodation throughout North Leitrim. Cllr Fallon reiterated the point that when a person received a notice to quit, they must contact Housing Section as a matter of priority.

Cllr Sean McDermott supported the motion.

Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, acknowledged the difficulties people are facing and stated that Leitrim County Council will work with people in these situations. However, Ms. Quinn stated that there are no quick solutions to addressing the housing challenges.

MMD.11.22 **Motion from Councillor Frank Dolan:**

"Again I ask that public lighting be put in place from McCormack's filling station out to the bridge, it is extremely dark and a very poor entrance to a town the size of Manorhamilton."

Report by Roads - General

"As you are aware LCC discussed this matter previously with the TII safety section to extend the public lighting from the 50km/hr speed limit to the Bridge and LCC were informed that given the fact that it is not serving a residential area no funding would be provided. As this does not qualify for TII maintenance funding either, the Design Office are currently preparing a detailed TII Lighting Assessment application for permission to provide public lighting along this section of Road to the Departures section of the TII. If this departure is approved, funding will be then sought for provision of the Public Lighting."

Cllr Frank Dolan stated that this Public Lighting along this road is a necessity, and that it is a dangerous health and safety situation, and it must be resolved.

All members supported the motion.

Mr Sean Rynn, District Engineer, stated that the main issue in relation to the proposal is funding but it would continue to be sought.

MMD.12.22 **Motion from Councillor Frank Dolan:**

"I ask that some routine maintenance be carried out on part of the Fawnlion Road, this section of the road seems to get potholed every year."

Report by Roads - General

"The road will be surveyed, and maintenance works carried out as required."

Cllr Frank Dolan welcomed the response, however he stated a more permanent solution to the issue must be sought.

Cllr Felim Gurn supported the motion.

Mr Sean Rynn, District Engineer, stated that the situation would be examined further.

MMD.13.22 **Motion from Councillor Mary Bohan:**

"I propose that the Council carry out repairs and make the footpath safe at the entrance to Drumlease housing estate off Drumlease road."

Report by Roads - General

"The footpaths at the junction of Local Roads L-4165 and L-8165 have been identified for cleaning. Works have been added to the works list."

ClIr Mary Bohan queried when the work would be completed. Mr. Sean Rynn, Area Engineer, informed members that the work had been scheduled for commencement week commencing 24th January and would be completed by the end of the week. ClIr Bohan welcomed the update.

MMD.14.22 Motion from Councillor Mary Bohan:

"I propose that the Council take immediate steps to prevent flooding at the Wood's residence at Aughamore. This is caused by excess water coming off the R280"

Report by Roads - General

"Some drainage maintenance works have been carried out along this section of R280. Extra works have been planned and will be carried out as part of other works in the area."

ClIr Mary Bohan queried when the work would be completed. Mr Sean Rynn, Area Engineer, informed members that a crew was currently onsite. ClIr Bohan welcomed the update.

MMD.15.22 A.O.B.

- ClIr Justin Warnock queried whether there was an update on the new Council Building. Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services stated the matter was being progressed and would update when in a position to provide same.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 3.52 pm

SIGNED: _____
Councillor Justin Warnock
Cathaoirleach,
Manorhamilton Municipal
District

SIGNED: _____
Nicola McManus
Meetings Administrator

Date: Monday, 21 February 2022