

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL
DISTRICT OF ENNISCORTHY HELD IN THE PRESENTATION
CENTRE, ENNISCORTHY ON MONDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 2022 AT
3.00 P.M.**

Attendance: Councillors:

Cathal Byrne (Cathaoirleach)
Kathleen Codd-Nolan
Barbara Anne Murphy
John O'Rourke
Aidan Browne
Jackser Owens

Officials:

Ms. Carolyne Godkin, Director of Services
Ms. Bernie Quigley, A/District Administrator
Mr. Larry McHale, Project Engineer
Ms. Roseanne Redmond, Senior Staff Officer, Housing
Mr. David Codd, Chief Technician, Roads
Ms. Majella Ryan, A/Staff Officer

**Hybrid Attendees via
Microsoft Teams**

Ms. Niamh Lennon, Executive Planner
Ms. Sharon Pettit, on behalf of Ms. Verona Murphy TD

Apologies:

Mr. Tadhg O'Corcora, SEE
Mr. Neil Dempsey, EE.

At the outset of the meeting the Chairman stated that the restricted time allowance of 1 hour 55 minutes was no longer applicable.

Congratulations:

- Cllr. Owens congratulated Oulart Camogie Team on progressing to the All-Ireland Final and wished them the best of luck.
- Cllr. Murphy congratulated all involved in making possible the return to the Council Chamber for the monthly meetings.

Votes of Sympathy:

- Cllr. Murphy extended a vote of sympathy to the family of the late Mr. Billy (William) Kinsella, who worked in the Gorey Municipal District Office of Wexford County Council.

All Elected Members wished to be included in this vote of sympathy and it was agreed to send a sympathy card to the Kinsella family.

- Cllr. Codd-Nolan offered a vote of sympathy Verona Murphy TD on the death of her mother, Breda Murphy.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

1.1 Minutes of the January Meeting of the Members of the Municipal District of Enniscorthy – 17th January 2022

On the proposal of Cllr. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. Codd-Nolan, the Minutes of the January Monthly Meeting of the Members of the Municipal District of Enniscorthy held on 17th January 2022 were adopted by the Council and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

1.2 Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Members of the Municipal District of Enniscorthy held by Microsoft Teams on Thursday 13th January 2022

On the proposal of Cllr. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. O'Rourke, the Minutes of the Special Meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 13th January 2022 were adopted by the Council and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

1.3 Matters Arising

Cllr. Owens enquired as to the status with the Memorial Bench for the late Tom Moorehouse. It was noted that the Municipal District is currently in the process of finalising a procedure to deal with requests of this nature. Cllr. Owens requested that the family be contacted by the Municipal District. Ms. Quigley advised that she would speak to Cllr. Owens in this regard.

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations:

2.1 Planning

The Chairman asked that the Planning Report be discussed at this juncture of the meeting. Ms. Niamh Lennon, Executive Planner attended the meeting via Microsoft Teams.

Cllr. Owens questioned Ms. Lennon's knowledge of the property at No. 34 Island Road, Enniscorthy, which has been vacant for a number of years.

Cllr. Codd Nolan asked for clarification on whether pre-planning meetings were taking place in person.

Cllr. Byrne also requested clarity regarding the significant backlog in pre-planning meeting requests.

Ms. Lennon responded to all queries raised. In particular, she advised that the vacant property at 34 Island Road did not relate to planning and recommended that Cllr. Owens refer the query to the housing department.

Ms. Lennon confirmed that the backlog in requests for pre-planning meetings was due to staff shortages within the planning department. It was noted that planning applications must be given priority due to the statutory timelines which is also adding to the delay in scheduling pre-planning meetings.

Cllr. Byrne queried the recruitment plans for the planning department. Ms. Lennon advised that the human resources department would be best equipped to respond to this query, however, it was noted that the positions of Executive Planner and Assistant Planner have been advertised.

Cllr. Owens asked if the property on Island Road came under Derelict Sites. Ms. Lennon undertook to make enquiries in this regard.

On the proposal of Cllr. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. Codd-Nolan it was proposed that the Municipal District make enquiries to the Human Resources Department regarding the appointment of staff to the Planning Department.

The Director of Services undertook to speak to the HR Department.

2.2 Housing Report.

Ms. Roseanne Redmond attended the meeting to discuss housing matters. The report circulated prior to the meeting was noted.

The Members put forward a number of queries to Ms. Redmond, in particular:-

- Delays in re-letting properties once they become vacant.
- Allocation of 28 Ross Road.
- Housing transfers.
- Possibility of taking over the old St. Patricks Special School Site for Sheltered Housing.
- Consideration for securing the campus at St. Johns Hospital for housing purposes, e.g., independent living. Cllr. O'Rourke asked if discussions could commence with the HSE in this regard.

Ms. Redmond responded to all queries raised.

It was noted that the bungalow at Borrmount was currently undergoing a cost benefit analysis and once completed she would be in a better position to update the Members.

In response to Cllr. Owens, Ms. Redmond advised that Housing are currently waiting on the ESB connection for the property at Ross Road and once completed it would be ready for second fix works.

Ms. Redmond further advised that in relation to re-letting repairs on vacant units, housing have been experiencing difficulties for quite some time now in the availability of contractors due to covid restrictions which is being further compounded by the shortage of materials. It was noted that lead times on various properties vary due to the urgency of some allocations, however, Ms. Redmond undertook to speak to her colleagues in this regard.

Cllr. Browne asked for clarification on the vacant unit process and lengths of time involved in completions.

Cllr. Murphy wished to support the recommendation regarding the campus at St. Johns Hospital and asked that investigations be made into unused buildings around the town for the provision of housing.

Cllr. Murphy asked what the average cost of preparing a unit for re-letting was and if it included any retrofitting proposals. In particular, Cllr. Murphy sought clarification on funding at 17 Carrigban, Bunclody and on the status of leased properties on a choice based letting process. Cllr. Murphy highlighted the need for one and two bedroomed houses in Bunclody.

On the proposal of Cllr. O'Rourke, seconded by Cllr. Murphy it was proposed that the Municipal District contact the HSE in relation to their vacant properties.

A discussion took place regarding the income threshold cut off points to be eligible for Social Housing. The question of the preparation of snag lists prior to housing being allocated was raised and a recommendation that tenants are asked if they are satisfied with the condition of a house being offered to them, prior to any repairs being carried out.

Cllr. Owens thanked the Director of Services for her tireless work in tackling the homeless issues in the County. He highlighted the delays in allocation of 1 bed houses and felt that the Housing Department are failing to meet the need of people in need of these type properties. Cllr. Owens recommended that people on this list should be considered for 2 bed dwellings.

Ms. Redmond clarified that the average cost of a turning around a property for re-letting is €7,000, however, that retrofitting budgets are facilitated through a special fund.

Regarding the time frame on leased properties, Ms. Redmond advised they could potentially include a time frame of 20 years before expiration.

Ms. Redmond undertook to get a more detailed breakdown on the Choice Based Lettings and confirmed that income limits for social housing are dictated by the Department.

Cllr. O'Rourke expressed his disappointment in how the Local Authority in their role as landlords, do not have the power to deal with deposits and contracts which might lessen mistreatment of properties by tenants. He suggested that inspections of our stock should be considered within the role of the Tenant Liaison Officer and Engineers.

The Director of Services advised that the Housing Department have a duty to meet certain standards and requirements when re-letting properties. Unfortunately, at times this involves undoing some works that tenants have carried out before they vacate a unit as they may not be to a certain standard.

Ms. Godkin further advised that there are serious resourcing issues currently with readying homes for re-letting and that houses are being reallocated on a regular basis, however, there will always be vacant units. She commented on the already huge demands on the housing teams in readying properties for re-letting.

Cllr. Byrne requested clarity regarding the process of retrofitting of the 54 properties from 2021. Ms. Redmond advised that 47 homes are proceeding with retrofitting works from the 2021 allocation with 7 not proceeding various reasons. It was noted that housing is currently awaiting confirmation from the Department for funding allocations for 2022. It was further noted that that 40% of the properties retrofitted under the 2021 programme were in Enniscorthy.

A discussion took place regarding improvement works carried out by a tenant being undone by housing in the process of pre-let repairs. It was noted that the correct forum for recommending changes to this process was the Housing SPC. Ms. Godkin advised that it would be difficult to address this issue based on the circumstances surrounding one property and to affect policy change, it would be better to have evidence of this occurring on more than one property.

2.2 Community

The Community report circulated prior to the meeting was noted by the Members.

Cllr. Murphy asked for consideration of the provision of a Skate Park in Enniscorthy. This initiative was supported by Cllr. O'Rourke. A number of locations were recommended by the Members for consideration, including lands at Turret Rocks and lands at the Old Dump, Enniscorthy.

The A/District Administrator undertook to speak to the Director of Services and the A/S.E.O., Community in this regard.

The possibility of the provision of an over 35's Soccer League in Enniscorthy was raised.

2.2 Environment

A number of issues were highlighted under Environment, as follows:-

- Proposed dates for clean ups in the district.
- Remedial works to be carried out in the Orchard Peace Park – loose stones.
- Bio-Diversity information signs to be erected around the district.
- Black Bag Recycling – Kilcannon.
- Litter picking R746, Bunclody towards Shillelagh.
- Planting grass verges and roundabouts with wild plants/flowers.
- Directional signage for Vinegar Hill to be reinstated at Toss Kavanaghs.
- Date for National Spring Clean Campaign – Litter Picking, N80.

The Director undertook to investigate the situation regarding Black Bag Recycling. It was noted that the National Spring Clean Campaign is normally run in April. It was further noted that a traffic plan would be needed for any litter picking on the N80.

The A/District Administrator stated she would bring these queries to the attention of the Executive and Senior Executive Engineers for their attention.

2.2 Libraries

Noted.

2.2 Fire Services

Cllr. Murphy highlighted her concerns regarding the huge turnover of staff in Fire Services. She outlined the importance of filling these vacancies to this much needed essential service. The Director of Services advised that recruiting within the Fire Services is difficult, especially as it is a Retained Fire Service. Cllr. Murphy advised that if there was a role members can play in creating awareness for these posts and such careers that they be informed so that they can assist in this difficult procedure.

2.3 District Managers Report

The A/District Administrator outlined the main points of the report.

Cllr. Byrne thanked Ms. Quigley and her team for facilitating the installation of the Hybrid Meeting Option in the Council Chamber.

The Members were circulated a memo from the A/District Manager seeking approval for under spends in 2021 to be reallocated to the expenditure under Managers Discretion 2021. On the proposal of Cllr. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. Owens it was unanimously agreed to transfer surplus monies as presented.

A discussion regarding the festival programme for 2022 commenced and the Members asked for clarification on whether the Rock N Food Festival was planned for 2022. Ms. Quigley advised that to the best of her knowledge this festival would be taking place, however, it was her belief that a number of festivals were amalgamating for 2022 to form one summer festival to take place on the August Bank Holiday weekend. It was noted that the Rock N Food Festival, the Strawberry Fair Festival, the Rock N Roll Festival, and the All-Ireland Farmers Market were among those festivals who will take part in the amalgamation.

Cllr. Codd-Nolan raised the recent online public consultation for the Enniscorthy Regeneration Plan which she felt from an online prospectus was somewhat disappointing. A discussion took place, and it was noted that further consultation will take place.

Cllr. Murphy took this opportunity to congratulate all involved on the success of the Slaney Street Heritage Project and questioned the availability of similar funding to potentially re-develop other streets. It was noted that further funding, if available should be announced in May.

Cllr Murphy asked for consideration for the replacement of the existing litter bins in Bunclody and if funding could be made available to assist with the Bunclody St. Patricks Day Parade.

On the proposal of Cllr. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. Codd-Nolan the allocation of €1,000 to the Bunclody St. Patricks Day Parade was agreed.

A number of further queries were raised by Cllr. Browne, including the provision of a Sensory Street to be incorporated into any upcoming festivals. Cllr. Browne also asked for clarification on funding for the North Business District. Ms. Quigley to investigate and revert to Cllr. Browne in due course.

3. Special Speed Limit Review – Pre-Draft Consultation

Mr. David Codd, Chief Technician, Roads attended the meeting to discuss the Pre-Draft Consultation Process.

The Members raised a number of queries, including:-

- Last day for submissions by Elected Members.
- Concerns regarding the 50kmph speed limit in some locations in rural areas and at schools – legal clarification regarding the setting of limits.
- Cllr. Byrne sought clarification on the last day of submissions by members and was advised by Mr. Codd that any submissions received since the last review was completed would be considered. He then proceeded to request that members compile their lists if any for considerations and submit them to him.

Mr. Codd responded to all queries raised, following which he left the meeting.

4. Roads

Apologies from Mr. Neil Dempsey were noted. The Members raised the following concerns:-

- Condition of road in the vicinity of Salville to Gimont and the general Bellefield Area.
- Request for an additional survey on public lighting be carried out.
- Condition of Cromogue Road – flooding concerns.
- Repairs to the bridge in Kiltilly.
- “Yield Right of Way” signage at both sides of Carleysbridge – in particular at its junction with Ross Road.
- ESB junction boxes in housing developments – flat top boxes posing risk to young children.
- Condition of St. Senans Road – immediate attention requested.

5. Enniscorthy Flood Defence Scheme Report/Update.

Mr. Larry McHale updated the Members on the main points of the Flood Defence Scheme report circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr. Owens requested clarification on how much money had been spent to date on the scheme.

Mr. McHale clarified that the scheme was currently held up pending a decision by the Department of Public Expenditure. Cllr. Owens recommended that a meeting be sought between the Enniscorthy Municipal District and Minister McGrath.

Cllr. Codd-Nolan also expressed her frustrations with the scheme at this point and advised that it was unfair that members were being blamed for the non-progression of works. She noted it was unconstitutional and unfair to victims of the flooding. She also proposed that the Municipal District contact the Minister for clarification on the time frame and progression outline. Cllr. Owens supported this recommendation and requested that this be done before the March Meeting. This was further agreed by all members.

Cllr. Byrne requested the Manager contact Minister McGrath on behalf of the members to seek clarification on the timeframes given to consultants.

6. Water Services Report

Apologies from Mr. Tadhg O'Corcora was noted. Cllr. Murphy requested remedial action for a water leak at No. 2 Lower Church Road, Bunclody.

Cllr. Byrne requested clarification for the funding of fencing and percolation issues currently ongoing at Belview Court, Ballyhogue.

16:25 *This this juncture Mr. Larry McHale left the meeting.*

7. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District Members

7.1 Lease of Drumgoold Community Centre to Ferns Diocesan Youth Services.

On the proposal of Cllr. O'Rourke, seconded by Cllr. Codd-Nolan it was agreed to proceed with the lease of Drumgoold Community Centre to Ferns Diocesan Youth Services.

7.2 Notice of Motion: Flooding at Carleysbridge.

Cllr. Byrne noted the motion submitted by Cllr. Owens.

Members requested at this point that any Notices of Motions be circulated prior to the meeting taking place.

Cllr. Owens detailed the devastating effects of the recent flood on the victims in Carleysbridge, Enniscorthy. Cllr. O'Rourke requested clarification on whether a deputation had been sought by residents in the area.

A discussion took place and on the proposal of Cllr. Owens, seconded by Cllr. O'Rourke the Members unanimously agreed that the Chair, Vice Chair. Relevant

Engineer and A/District Administrator make arrangements to meet the residents in this regard.

7.3 Notice of Motion: Access to Bunclody Graveyard.

Cllr. Byrne noted the motion submitted by Cllr. Owens.

Cllr. Owens expressed his concerns regarding the difficulties being endured by people visiting the graveyard in Bunclody with regard to carrying heavy materials through the graveyard. He requested that the gate be left open.

Cllr. Murphy stated that she had no objection in principle to the gate being left open, however, consideration should be given to previous accounts of intimidation felt by visitors to the graveyard. The potential of anti-social behaviour taking place if vehicles had full access around the graveyard was discussed. Cllr. Murphy asked of the possibility of CCTV being installed and felt that vehicles should only be given partial access around the graveyard. Cllr. Codd Nolan agreed that full vehicular access should not be permitted and may present difficulties in the future.

The Director advised that works had been carried out in the Graveyard and that all complaints regarding issues should be directed to Michael Sweeney in Community. Ms. Godkin suggested that access points for a Water Feed should be investigated so visitors do not have to carry heavy loads for long distances when visiting the graveyard.

Following a discussion, Cllr. Byrne requested that the matter be taken to the Director for further assessment on how to address the issues.

Cllr. Owens proposed that the gates be left open for access once we were able to insert a barrier at points around the graveyard to stop full access by vehicles.

8. Correspondence.

None.

9. Any Other Business

Cllr. Murphy requested clarification regarding funding for Monuments – with specific regard to the Civil War. The A/District Manager and Director undertook to investigate this further.

At this juncture of the meeting a minutes silence was observed for the late Mr. Billy (William) Kinsella who worked at the Gorey Municipal District Office.

Cllr. O'Rourke recommended that the meeting now to into 'Committee', following which the public attendees left the meeting.

The Members asked for guidance regarding the use of Microsoft Teams during meetings especially in relation to the protocol around cameras.

Cllr. O'Rourke asked that the departure of Mary Clince from the Enniscorthy Municipal District Office be officially marked by the Members. He requested that her hard work and dedication to the service of the people and Members of Enniscorthy should be acknowledged appropriately.

This request was fully supported by all Members, and it was agreed to organise something to mark the occasion before the next meeting.

The date for the next Municipal District Meeting is set for Monday March 21st at 3pm.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE