

**Minutes of the New Ross Municipal District Non Statutory Information Meeting
held remotely on Thursday 7th May at 3.00pm VIA Microsoft Teams**

Presiding: Councillor John Fleming

In Attendance: Councillor Anthony Connick
Councillor Michael Whelan
Councillor Michael Sheehan
Councillor Pat Barden
Councillor Bridin Murphy

Officials Present: Mick McCormack – District Administrator
Eamonn Hore - District Director
Dan McCartan – Senior Executive Engineer
Eilis Furlong – Executive Engineer
Martina Donoghue – Administrative Officer, Housing
Liam Bowe – Executive Planner
Brendan Cooney – Senior Executive Scientist, Environment
Eimear Kennedy – Staff Officer

Sinead Casey – Senior Engineer Special Project
Michael Jones – Executive Engineer Special Projects
Sean Breen Malachy Walsh and Partners
Martina Kenny – ESB Networks
Barry Rafter - Gaeltec Utilities

Apologies: N/A

The District Manager opened the meeting and thanked Frank Burke and the IT Department for their work in enabling this virtual meeting to take place via Microsoft Teams.

He explained that due to the non-statutory nature of a remote meeting, no decisions could be made and that this would be an information sharing event. He then handed over to the Cathaoirleach to commence the meeting.

The Cathaoirleach started the meeting by expressing his thanks to all frontline workers. He then explained the necessary housekeeping rules and etiquette required to undertake a virtual meeting.

Presentation 1:

The first item of business was a presentation from the Special Projects Team (Sinead Casey and Michael Jones) with consulting engineer Sean Breen of Malachy Walsh and Partners with an update on the South East Greenway.

Sean updated the Members on issues including the abandonment of the old railway line and the landowner consultation process. The resolution has been passed to abandon the old railway line. The rail lifting process is due to commence in June and has not currently been impacted by Covid 19. This situation is not expected to change. The landowner consultation in respect of crossings and culverts is going well and due to be concluded in the coming months.

Sinead advised on the current position in respect of business development opportunities. This process has been delayed due to Covid 19. A number of business proposals had been received before the current pandemic but the process is still open for any businesses who wish to make a proposal to the Wexford Local Development (WLD).

Public meetings which had been due to take place have not happened but partner meetings, with WLD have.

Animation and signage for the Greenway have been discussed with the partner Local Authorities and local groups and these continue to happen. A contractor has been recommended to undertake the works but as it is currently in the statutory contract standstill period, this has not been affected by Covid.

They answered questions from the Members.

Presentation 2: Martina Kenny Project Manager for ESB Networks and Barry Rafter, Gaeltec Utilities, on the new Knockmullen Sub Station and associated Grid Connection (New Ross ESB Reinforcement Project);

Martina and Barry updated the Members on the New Ross ESB reinforcement Project.

They explained that the installation of a new substation at Knockmullen would lead to the eventual retirement of the existing substation in the Irishtown, which was built in the 1920's. The new substation will future-proof the New Ross electricity supply by providing more capacity for additional industrial loading and security of supply for residential needs for many years to come.

A local Partnership Manager has been appointed to manage the process locally.

They advised that Covid19 should not halt the construction process once it commences.

As public consultation couldn't take place in the way it was originally planned, the ESB are contacting local residents and businesses by letter. There is an email address to which all concerns in respect of the project should be addressed.

newrossesbreinforcementproject@esb.ie

The Members requested a copy of Barry's presentation.

Condolences

N/A

Congratulations

N/A

1. Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Monthly Meeting –

This is a non-statutory meeting so Minutes of the previous meeting may not be formally adopted.

1.2 Matters Arising

Two queries arose from the last meeting: Councillor Connick requested an update on the management of Defibrillators in the town and Councillor Whelan requested an update on whether or not a (Pac a Sac) Waste Compactor Unit could be put into the recycling Centre in Hewittsland.

The District Manager responded to queries. He advised that the matter of the Defibrillators has been discussed but remains on the agenda.

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations.

2.1. District Manager's Report

The District Manager delivered his report and responded to queries raised by the councillors.

He advised that the allotments will reopen on May 18th.

He reassured the Members that they will be advised before parking charges are reinstated.

He advised the Members that all District Festivals up to and including the Kennedy Summer School have been postponed for this year.

Councillor Whelan requested that the money allocated to the now postponed Baginbun Festival could be ring-fenced for next year. The District Manager advised that the money came from the Tourism Department and that he will speak to them.

The Cathaoirleach requested a letter be sent to Maeve Kennedy Townsend on the recent passing of her sister and nephew – the Members were in agreement.

In response to a query from Councillor Sheehan, the District Manager advised that the matter of Traffic Management and pedestrianisation within the town would be discussed between the District Manager, District Engineer and the District Director.

He also requested (2) a letter be written to the Director of Economic Development about funding incentives for the town and villages in the New Ross District for the post-Covid economy. (3) He asked that money which would have gone to the Norman festival this summer be diverted to a Christmas Festival or Oktoberfest for the town.

Following a query from Councillor Barden, the District Manager advised that as per Government Directive, WCC will not seek to recoup lost revenue from current rates waivers in the future.

In response to Councillor Fleming's query about Endessa Funding, the District Manager advised that a committee was formed earlier this year and that Paul L'Estrange is the new Community Officer.

2.2. Roads Report; 2.3 Water Services Report

The Roads and Water Services Reports were taken together. The content of each report was noted by the Members. The Senior Executive Engineer (Water) and the Executive Engineer (Roads) were on hand to answer questions from the Members.

Following a query, the Roads Engineer advised that signage (stencilling) for social distancing has been put in place at Pearse Park, Library Park, the River Walk and the ring road at Mannion's. Consideration will be given to putting this signage on town footpaths when shops begin to reopen, as it should not interfere with shops' own signage.

The Senior Executive Engineer Water Services advised he will follow up with the contractor on waste removal from a site at the WWTP in Ballycullane.

2.4. Housing Report.

The Administrative Officer, Housing was online to answer queries from the Councillors.

The Members noted an overall increase in anti- social behaviour among some WCC tenants and asked what could be done to solve the problem given that writing to them is not successful. The Administrative Officer, Housing, advised that the government has advised that evictions are not permitted during Covid19.

In response to Councillor Barden's query, she also advised that housing allocations will not commence before the June Bank Holiday weekend.

2.5 Planning Report; 2.8 Environment Report

The Executive Planner and Senior Executive Scientist were on hand remotely to respond to the Members' questions.

The Senior Executive Scientist agreed that there has been a significant increase in illegal dumping around the County but that our crews are working to keep up with the required clean-ups.

He advised the Members that due to GDPR issues with some CCTV camera evidence, the Environment Section is now looking for a provider of encrypted cameras, however this has not been successful to date. This is an issue for "chip" type cameras only – not for cameras where the footage is streamed direct to a monitoring centre.

He advised that the issue with placing Pac a Sac Waste Compactors at our recycling sites is the issue with cash receipting.

The Executive Planner reminded the Members of a 2011 Public Realm plan for New Ross that was drawn up by Nicholas de Jong & Associates, which included elements on pedestrianisation. He will forward the plan to the Members for information.

2.6 Libraries Archives & Arts Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.7 Community Development Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.9 Fire Services Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.10 Members Query System - NRMD

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

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

3.1 Schedule of Municipal District Works.

This was presented by the District Manager for information purposes. It must wait to be adopted at the next Statutory Meeting.

4. Other Business

Presentations taken at the start of the meeting.

4.1 Presentation 1:

The first item of business was a presentation from the Special Projects Team (Sinead Casey and Michael Jones) with consulting engineer Sean Breen of Malachy Walsh and Partners with an update on the South East Greenway.

4.2 Presentation 2: Martina Kenny Project Manager for ESB Networks and Barry Rafter, Gaeltec Utilities, on the new Knockmullen Sub Station and associated Grid Connection (New Ross ESB Reinforcement Project)

5. Notices of Motion

N/A

6. Correspondence

N/A

7. AOB

The Members requested that NRMD writes to Martin Collins of Pavee Point and the Irish Traveller Movement about recent issues including the numbers in attendance at Traveller funerals in New Ross since Covid 19.

Councillor Barden advised that he requested the opening up of the JFK Arboretum for families of children with Special Needs, particularly ADHD and Autism, due to the additional stresses placed on families in these situations at this time. He advised that as the Arboretum (OPW) had declined the request, he is taking the matter further to an Taoiseach and the Minister for Health. The Members and the District Manager are in support of Councillor Barden.

The District Director thanked all present for making history in being part of the first Virtual meeting of a Municipal District in the County. He thanked David Looby for the excellent piece in the New Ross Standard this week.

In conclusion, the District Manager thanked all present and advised that the next meeting will take place via Teams at the usual date of second Wednesday in June.

THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

Signed _____
Cathaoirleach

Date _____