

**Minutes of the New Ross Municipal District Monthly Meeting
held on Wednesday 8th February 2023 in the Tholsel, Quay St., New Ross**

Presiding: Councillor Michael Sheehan

In Attendance: Councillor John Fleming
Councillor Anthony Connick
Councillor Michael Whelan
Councillor Pat Barden

Officials Present: Alan Fitzhenry – District Manager
Eamonn Hore - District Director
David Murphy – Acting Executive Engineer
Martina Donoghue – AO Housing (Teams)
Ger Walsh – Staff Officer
Melissa Goff – SSO Environment
Eoin Furlong – CO
Paul L'Estrange – Chief Fire Officer
Niamh Lennon – Executive Planner
Mick McCormack – Town Regeneration Officer

Others Present: David Looby New Ross Standard
Ann Lacey PPN
Sharon Pettit Parliamentary Assistant

Apologies Dan McCartan – Senior Executive Engineer
Cllr Bridin Murphy

The Cathaoirleach welcomed all to the meeting and welcomed Alan Fitzhenry to his first meeting as District Manager of New Ross Municipal District.

Standing orders were suspended to allow a presentation on 'Town Centre First' by Mick McCormack, Town Regeneration Officer.

This was proposed by Cllr Sheehan and Seconded by Cllr Barden.

The presentation was given and the Town Regeneration Officer responded to queries from the Members. He looked for the endorsement of the Members to establish a Town Team in New Ross. He outlined that the team would consist of a Member of the

Council, who would chair the team as well as the District Manager and representatives from the Chamber, Tourism, Culture, Residents, the PPN and the Gardai. It was proposed by Cllr Fleming and seconded by Cllr Sheehan and agreed by all that the 'Chair of the Day' would chair the team.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the Town Regeneration Officer for his attendance and presentation.

Standing orders were then suspended again on the proposal of Cllr Fleming and seconded by Cllr Connick, to allow a presentation on the South Irish Sea offshore wind project by Jodie Neary and Eoin McPartland from Energia.

Following the presentation, the presenters responded to questions from the Members and the Cathaoirleach thanked them for their presence and attendance.

Sympathies

Cllr Sheehan offered sympathies to the family of Tom Doyle Charlton Hill, Sean Rossiter Southknock, John Walsh, Nunnery Lane, Eoin Minihan, New Ross and John O Dwyer, Ballyleigh.

Cllr Fleming sympathised with the family of Sadie Doyle, Lacken.

Cllr Barden offered sympathies to the family of Paddy Moran, Shanoule and Peggy Kinsella, Newbawn.

Cllr Connick paid tribute to the late Tom Doyle who was such a big part of the Pantomime Society and the St Patricks Day Parade and extended condolences to his family. He also extended sympathies to the family of Paddy Donovan, Ballyrue.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Monthly Meeting –

The January 2023 Minutes were proposed as presented by Councillor Connick and seconded by Cllr Fleming.

1.2 The minutes of the special meeting for Eoin Minihan RIP, were proposed by Cllr Connick and seconded by Cllr Whelan.

Matters Arising

N/A

2.0 Consideration of Reports and Recommendations.

2.1 District Managers Report

The District Manager thanked the Members for welcoming him and delivered his report and responded to queries raised by the Members.

Advance Factory

Having been advised that the existing Advance Factory developers had decided not to progress at this time, a new call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the Design and Construction of Commercial/Industrial Property Solutions on Council owned lands at Butlersland, New Ross would appear in the local papers on Wednesday 8th February with the closing date for receipt of submissions being 5pm on Thursday 2nd March 2023.

Arts & Amenities and Residents Association Grants 2023

The Members were advised that the 2023 Arts & Amenity and Residents Association Grants have been advertised in the newspapers and on the Council's website with a closing date of Friday 17th February at 5.00pm.

Once the Arts and Amenity closing date has passed, each Elected Member will be sent the list of applications and will have €7,000 each to distribute as they see fit. The report with the allocations for both grants will be brought to the earliest possible meeting, for approval by the Members.

Duncannon Fort Masterplan

The District Manager advised that the project brief for the creation of a Masterplan for the entire Duncannon Fort site would be put out to the tender by the end of February and that it is planned to have the Masterplan complete in Quarter 3 of 2023.

He also advised that in relation to Duncannon Fort Works that a Project Team is being finalised for the planned works needed in order to reopen the gates of historic Duncannon Fort for visitors.

The Members requested that a presentation be given on the plans for the fort.

Brennan's Lane/Shambles Town and Village

The Members were informed that Avanti Architects have been appointed as consultants and that an initial meeting is being scheduled on the project. And also that a brief on the statue of Michael O'Hanrahan proposed for this site has been prepared and sent to the Arts Office also.

"Small Things Like These" is to be Filmed in New Ross

The District Manager advised the Members that Barrow Productions DAC will be filming "Small Things Like These" from mid-March in the town.

The film will be Directed by Tim Mielants (Peaky Blinders) and Producers include Catherine McGee (Normal People) and Cillian Murphy, who will also star in the main role of Bill Furlong. The film is based on Claire Keegan's Booker Short-Listed novel, with screenplay adaptation by Playwright Enda Walsh.

The production currently estimates a cast & crew of 70 people will be in New Ross for c.1 month, which will bring a welcome economic lift. It is hoped the success of the film will be yet another addition to the reputation of New Ross and help with attracting visitors.

In relation to a query on the Emigrant Park, the District Director informed the Members that MJS contractors had been appointed and would be starting works on the park shortly.

In relation to a query on sites for a hotel, the Members were advised that that an update would be available in the near future.

2.2. Roads Report

The Roads Engineer had been called away for an emergency but made his report available to the Members and asked that if they had any questions that they would email them to him.

2.3. Water Services Report

The Senior Executive Engineer was unavailable due to an emergency, but his report was made available to the Members.

2.4. Housing Report.

The Housing report was delivered by the Administrative Officer, Housing who responded to queries from the Members.

She advised them that the house at the Bullawn was out to tender for demolition, with the tender for construction to follow shortly thereafter.

She also advised that the allocation of houses at Ard an Bhille was ongoing.

Cllr Sheehan requested that the Housing section write to the Minister for Housing in relation to the Respond apartments in the Irishtown.

With regard to Marshmeadows Halting Site, on the proposal of Cllr Connick, seconded by Cllr Sheehan, the members recommended that the tenancies there be regularised as soon as possible.

2.5 Planning Report

The Executive Planner delivered her report and responded to queries from the Members. She advised that there was still a backlog for pre planning meetings but that she is on the Planning Help Desk on Mondays so would be able to answer pre planning calls then.

2.6 Planning Grants

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.7 Planning Refusals

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.8 Libraries Archives & Arts Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.9 Community Development Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.10 Environment Report

The Members queried whether a mattress amnesty and paint amnesty could be considered and in relation to a query on the mixing of paints the SSO advised that she would revert to the Members on it.

2.11 Fire Services Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.12 Members Query System

The content of the report was noted by the Members

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

N/A

4.0 Other Business

4.1 Presentation on 'Town Centre First' by Mick McCormack, Town Regeneration Officer. (Held earlier in the meeting)

4.2 Presentation on South Irish Sea offshore wind project by Jodie Neary and Eoin McPartland from Energia.

5.0 Notice of Motion/s –

The following motion was proposed by Cllr Connick, seconded by Cllr Sheehan and agreed by all:

“In light of the ongoing housing crisis, I call on the Minister for Housing to amend the Social Housing Allocation Regulations 2011 to increase the suspension period from 12 to 24 months for applicants who refuse an offer of a new property on unreasonable grounds.

Refusals on certified medical grounds or on the basis of a report from An Garda Síochana are not deemed to be unreasonable.”

This motion is from all councillors in our district.

6.0 Correspondence

N/A

7.0 AOB

Cllr Connick requested that funding be allocated for the upgrading of the toilets in the pavilion in Pearse Park.

A query was also made in relation to the availability of public toilets at the Dunbrody and St Michael’s Theatre. The District Manager advised that he would revert on the query.

It was proposed by Cllr Sheehan and seconded by Cllr Fleming, that the mace would be made available for the St Patrick’s Day Parade.

THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

Signed _____
Cathaoirleach

Date _____