

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE,
HELD IN LETTERKENNY PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE, ON MONDAY, 18TH
SEPTEMBER 2006.**

LEC 44/06 **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllr. Ciaran Brogan
Cllr Gerry Crawford
Cllr. Jimmy Harte
Cllr. Dessie Larkin

Apologies from Cllr Tony McDaid

LEC 45/06 **OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Charlie Cannon, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation
Terre Duffy, Public Art Manager
Joseph Gallagher, Heritage Officer
Mark Gallagher, Donegal National Road Design Office
Richard Gibson, Acting CEDO, Community Enterprise & Cultural Services
Pat Gillespie, Area Manager, Roads & Transportation,
Jim Hyland, Executive Engineer, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,
Eunan Kelly, Area Manager, Corporate Services,
Patsy Lafferty, Area Manager, Housing,
Karen McCafferty, Executive Engineer, Donegal National Road Design Office
Sinead McClafferty, Assistant Planner, Planning & Economic Development
Con McLaughlin, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,
Tommy McNulty, Clerk of Works, Housing
Rose Patton, Staff Officer, Corporate Services
Ronnie Sayers, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation

APOLOGIES

Frank Sweeney, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development
Liam Edwards, Senior Resident Engineer, Donegal National Road Design
Office

ALSO PRESENT

Aidan Ward, Mott McDonald Consultants
Noel Bonner, Manorcunningham Residents Association
Mary McFadden, Manorcunningham Residents Association

Cllr Gerry Crawford chaired the Meeting.

LEC 46/06 **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24th JULY 2006.**

On the proposal of Cllr. Dessie Larkin and seconded by Cllr. Jimmy Harte the Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 24th July 2006 were agreed.

LEC 47/06 **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28th JULY 2006.**

Cllr Larkin queried Appendix C of the Minutes relating to Letterkenny EU Co-Financed Proposals for 2007 and after lengthy discussion, the Minutes were proposed by Cllr Ciaran Brogan and seconded by Cllr Larkin, provided that:

- Design for Sallaghgrane link progressed by the end of the year.
- R245-Letterkenny to Ramelton via Silver Tassie is left in a satisfactory condition.
- Any remaining funding (minimum €300,000) is spent on R265-St Johnston to Rossgier road.

Cllr Crawford emphasised his concern at the safety issue on the Rossgier /St Johnston Road with numerous accidents occurring.

Cllr Harte requested that the results of a Traffic Count from Rossgier-Coolatee be circulated.

LEC 48/06 **ROADS & TRANSPORTATION**

48.01.1.1 **Class 2 & 3 Road Funding 2006**

On the proposal of Cllr Dessie Larkin, seconded by Cllr Ciaran Brogan, the Committee recommended that the following list of roads recommended as Class 2 & 3 roads to be improved under this funding:

L 11041	Ardrummond	€30,000
L5504-1	Mc Bride Street, Raphoe	€33,000
L 5294-1	Drumatoland	€7,000
L 5944-2	Kirkstown	€30,000

The Committee requested that in future they are presented with a list of all such roads prior to a selection being made and also maps of Class 2 & 3 Roads.

48.02

N56 Mountain Top to Illistrin Road Realignment - Phase 1

The Committee considered the Progress Report prepared by Liam Edwards, Senior Resident Engineer that was circulated with the Agenda.

The Members commended the work done to date and Cllr Ciaran Brogan urged that a Contractor for Phase 2 be selected as soon as possible and the Committee advised of any progress.

48.03

N13 Dual Carriageway - Dry Arch Roundabout to Pluck Roundabout

The Committee considered the Report circulated with the Agenda regarding improvement works from the Dry Arch Roundabout to Pluck Roundabout. This will include provision of accommodation works, construction of fencing including pavement strengthening and safety barriers work.

Karen McCafferty from the Donegal NRDO advised the Committee that work would commence shortly for a duration of 10 weeks, that there will be one lane of traffic incoming all the time and that the contractor plans to commence at the Dry Arch.

The Committee welcomed this but Cllr Dessie Larkin urged that works be completed prior to the Christmas rush and that every effort is made to ensure that the least amount of disruption to traffic flow occurs.

Cllr Ciaran Brogan stated that works were urgently required at the Manorcunningham Roundabout and recommended that finance be provided for planting at this Roundabout and also at Lifford Roundabout, the central margin of the Dual Carriageway and that the entrance to Manorcunningham be enhanced. Sponsorship should also be considered.

Pat Gillespie advised that this would be investigated.

48.04

N14/N13 Junction (Manorcunningham) to Lifford/Strabane

Aidan Ward from Mott McDonald Consulting Engineers gave a detailed Presentation regarding the options for linking with the A5 and approval was sought for Link 4 being the preferred option.

On the proposal of Cllr Jimmy Harte seconded by Cllr Gerry Crawford the Committee recommended that Option 4 be selected and advanced.

Karen McCafferty informed the Committee that efforts had been made to resolve problems with landowners who were not happy in the Drumoghill area on the proposed Lifford to Pluck route. Further meetings would be held with one businessman in particular in the area. She requested the member's approval to the preferred route so that the scheme could be advanced.

On the proposal of Cllr Ciaran Brogan seconded by Cllr Gerry Crawford the Committee recommended that the preferred route be advanced provided that people will be consulted and accommodated as far as was possible.

48.05 **Trimragh Junction Options**

Karen McCafferty, Donegal NRDO informed the Committee that the Council were awaiting a reply from VP McMullin, the Councils Solicitors as to the correct procedure that should be followed to introduce any change to the junction.

The Members expressed their dissatisfaction that no progress had been made since the special meeting on 01/08/06 and requested copies of correspondence between the Council and Council Solicitors.

They also asked that a Workshop be arranged for 25/09/06 at 1.00 pm with the Director of Services, and County Solicitors to discuss Trimragh Junction.

48.06 **Signage**

Cllr Ciaran Brogan requested that a survey be carried out on "Yield Signs" that are missing, need cleaning, are obscured etc and suggested that in the interest of Tourism and Safety, someone should be designated in each area to dealing with this issue, including replacing, cleaning and pointing in the proper direction

48.07 **Bomany/Kirkstown Roads**

Cllr Dessie Larkin acknowledged the work already done and urged that any works remaining be dealt with as early as possible in the New Year.

48.08 **Ramelton Road/Carolina House**

Cllr Dessie Larkin requested that proposals be examined to improve safety on the Ramelton Road where manhole covers have been raised.

Charlie informed the Committee that these works would be done in the next few weeks.

The Committee also requested that proposals for a junction at Carolina House be considered.

48.09 **Section 183 Notices**

Pat Gillespie advised the Committee that Section 183 Notices in respect of Derek and Susan Kelly, Cormac Gallagher and Lagan Harps F.C. would be included on the agenda for the next Council Meeting.

48.10 **Reports on Roads Workshops held on 28th July 2006, Roads Workshop on Trimeragh Junction held on 28th July 2006 and Roads Workshop held on 1st August 2006.**

The Committee agreed the Reports on Roads Workshops held on 28th July 2006, Roads Workshop on Trimeragh Junction held on 28th August 2006 and Roads Workshop held on 1st August 2006.

LEC 49/06 **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

49.01 **Highland View**

The Committee were informed that the Developer had been in contact and requested a meeting. A date was yet to be arranged. The Members asked to be kept informed.

49.02 **Ray National School**

Sinead McClafferty informed the Committee that an initial inspection had been done to determine disabled access but a more detailed site inspection would follow to ascertain if all planning conditions had been complied with.

49.03 **Ard na Mealla, St Johnston**

The Committee were informed that the Developer had gone into Liquidation and that an estimate for the cost of works to complete internal roads was to be prepared and consideration to be given to funding these works from the Bond that is being retained.

The Committee asked to be informed of any developments, and advised that the boundary needs to be clarified. They also stated that the whole bond issue needed to be reviewed to ensure that all costs were covered in situations like this.

49.04 **Enforcement Technician**

Sinead McClafferty informed the Committee that Helena O'Toole, Senior Planner would inform the Members of the current situation regarding the Enforcement Technician who is currently working in the Carndonagh office. The Members relayed their dissatisfaction with the current situation and awaited an urgent response to their concerns.

The Committee stated that the availability of the Area Manager to the Members was unsatisfactory and a dedicated Area Manager for Letterkenny Electoral Area should be considered.

The Members requested that a booklet on the new County Development Plan be circulated to them.

49.05 **Consideration of Recent Refusals**

The Committee considered the report on applications refused since the last meeting, which was circulated with the Agenda.

Cllr Jimmy Harte requested an explanation on 06/40425.

49.06 **Monthly Planning Meetings**

Cllr Dessie Larkin requested that consideration be given to holding planning meetings on a monthly basis with the members.

49.07 **Planning Statistics**

The Committee considered the report on Planning Statistics circulated with the Agenda.

49.08 **Manorcunningham**

The Committee requested that Planning applications for Manorcunningham be checked to ensure Planning conditions have been complied with and also be advised as to where Development Charges collected in Manorcunningham have been spent.

LEC 50/06 **HOUSING & SOCIAL SERVICES**

50.01 **Central Heating Programme 2006 – Croaghan Heights, Lifford**

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that the Contractor had recently commenced work on this Scheme and would be finished by the end of November.

50.02 **Remedial Works/Regeneration Programme**

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that tenders have been received and contractors selected for works at Fr Arnold Terrace approved for inclusion in the 2006 Programme. Work is to commence shortly. This was welcomed by the Members who also requested that options are examined for drainage and to alleviate flooding in the estate.

Mr Lafferty sought approval from the Committee to seek funding for 2007 under this Programme to upgrade clusters of SI dwellings in the Letterkenny and Manorcunningham areas.

Cllr Gerry Crawford asked whether they should be prioritised first and a list submitted. Mr Lafferty stated it was more cost effective to upgrade clusters but they were aware of those, which most needed attention. It was agreed to proceed on the basis of those with highest priority but that the 'cluster' approach as recommended by the Department would also be borne in mind.

50.03 **Peace Programme 2006**

The Committee were informed that funding had been secured for Glendale Drive, Letterkenny and Ard Baithin, St Johnston under the Peace Programme and that landscaping works had already commenced at Glendale Drive.

50.04 **Voluntary Housing**

The Committee were informed that the Councils application for funding on behalf of the Habinteg Housing Association, for a development consisting of accommodation and communal facilities at Lifford had been approved by the Department.

Funding approved is in the sum of €7,080,327.00 and construction is expected to commence shortly with a range of accommodation units that will be suitable for the needs of families, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Cllr Gerry Crawford welcomed the news and paid tribute to all those involved in bringing it forward to this stage.

50.05 **Grant Report**

The Committee considered the Grant Report at 8th September, 2006 that was circulated with the Agenda.

50.06 **Loan Report**

The Committee considered the Loan Report at 8th September, 2006 that was circulated with the Agenda.

Cllr Jimmy Harte felt that the Shared Ownership Scheme was a very good scheme and should be promoted. Patsy Lafferty, in reply, stated that there had been a significant increase on Shared Ownership applications since the local area offices opened, and that the scheme had also been improved in recent years.

50.07 **Casual Vacancy Report**

The Committee considered the Casual Vacancy Report at 8th September, 2006 that was circulated with the Agenda.

50.08 **Social Housing Programme**

The Committee considered the Social Housing Report at 8th September, 2006 that was circulated with the Agenda.

Cllr Jimmy Harte queried the delay on the development at the old school site at Raphoe and was informed that a dispute had arisen regarding title on the land. He asked to be kept informed on the up to date situation.

Cllr Larkin Dessie was informed that a playground facility would be provided at the development in Manorcunningham.

LEC 51/06 **WATER, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The Committee considered the Progress Report dated 18th September 2006 that was circulated at the meeting (Appendix 1)

51.01 **Lough Greenan**

Con McLaughlin stated, in his report presented at the Meeting, that John McElwaine, Capital Design office had advised that the Part 8 Planning Process is complete and efforts will now focus on the appointment of a contractor.

The Committee welcomed this progress and Cllr Dessie Larkin asked to be updated on when upgrading works will commence.

51.02 **Letterkenny Sewerage Scheme**

Con McLaughlin stated that as noted at previous meeting, the DOEHLG have indicated that Letterkenny and Gweedore are to be bundled as one contract; Contract Documents are now being combined to reflect that.

John McElwaine, Capital Design office has advised that procurement of the sites for pumping stations on the Gweedore scheme will involve CPO proceedings, which will have a bearing on the overall progress.

Cllr Dessie Larkin and Cllr Ciaran Brogan expressed their dissatisfaction that because both areas have been grouped together, both will now be delayed as a result of the CPO proceedings and requested that a meeting be arranged with the Director of Services and the County Manager regarding a proposal to separate Letterkenny and Gweedore SS.

51.03 **Letterkenny C.A.S.**

Con McLaughlin, in his report, informed the Committee that Paul Kilcoyne has confirmed that a renewed effort has been made to finalise the matter of the land transfer. He noted that further contact has been made with the HSE in this regard including through officials and Council members. Following recent contact, correspondence has issued from the Council with a response sought within two weeks.

51.04 Capital Programmes

Following a number of queries in relation to Phase 3 of the Lagan Desert Scheme, the Committee were informed that Progress Reports on Capital Schemes would in future be included in Quarterly Capital Reports to Council Meetings.

The Members requested clarification with regards to the procedure for updating them on Capital Projects.

51.05 **Group Water Schemes**

The Committee considered the Report on Group Water Schemes, which was circulated with the Agenda.

51.05.01 **Rareagh GWS**

The Committee were informed that correspondence has issued to the Group in February 2006 following a meeting with the Council to discuss their status in

the context of proposed works at Rahan by the Council. There has been no response from the group since then.

Con McLaughlin noted position in his report to the meeting, that despite previous difficulties this scheme will now be cost effective if all houses on route become members however it will be necessary to re-tender the scheme to determine exact costs.

51.06 **Fire Service**

Cllr Gerry Crawford asked whether or not it would be possible that Derry Fire Brigade was dispatched to a recent Fire alarm call in Letterkenny when Letterkenny Fire Service was not contacted.

Con McLaughlin stated that he would raise the query with the Chief Fire Officer.

The Committee requested that a letter of best wishes be sent to Attracta McCay, Assistant Chief Fire Officer who retired recently and also a letter of sympathy to issue to Edel Wilson, Civil Defence Officer, on the recent death of her father Joe Wilson.

LEC 52/06 **COMMUNITY CULTURAL AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES**

52.01 **Development Officer**

Richard Gibson informed the meeting that shortlisting has been completed and interviews are expected to take place in the first few days of October.

52.02 **Flight of the Earls**

Richard Gibson distributed a handout with detailed information on the Flight of the Earls Project and stated that Sally Murphy, Co-Ordinator of the Project would make a Presentation to the next Letterkenny Electoral area Committee Meeting in November.

Cllr Gerry Crawford asked that consideration be given to erecting a plaque at Ballindrait Bridge to commemorate the meeting prior to the Flight of the Earls as mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters.

52.03 **HEART Project**

Richard Gibson updated the Committee that a Project Manager, Kevin Wilson, commenced employment in mid August. The inaugural meeting of the HEART Management Committee is due to take place on the 22nd September in the Council Chamber, Lifford.

Environmental Improvement Works as part of the HEART Project are due to commence in Ballyshannon and Ardara in October. The Project Officer will soon begin to liaise with local groups in Raphoe and Lifford with a view to works commencing there in late 2006, early 2007.

Cllr Gerry Crawford requested that Lifford Roundabout be upgraded through a combination of Tourism Funding and the Heart Project as it is in urgent need of attention.

Following Presentations from Terre Duffy, Public Art Manager and Joseph Gallagher, Heritage Officer, Cllr Gerry Crawford asked that the possibility of a Public Art Project and Heritage Projects be examined for Lifford Roundabout, Lifford being the Corporate Headquarters for the County and the Main Gateway to the County.

52.04

Fleadh Ceoil

Richard Gibson informed the Committee that the Fleadh Cheoil is considered a flagship cultural project for the town of Letterkenny and the County as a whole, making a positive impact at a cultural, tourism and economic level. As was the case in 2005, Donegal County Council contributed €40,000.00 to the Fleadh Cheoil for 2006 through the Development Funds managed by Community & Enterprise.

From speaking to Paddy Tunney, the Chairman of the Fleadh Committee, the initial estimated figures confirm the significance of the event. It is estimated that around 2,500 people participated in the competitions with in excess of 300 volunteers assisting at the event. It is estimated that the event attracted between 100,000 and 120,000 visitors to the County with a positive economic impact of around €20 million. A well-managed and successful event.

The Members paid tribute to all involved in the Project and commended them on its success.

52.05

Oaklands Housing Estate, Letterkenny

Richard Gibson informed the Committee that an on-site meeting took place with Representatives of the Residents Association in mid August. They were given advice on the development of a playground for the estate and have been given contact details for a number of playground suppliers.

Their next step is to contact the suppliers with a view obtaining quotations and design specifications. The members asked to be updated on any progress.

52.06

Angling Fishery

The Committee were informed that a Members' Workshop took place on 6th September in Lifford regarding the operation and development of angling on the river between Lifford and Strabane. Members concerns revolved primarily around the requirement for local involvement and cooperation. The Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission confirmed that they would meet with local angling representatives within the next three to four weeks.

A full report on the workshop will be available shortly and will issue with the agenda for the next electoral area meeting.

52.07 Cultural Services

52.07.1 PRESENTATION BY TERRE DUFFY, PUBLIC ART MANAGER

Terre Duffy, Public Arts Manager advised the Committee that she was employed to prepare a Policy on Public Art funded by the Per Cent for Art Scheme in County Donegal where a maximum of €3,000 was available per project. She gave a presentation to the meeting in relation to the “Making Shapes Public Art in Donegal 2006 – 2010”. She informed the Members that the Launch of the Public Art Plan & Policy and a Web Site www.donegalpublicart.ie was to take place in Lifford on 28th September 2006. She requested that an elected representative from each Electoral Area be involved in the selection procedure for Public Art Projects and requested that the LEAC nominate a representative to sit on Selection Panels.

She also advised the Committee that she is hoping to establish a Public Art Agency for the county and that a Public Art Assistant will also be appointed.

The Members thanked Terre Duffy for her presentation, and advised that they were fully supportive of this exciting and innovative programme.

52.07.02 PRESENTATION BY JOE GALLAGHER, HERITAGE OFFICER

Joe Gallagher, Heritage Officer, gave a presentation to the meeting in relation to The County Donegal Heritage Plan 2007 – 2011 which was adopted on 29th May 2006. He outlined details of how this will assist in raising awareness of County Donegal’s natural, built and cultural heritage.

Joe Gallagher requested the LEAC to actively support the work of the County Donegal Heritage Forum.

The Committee thanked Mr Gallagher for his most informative presentation and looked forward to the implementation of this plan.

LEC 53/06 DEPUTATION FROM MANORCUNNINGHAM ENVIRONMENT AND TIDY TOWNS GROUP

Cllr Gerry Crawford welcomed Noel Bonner and Mary McFadden to the Meeting.

Mary McFadden informed the Committee that they were in the process of forming an Environment & Tidy Towns Group and sought clarification on a few issues:

- Water is turned off at nighttime, which is adversely affecting some businesses.

- Notices relating to water disruptions were not delivered to all houses and some people did not hear Notices on the Radio.
- An update was requested on the current situation and as to how 250 new houses will be supplied.
- Signage in and out of the village to be improved
- Clarification as to why two aluminium poles have been erected on the Main Street,
- Footpaths in the village to be improved and roads to Abbey Villas to be surfaced.
- Consideration to be given to the erection of bollards on the pedestrian entrance to Abbey Park.
- Works at Fr Arnold Terrace to be completed.
- Sign for Manorcunningham S.S. to be removed
- Litter bins to be provided on the Main Street.
- The entrance to Abbey Park was suggested as a possible location for Recycling Banks following a query from the Environment Section.

It was agreed that each Service would investigate matters raised relating to their section and reply to the Deputation. The Members to be kept updated.

Mary McFadden, on behalf of the Deputation, thanked the Committee for their time and hoped that the issues raised could be resolved.

LEC 54/06 DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee on Monday 20th November, 2006, commencing at **9.30 am** in the Public Services Centre, Letterkenny.

Appendix 1

WATER & ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

Report to Letterkenny EAC Meeting 18th Sept 2006

AGENDA Item no.2 – Update reports from previous meeting:

From minutes of previous meeting 24th July 2006, using same notation:

- 39.01 Lough Greenan Emergency Works**
John McElwaine, Capital Design office has advised that the Part 8 planning process is complete and efforts will now focus on the appointment of a contractor.
- 39.02 Letterkenny Sewerage Scheme (Contract 1 DBO Treatment):**
As noted at previous meeting, the DEHLG have indicated that Letterkenny and Gweedore are to be bundled as one contract; contract documents are now being combined to reflect that. John McElwaine, Capital Design office has advised that procurement of the sites for pumping stations on the Gweedore scheme will involve CPO proceedings, which will have a bearing on the overall progress.
- 39.03 Letterkenny CAS:**
Paul Kilcoyne has confirmed that a renewed effort has been made to finalise the matter of the land transfer. He noted that further contact has been made with the HSE in this regard including officials and Council members. Following recent contact, correspondence has issued from the Council with a response sought within two weeks.
- 39.07 Rareagh GWS:**
Our group schemes sections have advised that correspondence has issued to that group in February 2006 following a meeting with the Council to discuss their status in the context of proposed works at Rahan by the Council. There has been no response from the group since then. Despite previous difficulties this scheme will now be cost effective if all houses on route become members however it will be necessary to re-tender the scheme to determine exact costs.

AGENDA Items no. 3- Progress Reports:

Updated progress reports circulated with agenda, including:

Rural Water Programme:

Group Scheme Programme

*C.McLaughlin, Senior Executive Engineer,
Area Manager, Water & Environment Service,
18th Sept 2006*

