

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE,
HELD IN LETTERKENNY PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE, ON THURSDAY, 17th
MAY 2007.**

LEC 21/07* **MEMBERS PRESENT*

Cllr. Ciaran Brogan
Cllr. Dessie Larkin
Cllr. Tony McDaid

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Gerry Crawford
Cllr. Jimmy Harte

LEC 22/07* **OFFICIALS PRESENT*

Charlie Cannon, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation
Claire Cronin, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development
Aideen Doherty, Administrative Officer, Community Enterprise & Cultural
Pat Gillespie, Senior Executive Engineer/Area Manager, Roads
Sinead Harkin, Central Planning Unit, Lifford
Karen Hartin, Donegal National Roads Design Office,
Jim Hyland, Executive Engineer, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,
Eunan Kelly, Area Manager, Corporate Services,
James Kelly, Executive Engineer, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,
Patsy Lafferty, Area Manager, Housing,
Con McLaughlin, Senior Executive Engineer/Area Manager, WEES
Tommy McNulty, Clerk of Works, Housing
Linda McCann, Staff Officer, Corporate Services
Ronnie Sayers, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation
Fergus Towey, Senior Resident Engineer, Roads & Transportation

It was agreed that Cllr Dessie Larkin would chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr Gerry Crawford.

***LEC 23/07* **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY
ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5th MARCH
2007.****

On the proposal of Cllr. Ciaran Brogan and seconded by Cllr. Dessie Larkin the Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 5th March 2007 were agreed.

LEC 24/07 COMMUNITY CULTURAL AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES

24.01 Donegal Youth Council

The Committee asked that any proposed facility on the old Town Council site should include facilities for Donegal Youth Service, voluntary groups and communities in the town as a place to meet.

Aideen Doherty explained that this project is at information gathering stage, looking at the needs of the Youth Service and no proposal had been drawn up yet.

24.02 Playgrounds

Aideen Doherty informed the meeting that so far there were 2 no. applications for playgrounds received from Raphoe and that there was a poor response from Letterkenny.

Cllr. Dessie Larkin asked that consideration be given to the provision of a playground at Garage Court, Old Town.

Cllr. Ciaran Brogan asked that part of the Green Area at Ard na Rí be changed to a playground, as there is an ongoing problem with drainage in this area.

24.03 County Childcare Committee Report

Cllr Dessie Larkin asked for an update regarding the ‘Naonri’, pre-school through Irish who are having difficulty in meeting HSE requirements. Aideen Doherty referred to a response in the pack from Maria Gallo, Donegal County Childcare Committee indicating that the Childcare Development Worker with the Childcare Committee is in regular contact with the group and is aware of their ongoing difficulties. The County Childcare Committee will continue to support the group.

The Committee agreed that Maria Gallo would make a presentation at the July Electoral Area Meeting.

24.04 Resource Centre

The Committee acknowledged the Report circulated with the Agenda from Margaret Toner, Project Co-ordinator and asked that a Workshop be organised to discuss the development of a Family Resource Centre in Glencar.

24.05 Environmental Improvement Works – HEART Project

Aideen Doherty informed the meeting that Kevin Wilson was due to finish soon and would not be replaced for 4-5 months, as the position has to be advertised. Ms. Doherty stated that it is envisaged that someone will act in this position in the interim in order to carry through existing projects but no new projects will proceed. Ms. Doherty stated that Richard Gibson would provide updates and assist where necessary.

LEC 25/07 PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

25.01 Highland View, Letterkenny

Claire Cronin in her report circulated with the Agenda stated that attempts were made to serve an Enforcement Notice on Hugh McGinley, McGinley Construction Ltd however these were unsuccessful. A new address has now been established and the Notice will be served again based on a revised site visit, which was carried out.

The Committee asked that the removal of tress be investigated and that a progress report from the Council Solicitor be presented at the next Electoral Area Meeting.

25.02 Carolina Park

Claire Cronin in her report circulated with the Agenda stated that the construction of the unauthorised roadway in this case has been referred for prosecution. With regard to the continuing use of this roadway and associated ancillary works, a site inspection was carried out with the Council Solicitor and a report was prepared by the Planner. This matter is now with the Solicitor for review in order to recommend the next course of action to be taken.

Cllr. Dessie Larkin asked for a report from the Council Solicitor on the issues at Carolina Park including the play area.

25.03 Ard na Mealla, St Johnston

Claire Cronin informed the meeting that a lot of research was carried out in relation to Land Registry and the Companies Registration Office and stated that the Council were now in a position to move this forward and to try and get a resolution to the outstanding issues.

25.04 Cathedral Hill, Raphoe

Claire Cronin informed that the meeting that the Enforcement Officer was transferred to another area and the meeting planned with residents did not take place. Ms. Cronin stated that the meeting would take place before the end of May as a new Enforcement Officer was being appointed.

Cllr. Tony McDaid expressed his disappointment with this as this meeting was promised to residents in December 2006.

The Committee asked that Francie Coyle, Director of Planning & Economic Development explain why staff issues exist in the Letterkenny Electoral Area in relation to enforcement. The Members stated that residents are being let down by the Council and more action needs to be taken against developers who do not meet planning conditions. The Members recommended that the Council should take enforcement very seriously.

Claire Cronin stated that there is a huge commitment given to the issue of enforcement with staff being allocated to each electoral area. Ms. Cronin stated that in the interim staff in the office is endeavouring to process enforcement files.

25.05 **Consider Designating Areas for Wind Farms**

Claire Cronin stated that a letter was sent to the Central Planning Unit in relation to this. The CPU is examining this issue as part of the commitments to review certain elements of the County Development Plan.

25.06 **Drumardagh / Trimeragh Junction**

Claire Cronin stated that there is a capacity for limited development if central median is closed midyear. Ms. Cronin stated that 3 permissions have been granted recently.

Karen Hartin, NRDO, informed the meeting the closing date for receipt of comments on the proposed design layouts of the junction was extended to the end of June. Ms. Hartin stated that the new junction layout was needed because of the safety and did not relate to planning permissions. A meeting has been arranged for 30th May with representatives of the residents in the area.

Cllr. Dessie Larkin stated that it was agreed previously that Planning Permissions for up to 10 individual houses would be considered in the interim and a review should be carried out when this number is reached.

The Committee recommended that a Workshop on the Drumardagh Junction in conjunction with the Roads Directorate be organised.

25.07 **Review of Letterkenny Town & Environs Plan**

Sinead Harkin, Central Planning Unit updated the Committee on the Letterkenny Town & Environs Plan Part 9 Review. Ms. Harkin stated that Eunan Quinn, Emmet Gavin and herself would be working on the Review and are currently working on baseline data collection. Ms. Harkin stated that the Council and Letterkenny Town Council must agree Part 9 working relationship and the Letterkenny Town Council has endorsed this. Donegal County Council will consider this on 28th May.

Cllr. Dessie Larkin stated that the boundaries needs to be clarified and that transportation will be the biggest challenge that the Plan would need to address.

25.08 **Staffing**

Claire Cronin in her report circulated with the Agenda informed the meeting that Connell McGettigan will take up the position of Executive Planner as a replacement for Sharon McMorran who has been reassigned to the Stranorlar Electoral Area.

25.09

Planners Availability to Queries

Claire Cronin reported that a second telephone slot for Agents commenced on 19th April. The time allotted is on Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 12.30 pm. This slot is for Agents only, however in the event that an applicant does not have an Agent representing them, the Planners will also deal with such calls in the Thursday morning slot. Planners are also still available on Wednesday from 1.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. for telephone queries from the general public

25.10

Consideration of Recent Refusals

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

The Committee asked that a further Workshop be held in Letterkenny for Agents and Architects to highlight changes in the new County Development Plan.

Claire Cronin stated that two workshops were held recently in Stranorlar and Burt to cover the whole county. She stated these workshops were well attended and it is intended to hold a further workshop in the Autumn.

Cllr. Ciaran Brogan asked that this be held in Letterkenny and mentioned the importance in working closely with Agents to ensure valid applications are submitted. Cllr. Dessie Larkin stated that with 1 in 4 applications being refused there is a serious problem and the workshop should address this.

Cllr. Tony McDaid stated that the workshops are a great benefit but the responsibility lies with the Agents in submitting valid applications.

Cllr. Ciaran Brogan stated that in order for a clear interpretation of the CDP, consistent amongst Planners, Members and Agents the Workshop need to be coordinated so that everyone has a clear understanding of the Plan.

Claire Cronin stated that a commitment was given to review the Plan in the first year and there will be a Workshop on this, which will be coordinated by the Central Planning Unit. Ms. Cronin stated that all Planners have a clear understanding of the Plan.

25.11

Unauthorised Development Report

The Committee considered the Unauthorised Development Report that was circulated with the Agenda.

25.11.1

Fairways Estate.

The Committee requested that a meeting be organised in relation to outstanding issues at the Fairways, Letterkenny

25.11.2 Lismonaghan

The Committee recommended that Enforcement action be taken in relation to the provision of lights etc on the Lismonaghan Road.

LEC 26/07 WATER, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Committee considered the Progress Report dated 5th March 2007, which was circulated by Con Mc Laughlin at the meeting (Appendix 1).

26.01 Non Domestic Metering Project (N.D.M.)

Con McLaughlin in his report circulated at the meeting, responded to the issues raised at the previous meeting regarding the Non Domestic Metering Project.

The Committee asked that a workshop be held to discuss the issue of schools, nursing homes, sports clubs and disabled persons. The Committee asked for clarifications to be sought from the Department in relations to exemptions under this project.

26.02 Letterkenny Civic Amenity Site

The Committee asked that a Progress Report be presented at the next Electoral Area meeting on the proposed Civic Amenity Site in Letterkenny.

26.03 Odours at Ballymacool

Cllr. Dessie Larkin stated that he had received report of strong odours in the Ballymacool area, which was also an issue last year. Con McLaughlin stated that sewer vents and other measures were carried out to solve this problem. Jim Hyland agreed to investigate the matter, to ensure that the measures put in place were still operational.

26.04 Glenmaquinn Group Water Scheme

In response to queries regarding the proposed extension to Glenmaquinn Group Water Supply Scheme including the Dooballagh area, Con McLaughlin noted that there would appear to be two separate issues involved there.

The Glenmaquinn GWSS extension – he noted the scale of same / the context regarding water availability at this time ahead of the planned improvements and how it was not possible for that to proceed at this time. He did note thought that is being considered also in the context of the proposed Lagan Phase 3 / Labbadish Drumoghail GWSS.

The Dooballagh GWSS – is with the scheme for consideration, as noted in the Progress Report.

26.05 Sewers at The Diamond Lifford

Cllr. Tony McDaid asked that the problem with the sewers at the Diamond, Lifford be investigated and a report given at the next Electoral Area Meeting.

Jim Hyland noted that this was being looked into, including if CCTV needed to be used.

26.08 **Letterkenny Boreholes Scheme**

Cllr Dessie Larkin asked that an update on the Letterkenny Boreholes Scheme be presented at the next Electoral Area Meeting.

26.09 **Group Water Supply Schemes**

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

26.09.01 **Rareagh/Letterleague GWS**

Cllr. Dessie Larkin asked that the Council assist in advancing the Rareagh/Letterleague Group Water Supply Scheme. Con McLaughlin in response noted that our Group Schemes Section have already met the group and designer and advised, including new context following DCC improvements at South Letterkenny / Rahan reservoir, etc. It was now a matter for the group to progress.

26.10 **Small Capital Schemes**

The Committee considered the Report on Small Capital Schemes, which was circulated with the Agenda.

26.10 **Staffing**

Con McLaughlin informed the meeting of staff changes within the Water Environment & Emergency Services Department as a result of the retirement of Jim Holohan, Director of Services:

Peadar McRory will be acting as Director of Services

Con McLaughlin will be acting in Peadar McRory's post as Divisional Manager

Jim Hyland will be acting as Area Manager for Letterkenny and Inishowen Electoral Areas

James Kelly will replace Jim Hyland for the Letterkenny and Stranorlar Area. These positions will remain acting until the Director of Services post is filled.

Cllr Dessie Larkin on behalf of the Committee wished Peadar, Con, Jim and James well in their new positions.

LEC 27/07 **ROADS & TRANSPORTATION**

27.01 **N56 Mountain Top to Illistrin Road Realignment – Phase II**

Fergus Towey updated the Committee on progress being made on Phase II N56 Mountain Top to Illistrin Road realignment Project. Mr. Towey stated that progress is good and most of the major earthworks would be completed in

the coming week and that the job should be complete by Easter 2008. Works will be carried out around the school during July and August. He stated that the traffic management was working well and acknowledged the patience of the road users during the works.

27.02

N13 Dual Carriageway (Trimragh Junction Options)

In a report circulated at the meeting Karen Hartin, NRDO, informed the meeting that the DNRDO held a public information session on 14th February and that the period for the return of questionnaires/submissions has been extended from the end of February to 29th June 2007. She stated that a draft report is being progressed and will be completed when all the comments/submissions have been returned and examined.

The Committee recommended that a Workshop on the Drumardagh Junction in conjunction with the Planning Directorate be organised.

27.03

N14/N13 Junction (Manorcunningham to Lifford/Strabane)

In a report circulated at the meeting Karen Hartin, NRDO, informed the meeting that a preliminary design for the Type 2 Dual Carriageway is being updated. As a result of the alignment being changed in the Dromoghill area in 2006 additional geotechnical investigation need to be carried out in this area. She stated that it was envisaged that the contract would be awarded during August 2007 with all site testing and laboratory testing completed by the end of 2007. Ms Hartin stated that the C.P.O. should commence in September and that it is envisaged construction would commence in 2010/2011.

27.04

N56 Letterkenny Inner Relief Road

In a report circulated at the meeting Karen Hartin, NRDO, outlined the progress on the N56 Letterkenny Inner Relief Road. Ms. Hartin stated that as a follow up to a public consultation in December 2006 comments are currently being reviewed and will form part of the route selection report. A draft Environmental Reports from the Consultants is with the NRA for review and comment and the NRDO is currently awaiting clarification on some issues before the issue of final reports. The preferred route will then be identified at which stage a further public consultation will be held to show the public the preferred route, where again the public will have an opportunity to comment on the preferred option.

Ms. Hartin stated that a traffic model needs to be updated and this will take some time. Sinead Harkin stated that an accurate traffic model is vital to the review of the Letterkenny & Environs Development Plan.

The Committee asked that priority be given to this project and that the County Manager be requested to contact the NRDO on this project is prioritised and to ensure appropriate resources are given to this very important project.

27.05

N13 Dual Carriageway Pavement Strengthening Contract

In a report circulated at the meeting Karen Hartin, NRDO, stated that this scheme involves the design and overlay construction of approximately 4.1 Km of N.P.R. (East Bound) from the Dry Arch to Pluck. The scheme will also involve the provision of accommodation works, erection of fencing and safety barriers as well as signing and lining of the new road surfaces. Surveying for design and structural analysis of the existing pavement is now complete. Contract drawings and documentation in relation to the project are currently being prepared with a view to seeking NRA approval to proceed to tender for construction of the project by July 2007.

27.06

N14 Four Lane Road

In a report circulated at the meeting, Karen Hartin, NRDO gave an update on the N14 Four Lane Road. The Feasibility Study recommended the construction of a kerbed median in conjunction with a reduction in the speed limit from 100 K.P.H. to 80 K.P.H. The N.R.A. have allocated a budget of €650,000 for this scheme in 2007.

The public consultation element of the speed limit reduction process remains to be completed. The N.R.D.O. will be recommencing the public consultation part of the speed limit reduction process for completion before the scheme opens.

The Consultants have been requested to prepare detailed design and tender documentation for this project to include both construction of the median and the re-surfacing of the existing road pavement.

Ms. Hartin gave an estimated programme for to have the work completed by November 2007 subject to the approval of the final design by NRA.

27.07

Lifford Tidy Towns

Cllr. Tony McDaid congratulated the Roads Department on the work carried out on Lifford Roundabout. Pat Gillespie stated that Stephen Lambert was completing a design and it is hoped to have works at the location complete in August/September.

27.08

Local Improvement Schemes Programme & Clar Roads Scheme

The Committee agreed to hold a Roads Workshop on Monday 21st May at 9.00 a.m. to discuss the Local Improvement Schemes for 2007 and the Clar Roads Schemes.

27.09

Leck Road Scheme and Programme of Works for 2007

The Committee agreed to hold a Roads Workshop on Wednesday, 30th May at 9.00 a.m. to discuss the Leck Road Scheme and the Programme of Works for 2007.

27.10 **Lisnennan Road/Junction**

Cllr. Dessie Larkin asked that the Lisnennan Road and the junction to private houses be examined and road surface works be progressed.

27.11 **Ballyraine Road, Letterkenny**

Cllr. Dessie Larkin stated that the residents of the Ballyraine Road were promised double yellow lines on the left side of the road leaving Letterkenny and asked for confirmation on when this would be done.

LEC 28/07 **HOUSING & SOCIAL SERVICES**

28.01 **Affordable Housing, Letterkenny**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the meeting, reported that arrangements are being finalised for the procurement of a number of Affordable Units in Letterkenny, under the Part V Mechanism. At this stage it is expected that the houses will initially be offered for sale in the region of €130,000 to €140,000.

28.02 **Affordable Housing, Manorcunningham**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the meeting, reported that the Affordable Units in Manorcunningham are at an advanced state and will be ready later this year. The final sale price is yet to be determined and an update will be presented at the next Electoral Area Meeting.

28.03 **Remedial Works/Regeneration Programme 2006**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, reported that works are complete at Fr. Arnold Terrace, Manorcunningham.

Cllr. Tony McDaid asked that the area at the rear of the Terrace be examined and remedial works carried out. Tommy McNulty advised that there are difficulties with doing this, including the fact that there is a severe incline and tarmacing would cause flooding problems.

28.04 **Remedial Works/Regeneration Programme 2007**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, reported that an application had been submitted to the Department for the 2007 Programme. Mr. Lafferty agreed to update the Members as soon as the Departments decision is received.

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

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that works were ongoing and 30 units out of 44 have been completed. Mr. Lafferty acknowledged that these works are progressing slowly but commitment has been given by the Contractor that works will be completed as soon as possible.

28.06 **Central Heating Programme 2007**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, informed the meeting that tenders have been sought and the closing date for receipt of tenders in the 18th May. The houses selected are as follows:

- Meadowhill Estate, Raphoe
- Ard Baithin, St Johnston
- A number of S.I. dwellings

28.07 **Peace Programme 2006**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, informed the meeting that landscaping work at Glendale Drive, Letterkenny has recommenced and works at Ard na Rí, Letterkenny will commence shortly.

28.08 **Voluntary Housing**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, informed the meeting that approval had recently be obtained in the sum of €139,908 for the purchase of 3 apartments in Letterkenny for the North West Simon Community.

Various other projects are at various stages of construction as follows:

Lifford – Habinteg Housing Association 53 units

Letterkenny – North & West Housing Association 25 units

Letterkenny – Cheshire Ireland 6 units.

28.09 **Social Housing Scheme at St Johnston**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, requested approval to name the new scheme at St. Johnston as ‘Cois Abhainn’. The Members agreed this. He stated that tenders are currently be assessed it is expected that work will commence next month.

28.10 **Other Social Housing Scheme in Progress**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, informed the meeting that the following Social Housing Schemes are under construction:

Carnamuggagh, Letterkenny - 32 units – estimated completion date June/July

Abbey Park, Manorcunningham -29 units – estimated completion date August/September

28.11 **Grant Report**

The Committee considered the Grant Report at 1st May, 2007 that was circulated with the Agenda.

28.12 **Loan Report**

The Committee considered the Loan Report at 01st May, 2007 that was circulated with the Agenda.

28.13 **Casual Vacancy Report**

The Committee considered the Casual Vacancy Report at 01st May, 2007 that was circulated with the Agenda.

LEC 29/07 **DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee on Monday 23rd July, 2007, commencing at **9.30 am** in the Letterkenny Public Services Centre.

Appendix 1

WATER & ENVIRONMENT SERVICES Report to Letterkenny EAC Meeting 17th May 2007

1.0 Consideration of minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee meeting held on 5th March 2007

2.0 **Update reports from previous meeting:**
From minutes of previous meeting, using same notation:

14.01 **Lough Greenan:**

James Kelly, Resident Engineer will attend the meeting. The civil works are well under way and are expected to be operational by end of September.

14.02 **Lagan WS Ph 3:**

Our Capital Design office advises me that Contract preliminaries are being gone through at present. Construction can begin once the contractors insurances, bond, pension scheme are in place and a contract signed.

14.03 **Letterkenny WS: (interrupted supply)** - the problems noted arose from difficulties in meeting demand in recent times. Some relief has been brought to these matters over the last week, from a combination of positive results from water conservation work, together with emergency civil works at Lough Salt.

14.04 **NDMP Metering Project:**

Supplementary queries raised have been addressed as follows by the Hugh Gallagher, Resident Engineer on the Non Domestic Metering Project:

Business Addresses: Our contractor Laing-O'Rourke survey information is determined from sources such as the Geo-directory and Donegal County Council held data. The business address is confirmed with the customer and then logged in the survey, which will be subsequently used for billing purposes.

The project has received no instructions to suggest situations where businesses are exempt.

Allowance for Disabled People - Every domestic property (a dwelling house) receives a domestic allowance of 49,500 gallons of free water regardless if a business operates from that premises. There is no specific allowance for disabled people.

Charity Shops - All shops are regarded as non-domestic customer and will be metered accordingly.

Schools - Schools are classified as being non-domestic and so will be

metered.

Multiple Connections - All connections are metered and bills will be issued to the non-domestic customers based on the amount of water that is supplied.

Recent debate on possible concessions to farmers for existing multiple connections has not been confirmed.

14.09

St. Johnston Sewerage Scheme: John McElwaine, Capital Design has confirmed that the trunk sewer contract is to start in 2007. Treatment works to start in 2007 or 2008 following completion of land purchase.

3.0 & 4.0 Progress Reports:

Updated progress reports circulated with agenda, including:

Rural Water Programme:

Group Scheme Programme

Small Capital Programmes

C.McLaughlin, Senior Executive Engineer,
Area Manager, Water & Environment Service,
17th May 2007