

**MINUTES OF MILFORD ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE MILFORD PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE ON 16th MAY 2005**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr Ian McGarvey, Chairman
Cllr Liam Blaney
Cllr Noel McBride

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Brendan McFadden, Area Manager, Roads & Transportation
Mr John Gallagher, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services
Mr Paul McGill, Area Manager, Housing
Ms Virginia McLoone, Area Manager, Corporate Services
Mr Charles Sweeney, Community Enterprise, Development Officer
Mr Gerry Keeney, Executive Engineer, Water, Environment & Emergency Services
Ms Caitrin McDaid, Executive Planner, Planning
Mr Eamon Boyle, Assistant Engineer, Housing
Ms Mairead Shields, Staff Officer, Corporate Services

Apologies were received from Eunan, Quinn, Area Manager, Planning for his inability to attend today's meeting.

Councillors McGarvey and McBride offered sincere condolences to the Blaney family on their recent bereavement.

Councillor McGarvey, Chairman, on behalf of the Committee expressed sincere regret at the untimely death of Gaye Moynihan, Senior Executive Planner with Donegal County Council who had made a huge contribution to the development of the County over the past 30 years.

**MEC17/05 CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF MILFORD ELECTORAL
AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MARCH 14th 2005**

On the proposal of Councillor McBride, seconded by Councillor Blaney, the Minutes of the Milford Electoral Area Committee held on 14th March 2005 were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Members expressed concern at the disposal of land at Tirhomin Milford that was agreed at the last meeting of the Committee held on 14th March 2005 had still not progressed to the full Council Agenda.

As a separate issue Members queried the law on disposal of land.

MEC18/05 RECEPTION OF DEPUTATION FROM DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND – LETTERKENNY BRANCH

The Chairman welcomed Ms Kathleen Deeney and Ms Ann Boyce, Dyslexia Association of Ireland, Letterekenny Branch who presented a deputation to the meeting.

Ms Kathleen Deeney addressed the Meeting outlining the background to the formation of the Group together with its aims and objectives. She also highlighted the financial difficulties being experienced and the lack of support from Central Government. Ms Deeney thanked the Members for their support locally.

The Members complimented the Deputation on their work thusfar and offered their continued support to the Association. Councillor Blaney thanked the County Manager for allocating €20,000 from the Development Fund to the Dyslexia Association Of Ireland. Councillor McGarvey, Chairman thanked the Deputation for their address. The Deputation then withdrew from the Meeting.

MEC19/05 ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

19.1 Report and recommendation of Safety Measures at Lough Salt

The Members considered the report on Safety Measures at Lough Salt and the recommendation contained therein that circulated with the Agenda to include options available and budget costings.

Members expressed dissatisfaction at the recommendation contained in the report in addressing the safety measures at Lough Salt and at the road not being a priority for DOE funding. The Committee urged that a barrier be erected around the Lough without further delay.

Brendan McFadden, Area Manager, Roads and Transportation advised the meeting that he will relay the Members concerns to the Department of The Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

19.2 DOE Approved Improvement Schemes

The Committee considered the report on the DOE Approved Improvement Schemes and noted the total distribution of funds in the sum of €397,360 with the Milford Electoral Area receiving a total allocation of €70,360.

The Members also noted that the criteria set down by the Department includes that this allocation has to be expended on one stand alone project and not used as a 'top up' on an existing allocation.

Brendan McFadden, Area Manager, Roads and Transportation sought Members views in determining a road within the Milford Electoral Area for the allocation of €70,360.

In a response to a query regarding the safety issues at Lough Salt, Members recommended that the funding allocation of €70,360 be expended on this road.

Brendan McFadden Area Manager advised the meeting that he will check with the Department of The Environment, Heritage and Local Government to clarify that this road will meet the criteria for the funding and revert to the Members on the matter.

The Members unanimously agreed that the funding be expended on the Lough Salt Road subject to DOE Approval and in the event this road is not suitable for the funding that the monies be expended on the Kilmacrennan – Ramelton junction.

19.3 Guidelines for the Application of Special Speed Limits

The Members noted the guidelines for the application of Special Speed Limits that were previously circulated to them together with circular letter RST 1/05 that circulated with the Agenda.

Brendan McFadden, Area Manager advised the meeting that the guidelines will be kept under review.

19.4 N56 Mountain Top Project

The Members considered the progress report on the N56 Mountain Top Project that was circulated at the meeting.

Members expressed extreme dissatisfaction at there not being a staff member from the National Roads Design Office present at today's meeting to brief the Committee on the N56 Mountain Top Project as was agreed.

Members also expressed dissatisfaction at there not being a breakdown of figures on land purchase available at today's meeting as was requested at the last Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

Mr Brendan McFadden, Area Manager advised the meeting that he will request the figures from the National Roads Design Office and request Mr Liam Edwards to attend the next Electoral Area Committee Meeting on 18 July 2005.

Brendan McFadden, Area Manager also agreed to follow-up on the recommendation from Councillor Liam Blaney regarding a by-pass in the village of Kilmacrennan with the National Roads Authority via the National Roads Design Office.

19.5 Unauthorized Sign Removal

The Committee considered the report on the unauthorised sign removal that circulated with the Agenda.

Members noted the decision regarding unauthorised signage for Bed & Breakfasts to be left until 31 August 2005 and urged that the policy be reviewed by the Strategic Policy Committee as a matter of urgency as there was confusion among the public.

Brendan McFadden, Area Manager advised the meeting that he will relay the Committee's concerns to the Strategic Policy Committee.

Leitir-Kilmacrennan Junction – N56

Members expressed concern at the safety issues surrounding the Leitir – Kilmacrennan Junction on the N56.

Having regard to safety issues the Committee recommended that adjoining lands currently in the ownership of Coillte be acquired and a new junction layout be put in place.

Members also requested that a review of the speed limit signs on the approach road from Letterkenny into Kilmacrennan be reviewed as a matter of urgency having regard to safety issues in the area.

MEC20/05 HOUSING AND BUILDING

The Members welcomed Eamon Boyle, Assistant Engineer for the Housing Service in the Milford Electoral Area to the meeting and wished Kevin McGarvey well in his new assignment with the Water Services.

20.1 Progress Report – Housing Capital Programme

The Members noted the progress report on the Housing Capital Programme that circulated with the Agenda.

In response to a query, Paul McGill, Area Manager advised the meeting that it is anticipated that 8 number houses in Kilmacrennan and 10 number houses in Tamney will be let by the end of June.

Paul McGill, Area Manager advised the meeting that 1500 starts for the County have been approved for the Housing Capital programme 2004 – 2008 and will consist of Turnkey and existing Landbank Scheme Developments.

In response to a further query, Paul McGill, Area Manager advised the meeting that Housing Assistance forms recently forwarded to housing applicants are still being accepted by the Housing service and stressed the importance of these forms being returned by applicants. He invited members of the public to visit the Public Services Centre to get assistance to complete the forms in question either through staff in the Housing Service or through the Citizen's Information Centre.

S.I. Houses

Councillor Blaney expressed concern at the current timeframe for the provision of S.I. houses and urged that the procedures in place be reviewed with a view to achieving shorter lead-in times for such type houses.

Mr Paul McGill, Area Manager agreed to review procedures involved and revert to Members on the matter.

Housing Scheme – Milford

In response to a query, Paul McGill advised the meeting that 12 number houses in Milford will be let after the Kilmacrennan and Tamney schemes.

20.2 Progress Report – Social Housing

The Committee noted the report on Social Housing that circulated with the Agenda.

Housing Grants

Paul McGill, Area Manager, advised the meeting that approval had now been received for applying increases to the maximum grant levels in respect of Disabled Persons and Essential Repair Grants and this information was welcomed by the Members.

20.3 Casual Vacancies

The Committee considered the Casual Vacancy report that circulated with the Agenda.

In response to a query, Paul McGill, Area Manager advised the meeting that the casual vacancy at 172 Church Road, Carrigart still requires substantial upgrading works and will not therefore be let in the near future.

MEC21/05 COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE

21.1 Report on Community, Culture & Enterprise

Charles Sweeney, Community, Enterprise and Development Officer presented the progress reports on:

- Community Consultation
- Funding Update
- Inter-organisational development
- “An Straiteis” – County Strategy
- Research & Policy

Provision of Playground Facilities

Members noted that four applications from the Milford Electoral Area had been received from the Community and Voluntary Sector in respect of the provision of playground facilities with one application being withdrawn.

On the proposal of Councillor Liam Blaney, seconded by Councillor Noel McBride, the allocation of monies from the Peace II Fund for the provision of playground facilities in the Milford Electoral Area for 2005 was agreed for the application received from IRD Milford Ltd.

Councillor McGarvey recorded his dissatisfaction with the decision of the Committee as he believed that Ramelton should receive the funding this year for the playground facilities as it was in his opinion the most disadvantaged town in the Milford Electoral Area with the least facilities.

Youth Council

It was unanimously agreed that the Milford Electoral Area Youth Council Committee will attend future meetings of the Milford Electoral Area Committee either in an observation capacity or will present to the meeting under the Community & Enterprise Agenda.

The Members welcomed the news of the provision of newer buses being in place early next term improving the transport system for school going children and congratulated the Youth Council and Ms Ann McGeever, Youth Council co-ordinator on their work in this area.

Milford Youth Project

In response to a query, Charles Sweeney, Community, Enterprise & Development Officer advised the meeting that he had met with the Milford Youth Project Group and that they were now considering funding options available to them.

Rathmullan 2007

Charles Sweeney, Community, Enterprise and Development Officer advised the meeting that an internal working group has been set-up within the Community and Enterprise Directorate whose role is to devise and develop a programme of works to facilitate the 400th Anniversary of Flight of the Earls.

Members urged that plans surrounding the commemoration be finalised by year-end for implementation by 2007 and they requested a progress report on preparations for commemorating the 400th Anniversary of Flight of the Earls be made available to them at the next meeting.

MEC22/05 WATER, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES

22.1 Work Progress Charts

John Gallagher, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services presented reports on:

- (a) Large Capital Scheme
- (b) Small Capital Scheme
- (c) Group Schemes

Fanad Water Supply – Phase 1

In response to a query regarding a completion date for phase 1 of the Fanad Water Supply scheme and penalties for non compliance with completion date, John Gallagher, Area Manager advised the meeting that he will revert to the Members with this information.

Rathmullan Sewerage Scheme

Members expressed concern at the Council being in a position to start works on this Scheme in 2006 having regard to procedures involved. John Gallagher, Area Manager advised the meeting that he would relay the Members concerns to the Capital Sanitary Design team at Headquarters.

John Gallagher, Area Manager also advised the meeting that arrangements will be put in place for staff of the sanitary design team at headquarters to attend some of the Milford Electoral Area Committee Meetings each year to brief and update Members on progress on various capital schemes.

Members urged that works on the scheme commence and advance as expeditiously as possible having regard to the forthcoming commemoration of the Flight of the Earls.

Glenalla Group Water Supply Scheme

Members considered the report on the Glenalla Group Water Supply Scheme that was circulated at the meeting.

Members expressed concern at the exorbitant costs some group scheme members incur when connecting to a water supply by means of a Group Scheme.

Members recommended that further financial assistance is required from the DoEHLG to address this issue.

Members requested that the criteria outlining the grant assistance available under the Clar Programme be forwarded to them at the next Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

22.2 Three Year Capital Replacement Programme

The Members considered the report on the current Three Year Capital Replacement Programme that circulated with the Agenda.

The Committee agreed to consider the next Three Year Capital Replacement Programme at a future Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

22.3 Civic Amenity Site in Milford

The Members noted that a formal submission has been made to the Department of the Environment for funding for a Civic Amenity Site in Milford.

In a response to a query John Gallagher, Area Manager advised the meeting that no word to date has been received from the Department of The Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

22.4 Meenabol Lanfill

The Committee noted the report on the proposed Meenabol Landfill site that circulated with the Agenda.

The Members expressed their dissatisfaction at Mr Casey's non attendance at today's meeting and requested that he attend the next Electoral Area Committee Meeting on 18th July 2005.

22.5 Kerbside Recycling

The Members considered the report on Kerbside Recycling that circulated with the Agenda.

Members expressed their disappointment at the Bring Bank facility in Letterkenny closing down at the end of May emphasising the need for continual promotional campaigns in relation to home composting and recycling.

MEC23/05 CORPORATE SERVICES

The Members noted the activity report for January – March 2005 that circulated with the Agenda for their information.

The Members requested that comparative figures for the same period in 2004 be made available to them for their information.

In a response to a query, Virginia McLoone, Area Manager advised the meeting that demand for services had levelled off now with the opening of the Letterkenny office being the main contributing factor.

MEC24/05 PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Caitrin McDaid, Executive Planner offered apologies for Eunan Quinn's inability to attend today's meeting.

24.1 Planning Statistics

The Committee noted the report on the Planning Statistics that circulated with the Agenda.

24.2 Consideration of Recent Refusals

Members considered and noted the report on recent refusals of Planning Applications that circulated with the Agenda.

Having regard to the level of Planning Applications being processed in the Milford Office, the Members requested that adequate staffing be provided to deal with workloads.

Environmental Improvement Works – Rathmullan

Having regard to the Environmental Improvement Works in Rathmullan, Members requested that Mr Francis Coyle, Director of Services, Planning & Economic Development be invited to attend the next Electoral Area Committee Meeting on Monday 18th July 2005.

MEC25/05 AOB – Correspondence

Members considered the correspondence received from Rathmullan 21 that circulated with the Agenda.

The Committee unanimously agreed to receive a Deputation from Rathmullan 21 at the next Milford Electoral Area Committee Meeting on 18 July 2005.

Workshop

Members unanimously agreed to attend a workshop on 25th May at 9.30 am in the Milford Public Services Centre to discuss major capital projects to include Rathmullan with staff from Roads, Water & Environment, Sanitary Design, Donal Casey, Senior Executive Chemist, planning and economic development and a representative from Marine Services to be invited to attend.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members agreed that the next meeting of the Milford Electoral Area Committee will take place on Monday, 18th July commencing at 10.00 am in accordance with the adopted schedule of Electoral Area Meetings for 2005.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

