

**Minutes of Donegal Electoral Area Committee Meeting
held on
Wednesday 8th February 2006 at 2.00 p.m.
In the Peter Kennedy Chamber, Donegal Town PSC**

Members Present

Cllr John Boyle
Cllr Brendan Byrne
Cllr Jonathon Kennedy
Cllr Thomas Pringle
Cllr Tiernan Brady
Cllr Barry O'Neill

Officials in Attendance

Gerry Gilroy, Area Manager, Corporate Services
Enda Monaghan, Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services
Mary Hannigan, Area Manager, Housing & Building
John McCarron, Executive Engineer, Housing & Building
Peadar Thomas, Area Manager, Roads & Transportation
Barney McLaughlin, Community & Enterprise Development Officer
Denis Kelly, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development
Michael Breslin, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services.
Brian Boyle, Head of Information Systems
Stephen Flynn, Executive Engineer, Information Systems
Fergus Towey, Resident Engineer, Ballyshannon Bypass
Eamonn McGill, SIAC/WILLS

Apologies

Cllr Sean McEniff
Cllr Billy Grimes

DEAC	01.00	Corporate Services
-------------	--------------	---------------------------

DEAC	01.01	Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 14 th December 2005
------	-------	--

Cllr Byrne apologised for the deferral of the meeting from Monday the 6th February 2006 to the 8th February 2006 advising that it was necessary to facilitate Members attendance at the Special Council meeting on Monday to consider the Draft County Development Plan.

Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 14th December 2005.

On the proposal of Cllr Boyle, seconded by Cllr Brady the minutes of the meeting of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee held on the 14th December 2005 were adopted.

It was further agreed that matters arising would be dealt with under the various service headings.

DEAC	01.02	Activity levels in Donegal PSC
------	-------	--------------------------------

Activity levels in Donegal PSC

Members noted the report on activity levels for 2005 in the Donegal PSC circulated with the Agenda and presented by Mr. G Gilroy.

DEAC	01.03	Submissions from Members
------	-------	--------------------------

Submission from Members

Members noted three submissions circulated with the Agenda and submitted by Cllr McEniff, which were dealt with as follows:

- A) *that the Co. Council's Financial Allocation to the street cleaning of Bundoran be discussed* – Mr. P Thomas, Area Manager, Roads & Transportation informed Members that he

had not been advised fully of this years allocation. Cllr Brady requested that this item be adjourned to the next meeting of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee. This was agreed by Members.

- B) *That Roguey Walk be included in the Co. Councils Coastal Erosion Plan* – Mr. P Thomas undertook to convey this matter to Mr. Vincent Lynn, Senior Engineer, Marine Section with a recommendation that same be included in the Coastal Erosion Plan.
- C) *Bundoran Town Council call on Donegal County Council to appoint Consultants re the Coastal Erosion at West End Bundoran* – Mr. P Thomas undertook to convey this matter to Mr. Vincent Lynn, Senior Engineer, Marine Section with a recommendation that it be given due consideration/attention.

DEAC	01.04	Donegal Town/Ballyshannon Twinning Association
------	-------	--

Donegal Town/Ballyshannon Twinning Association

Members noted the correspondence from Donegal Town/Ballyshannon Twinning Association requesting that the Council host a small reception during a visit of visitors and officials from Sene in Brittany and also that the Twinning Charter be hung in the public area of the Donegal PSC. Mr. G Gilroy, Area Manager, Corporate Services informed Members that he was still waiting on confirmation of the date of the requested reception. On the proposal of Cllr Brady, seconded by Cllr Boyle, Members confirmed their agreement to the requests from the Twinning Association.

DEAC	01.05	Schedule of meetings
------	-------	----------------------

Schedule of Meetings for 2006

Members noted the agreed schedule of meeting for 2006 and confirmed that the next meeting will take place on the 13th March 2006.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Donegal Electoral Area Committee</u>
March	Monday 13 th March
April	
May	Monday 22 nd May
June	
July	Monday 24 th July
August	
September	Monday 11 th September
October	
November	Monday 13 th November
December	

DEAC	01.06	Votes of Sympathy
------	-------	-------------------

Votes of Sympathy

Votes of Sympathy were unanimously passed in respect of the following recent bereavements:

Mrs. Iris Elvin, mother of Ms. Jennifer McClay, Corporate Services, Donegal Town.

Mr. Jack McMullin, father of Mrs. Marian Doherty, Revenue Collector and father-in-law of Mr. Michael Doherty, Revenue Collector and Mr. Brian Boyle, Head of Information Systems.

Mrs. Madge O'Donnell, grandmother of Ms. Edel O'Donnell, Corporate Services, Donegal Town.

Mrs. Ellen Grimes, mother of Cllr Billy Grimes, Ballyshannon Town Council.

DEAC	02.00	Metropolitan Area Network Phase II: Status as at January 2006
-------------	--------------	--

DEAC	02.01	Metropolitan Area Network Phase II: Status as at January 2006
------	-------	--

Mr. Brian Boyle, Head of Information Systems introduced Members to Mr. Stephen Flynn, Executive Engineer who had recently joined the Information Systems Department to work on the Broadband Project in Co. Donegal. He gave a detailed presentation on the background of the project detailing the scale and current status of same. The towns in the Donegal Electoral Area where Broadband is being provided are Donegal Town, Ballyshannon and Bundoran. He advised Members that the exact route for network cabling in these towns is still under discussion with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and negotiations were ongoing. Co. Location Centres, similar to a small telephone exchange would have to be located in each of the Towns and this will be done in a manner that will be as visually attractive as possible. These have to be located on publicly owned land as part of the criteria set down by the DoEHLG and Part 8 planning process will apply to same. Tendering for the project has already commenced and it is hoped work will commence mid May with an anticipated completion date of December 2006. Commissioning of the Broadband service should be completed early in 2007. Traffic Management is an issue that will arise during the construction phase but efforts will be made to minimise inconvenience as far as possible.

Mr. Boyle also informed Members that communications with all interested parties will be ongoing during the works which will include publications on the Council's Website, Public Notices, and Part 8 Planning Process.

A number of queries/comments were dealt with as follows:

Members welcomed the coming of Broadband to the various towns and in particular the potential economic benefits it will have for the area.

In response to a query from Cllr Brady regarding the route in Bundoran, Mr. Boyle informed Members that there was a limited amount of money available to the Department for this project and that the Council was negotiation to maximise the project as far as possible. He confirmed that the comments of the Town Council had been taken on board.

Cllr Brady suggested a saving could be achieved if the Roads, Water and Information Systems Services co-ordinated their work programmes in order to maximise the value of the monies included in the project for the reinstatement of roads, this money could be used to extend the project. Mr. P Thomas, Area Manager, Roads informed Members that the work programmes would be co-ordinated and that a complete overlay on the roads would be required and not just a reinstatement of the trenches.

Cllr O'Neill expressed disappointment that the area of the Donegal Road and Mall Area, Ballyshannon, are not included in the scheme. Mr. B Boyle informed Members that where land isn't zoned for development, the Department would not agree to provide Broadband. He added that there would be no difficulty in extending the scheme further at a later date. Cllr O'Neill asked that the Department be formally asked for their approval for the Ballyshannon Sewerage scheme to go ahead and that this might present an opportunity to extend the Broadband when these works are being carried out.

Cllr Kennedy asked that the Council be sensitive to the needs of Donegal Town when carrying out these works during the summer in particular tourism. Mr. B Boyle confirmed to Members that the Council would be sensitive to the needs of all of the towns concerned when carrying out these works.

Mr. M Breslin, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services asked that his Service be included in any meetings in relation to the project in order to liase in relation to existing networks etc. and Mr. Boyle confirmed that would be included.

Mr. P Thomas advised Members that the only suitable location for the Co-Location Centre was behind the Bus Station in Ballyshannon and Members confirmed their agreement to same.

In relation to a query from Cllr O'Neill regarding the finalising of the routes for the broadband and the possibility of a further meeting to

discuss same, Mr. Boyle confirmed to Members that it will be the DoEHLG who will decide the final routes.

Before concluding Cllr Byrne congratulated Mr. Boyle on the recent award to Donegal County Council in the 'Government to Citizen' category of the Governments 'Innovation through Technology Awards' Scheme for the e-Planning Online facility.

DEAC	03.00	Water, Environment & Emergency
-------------	--------------	---

DEAC	03.01	Group Water Schemes
------	-------	---------------------

Group Water Schemes

Members noted the Progress Report on Group Water Schemes circulated with the Agenda and presented by Mr. M Breslin, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services.

Mr. Breslin informed Members that work had commenced on the Aughahoo/Aghafoy Group Water Scheme. He also informed Members that progress was good in relation to the Owenteskna Scheme but a lot of negotiations are required on the ground in order to finalise proposals.

Drumbar Group Water Supply Scheme.

In response to a query from Cllr Boyle as to what the up to date position was in relation to the Drumbar Group Water Supply Scheme, Mr. M Breslin informed Members that it was up to the promoter at this point to 'drive' the scheme.

Drumlatafin GWS

In response to a query from Cllr Boyle as to what was the up to date position in relation to final costs on the Drumlatafin GWS, Mr. M Breslin informed Members the final costs were still awaited on this scheme.

Aughahoo/Aghafoy

In response to a query from Cllr O'Neill on progress on the Aughahoo/Aghafoy GWS, Mr. M. Breslin informed Members that the scheme was progressing well.

DEAC	03.02	South West Donegal Water Supply
------	-------	---------------------------------

South West Donegal Water Supply

Members noted as per report circulated with the Agenda that the direct labour contract is underway and progressing well on the South West Donegal Water Supply.

DEAC	03.03	Major Capital Programme
------	-------	-------------------------

Major Capital Programme

Members noted the update report circulated with the Agenda on the Major Capital Programme and presented by Mr. M Breslin. Mr. Breslin informed Members that a contractor has been appointed for the Laghey Scheme and it is hoped works will commence in the coming months.

Killybegs Sewerage Scheme

Members also noted the report circulated with the Agenda on the Killybegs Sewerage Scheme and presented by Mr. M Breslin. Members noted that the go ahead is still awaited from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

DEAC	03.04	Restoration Programme
------	-------	-----------------------

Restoration Programme

Members noted the progress report on the Restoration Programme circulated with the agenda and presented by Mr. M Breslin.

DEAC	03.05	Other Water & Environment Matters
------	-------	-----------------------------------

Road to Landfill (“Bog Road”)

In response to a query from Cllr O'Neill for a progress update on restoration works to be carried out on the ‘bog road’ at

Ballinacarrick, Mr. Breslin informed Members that a price to upgrade the road had been obtained. He also advised that discussions have to take place with one landowner and undertook to revert to Members with a start date for the works.

Fire Stations – Ballyshannon/Bundoran.

Cllr O Neill expressed concern that no works had been carried out in relation to the refurbishment of both the Ballyshannon and Bundoran Fire Stations. He referred to the unanimous view of the members of the Donegal Electoral Area to reject proposals to build one station at Finner to serve both towns and questioned what steps had been taken since then to progress the refurbishment of both stations as decided by the full Council. He questioned had this decision been forwarded to the Department. He also referred to the necessity for the purchase of additional equipment for the stations e.g. longer extension ladders and that there should have been provision in the Budget for 2006 for these works in Ballyshannon and Bundoran.

Cllr Brady also referred to the previous decision of the Bundoran and Ballyshannon Town Councils to reject the proposal of providing a single fire station located at Finner to service both Ballyshannon and Bundoran. He confirmed the decision of the County Council at that time was to seek funding for the renovation of the two stations i.e. one in Ballyshannon and one in Bundoran and felt that an attempt was being made to revive the proposal for one Station.

Following a short discussion on the proposal of Cllr O'Neill, seconded by Cllr Boyle, Members requested that an early meeting be arranged with the Director of Water Environment and Emergency Services, and the Chief Fire Officer.

Mr. M Breslin, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services undertook to convey the request to both the Director and the Chief Fire Officer.

Sewerage Leak in Donegal Town.

In response to concerns raised by Cllr Kennedy in relation to a sewerage leak from manholes adjacent to the Snooker Club in Donegal Town, Mr. M Breslin informed Members that he would have the issue addressed as a matter of urgency and revert to Members in the matter.

Teelin Water Main

In response to a query from Cllr Byrne for a start date for the works on the Teelin Water Main, Mr. M Breslin undertook to revert to Members in the matter at an early date.

Proposed Fish Factory at Killybegs

Cllr Pringle referred to the previous meeting of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee where a query had been raised in relation to the availability of water supply for the proposed new fish factory at Killybegs and asked if there was any update. Mr. M Breslin informed Members that the question of the general availability of additional water supplies in the area was still being looked into and that he would keep Members informed of progress.

Bring Centre, Killybegs

In response to a query from Cllr Pringle in relation to the provision of signs at the Bring Centre, Killybegs, Mr. M Breslin informed Members that the signs had been ordered and hoped that they would be erected shortly.

Mr. M Breslin referred to the intention to remove the paper and plastic recycling bins to another location and sought the views of Members in relation to same. Members expressed their opposition to their removal, at least in the short term. Members proposed no change takes place until a review of how the collectors are working out with the second bin for recycling. Members also referred to the large proportion of the area which does not have a refuse collection.

It was agreed that no change would take place without reverting to the Members at a future Donegal Electoral Area Committee meeting.

DEAC	04.00	Community, Culture & Enterprise
-------------	--------------	--

DEAC	04.01	Report on Community & Enterprise Services
------	-------	---

Community Consultation

Members noted the update report on Community Consultation circulated with the Agenda as presented by Mr. Barney McLaughlin, Community & Enterprise Development Officer.

County Strategy

Members noted the progress report on the County Strategy circulated with the Agenda as presented by Mr. B McLaughlin.

Local Area Teams

Members noted the progress report on Local Area Teams circulated with the Agenda and presented by Mr. B McLaughlin.

Mr. B McLaughlin informed Members that it was hoped that later this month, work on baseline information would be commenced in relation to Ballyshannon.

Tourism Development

North West Cycle Route

Members noted the report circulated with the Agenda in relation to the proposed North West Cycle Route and presented by Mr. B McLaughlin. Members noted that the sum of €8000.00 was being sought from the Donegal Electoral Area Tourism Development Fund as a contribution towards the development of the North West Cycle Route.

A number of queries were dealt with as follows.

In response to a query from Cllr Pringle, Mr. B McLaughlin informed Members that signage would be erected as part of the project. He also informed Members that it is not possible to include off road routes at this stage.

In response to a query from Cllr Boyle, Mr. B McLaughlin informed Members that this would be a permanent cycle route.

In response to a query from Cllr Kennedy regarding a timescale for the project, Mr. B McLaughlin informed Members that once the funding is approved the project will rollout out this year.

In response to a query from Cllr O'Neill, Mr. B McLaughlin confirmed that the total amount of funding required from the Council for the cycling route is €27,900.00.

On the proposal of Cllr Pringle, seconded by Cllr Kennedy this contribution was agreed.

Blue Stack Way Pilot Project

Members noted that the application on behalf of Donegal Walking Forum was successful and that planning is now underway to establish an appropriate management structure as per the report circulated with the Agenda. Mr. B McLaughlin informed Members that Mr. Jeremy Smith has been employed in the post of Walking Trials Officer and that he would attend a future meeting of the Area Committee to inform Members of what this role involves.

In response to a suggestion from Cllr Boyle that the old railway line from Donegal to Killybegs would make a suitable trail for walking if developed, Mr. B McLaughlin confirmed that he would bring the suggestion to the attention of Mr. Smith with a request that he revert to Members at a later date with his views on same.

DEAC	04.02	Care & Conservation of Historic Graveyards Seminars
------	-------	---

Care & Conservation of Historic Graveyards Seminars

Members noted the report on Care & Conservation of Historic Graveyards Seminars prepared by Mr. Joseph Gallagher, Heritage Officer, circulated with the Agenda and presented by Mr. B McLaughlin.

DEAC	04.03	Members Development Fund
------	-------	--------------------------

Members Development Fund

Members noted the report on the Members Development Fund Allocations for the Donegal Electoral Area for the year 2005 as circulated with the Agenda.

DEAC	05.00	Housing & Building
-------------	--------------	-------------------------------

Cllr Byrne on behalf on all of the Members, congratulated Ms. Mary Hannigan, Area Manager, Housing & Building on her recent marriage, to Mr. Paul Kilcoyne, Senior Engineer, Water Services Capital Section.

DEAC	05.01	Progress Report – Housing Capital Programme
------	-------	---

Progress Report – Housing Capital Programme

Members noted the progress report on the Housing Capital Programme as at 31st January 2006 circulated with the Agenda and presented by Ms. M Hannigan.

Houses, Donegal Town.

In response to a query from Cllr Kennedy as to when the houses in Donegal Town would be completed, Ms. M Hannigan informed Members that they would be completed shortly and anticipated that offers would be made for letting the houses in March or April 2006.

Affordable Housing

In response to a query from Cllr Kennedy if the cost has been agreed on the affordable housing in Donegal Town yet, Ms. M Hannigan informed Members that the price had not yet been agreed but that once it was finalised members would be informed and the affordable houses would be advertised.

Housing in Ballyshannon

Cllr O'Neill thanked Ms. M Hannigan for the manner in which the houses at Ballyshannon were allocated.

Cllr O'Neill also requested that Greenfield sites are looked at in Ballyshannon stating that it was important to find sites for further housing in Ballyshannon and to progress same as a matter of urgency.

DEAC	05.02	Progress Report – S I Cottages
------	-------	--------------------------------

Progress Report on S I Cottages

Members noted the progress report on S I Cottages as at 31st January 2006 circulated with the Agenda and presented by Ms. M Hannigan.

DEAC	05.03	Progress Report – Social Housing
------	-------	----------------------------------

Progress Report – Social Housing

Members noted the progress report as at the 31st December 2005 on Loans and Grants circulated with the Agenda and presented by Ms. M Hannigan.

DEAC	05.03	Casual Vacancies
------	-------	------------------

Casual Vacancies

Members noted the casual vacancy report circulated with the Agenda and presented by Ms. M Hannigan. Ms. M Hannigan circulated an additional report detailing 6 casual vacancies, which had arisen recently and requested any recommendations Member may have for the filling of the vacancies be sent to her for consideration.

DEAC	05.03	Central Heating Programme
------	-------	---------------------------

Central Heating Programme

Ms. M Hannigan informed Members that funding had been secured in the sum of €795,200.00 for the provision of central heating programme for the County and that she was awaiting the allocation of the money to be decided by the Divisional Manager, Housing. Ms. Hannigan circulated a tentative list to Members as a recommendation to be included on the central heating programme subject to sufficient funding being available. On the proposal of Cllr Pringle, seconded by Cllr Brady, Members confirmed their agreement to the tentative priority list as circulated.

In response to a query from Cllr Pringle if the insulation of older housing stock is a separate programme, Ms. M Hannigan confirmed that it was.

In response to a request from Cllr Pringle to have 150 Church Road, Killybegs included in an insulation programme, Ms. M Hannigan undertook to look into this and to revert to the Member in the matter.

DEAC	05.04	Sheltered Housing Proposal
------	-------	----------------------------

St. Vincent de Paul – Sheltered Housing Project

Representative of St. Vincent De Paul, Donegal Town who attended the meeting to present their proposal for a sheltered housing project in Donegal Town were as follows:

Mr. Joe O'Rourke, Mr. Jim Leahy, Mr. Colm O'Rourke and Ms. Anna Meehan. Cllr Byrne welcomed the representatives of St. Vincent De Paul to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr. Joe O'Rourke made a lengthy presentation which outlined the work of the local St. V De Paul, the level of demand for sheltered housing in the Donegal area, the number of calls for assistance they receive from the elderly, and their proposals for the sheltered accommodation project in Donegal Town. This would include independent and more secure accommodation for the elderly.

Ms. Anna Meehan circulated and presented plans for the proposed scheme, which detailed the different levels of dependency, enclosed areas, amenity areas for residents, the employment of a caretaker etc.

Mr. Jim Leahy referred the experience St. V De Paul had in the Housing Sector through the provision of housing in other voluntary housing schemes.

A number of queries/comments were dealt with as follows:

In response to a query from Cllr Boyle as to what stage the negotiations were at, Ms. M Hannigan informed Members that only preliminary meetings had taken place so far as it was a matter for the Members to decide with respect to the site but that the Council would be in a position to apply for funding for the scheme.

In response to a query from Cllr Kennedy if the age group of occupants for the proposal would be over 65, Mr. Joe O'Rourke confirmed that it would be generally. He also advised that those offered accommodation would not be confined to residents of the Donegal Town Area but to those in most need. The accommodation provided would also cater for clients requiring support between leaving hospital and being able to return to their home with a high level of support and security available for the patrons.

In response to a query from Cllr Kennedy if the high density housing would be in the centre of the development, Mr. J O'Rourke informed Members there was also low density units as part of the development with some individual gardens and 2 person homes within the complex.

Cllr Pringle congratulated the St. V De Paul on their plans and queried if there community facilities would be included in the funding for such a development. Ms. Anna Meehan confirmed that some of the grant would include community facilities but that additional funding would be required. Cllr Pringle also felt that the fencing proposed in the plans might prevent or restrict contact with the wider community and prevent a mixing of different age groups. Mr. Joe O'Rourke acknowledged this and added that the proposed project could be part of the wider community in the area.

Cllr O'Neill complimented the representatives on their presentation and offered his support for the project. He welcomed the fact that the proposal would service a wider area than Donegal Town and agreed with the point that the development would need to be integrated into the wider community. In response to a query from Cllr O'Neill if people could come from hospital to live in the sheltered accommodation, Mr. J O'Rourke confirmed that some of the patients from St. Joseph's in Stranorlar could be accommodated.

Cllr Brady complimented the St. V De Paul on their presentation/proposal and acknowledged the ongoing good work the Society does referring to Ozanam House in Bundoran, and offered his best wishes.

In response to a query from Cllr Boyle, as to who would allocate the housing units, Mr. J O'Rourke informed Members that it was the St. V De Paul who would allocate the units in consultation with the County Council. Cllr Boyle complimented the representative on their proposal and suggested that it would be useful for the Members to visit the site prior to making a decision on same.

Mr. Denis Kelly, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development informed Members that if the project were agreed in principal then planning issues could be addressed e.g. social integration etc.

Cllr. Kennedy acknowledged the work of St. V De Paul and recognised that it was a good plan for the area. He suggested that St. V De Paul should give consideration to making a contribution of say 10% of the value of the land back to the community for other community based projects. Mr. Joe O'Rourke, in response to the suggestion referred to the huge financial commitment the St. V De Paul would be putting in to the project if they get the approval to go ahead.

Cllr Byrne thanked the Representatives of St. V De Paul for their contributions and indicated that the site visit proposed should be arranged shortly and the decision of the Members communicated to them shortly regarding their proposal. In relation to the layout of the proposal it was acknowledged that further consultation should take place prior to the finalising of the project.

Ms. M Hannigan undertook to arrange the site visit shortly and to revert to the St. Vincent De Paul to move the matter on thereafter.

DEAC	05.05	Other Housing Matters
------	-------	-----------------------

Halting Sites

Cllr O'Neill referred to an ongoing problem of anti-social behaviour at Ballyshannon that he believed might be alleviated if the sites at Carrickboy, Rathmore and Finner were sold back to the original owners. He stated that as long as these facilities exist that people think they are accessible.

Cllr Brady also referred to Council property being broken into with no action being taken by An Garda Siochana on this and other anti-social behaviour. He referred to the local 'Horse School' which had been broken into and the tails cut off the horses.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Neill, seconded by Cllr Brady, Members recommended that the three temporary sites at Ballyshannon, be sold back to the previous owners.

Ms. M Hannigan noted the comments of the Members advising that the Council was trying to liaise with An Garda Siochana but accepted that the solution to anti-social behaviour is difficult. She also confirmed that she would bring the recommendation to dispose of these sites back to her Director/Divisional Manager.

In response to a query from Cllr O'Neill if there was a need for further halting sites given that the indigenous travellers were all housed, Ms. Hannigan advised that she was not in a position to give a definitive answer in this matter.

Cllr Pringle stated that antisocial behaviour is unacceptable and is an issue of policing. He also stated that the Housing Acts recognise the rights of Travellers and their nomadic way of life and that the matter won't be solved until the Council provides a network of transient sites to accommodate travellers.

Cllr Kennedy referred to the temporary Halting Site at Donegal Town being untidy and unsightly and asked if the horse had been removed as previously agreed. Ms. Hannigan undertook to check out the matter and to revert to Cllr Kennedy with regard to same.

DEAC	06.00	Roads and Transportation
-------------	--------------	---------------------------------

DEAC	06.01	2006 Road Works Programme
------	-------	---------------------------

2006 Road Works Programme

Mr. P Thomas, Area Manager, Roads / Transportation informed Members that he had not yet received all the details in respect of funding for the 2006 programme but that he hoped to have a full breakdown for the next meeting. He hoped to be in contact with

the Members in advance of the next meeting of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee to arrange a workshop to agree as early as possible the 2006 programme and the Local Improvement Scheme for 2006.

DEAC	06.02	Pay & Display – Donegal Town
------	-------	------------------------------

Pay & Display – Donegal Town.

Mr. P Thomas informed Members that he intended to extend the Pay & Display Scheme to additional streets in the Town. These areas are included in the current Bye Laws but have not been covered by the charging regime. The areas concerned are as per report and map circulated at the meeting (Water Street, Castle Street, Tir Chonail Street, New Row, Waterloo Place, Meeting House Street). He confirmed that this had been requested by a number of residents in these areas as these streets are being used for long term parking since the charges have been introduced in the centre of town. The additional machines / signs will cost in the region of €50,000 and will be funded from the charges. Mr. Thomas stated that they had learned a lot from the introduction of the charges already and briefed Members regarding policy on Residents Permits and Periodic Parking Permits that cater for workers parking and residents parking at a reasonable cost. The proposal to extend the parking charges to other streets in Donegal Town was accepted by Members.

In response to a query from Cllr Boyle regarding the fairness of charging residents for parking outside their own homes, Mr. P Thomas informed Members that the resident permits only cost €45.00 annually but if there were particular issues they could be looked at on a case by case basis.

Street Cleaning/Community Projects

Mr. P Thomas informed Members he had reinstated the street cleaning for Donegal Town at weekends and was funding this to the tune of €40,000.00 per annum from the parking charges. This decision was welcomed by Members. Members also noted that an annual contribution of €10,000.00 is made to the Community Chamber for the provision of the Christmas lights in Donegal Town from Pay and Display charges.

Development of Quay Car Park

Mr. P Thomas circulated drawing for the proposed redevelopment of the Quay Car Park in Donegal Town. This would provide for an additional 80 spaces and other works including improved lighting, Rock Armour, Safety Railings etc. He informed Members that the project would take two years to complete and could be funded as follows:

- Pay & Display income over the next 2 years
- Development Contributions already paid
- Development Contributions from applications pending.

The proposal was widely welcomed by Members, and a number of queries were dealt with as follows:

In response to a query from Cllr Kennedy if there were alternative locations for buses to park as he had been led to believe additional spaces were needed, Mr. P Thomas informed Members that the buses largely park at night in the Town when parking is not an issue.

Cllr O'Neill complimented Roads Staff on the design of the project and in particular on the safety railing.

Cllr Pringle stated that the location for the proposed Tourist Office was a good location. In response to a query from Cllr Pringle if it was possible to provide a location / facilities for Camper Vans to pull in for the night in the Town, Mr. P Thomas informed Members that this was not intended as it was not a function for the Council.

Mr. Denis Kelly, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development asked that an area for Casual Trading be considered as part of the project as this matter would need to be dealt with for Donegal Town in the coming months.

Cllr Byrne also complimented Roads Staff on the project.

DEAC	06.03	DNRDO Progress Reports
------	-------	------------------------

N56 Mountcharles to Killybegs (Five Points) Scheme Update

Members noted the N56 Mountcharles to Killybegs (Five Points) Scheme Update circulated at the meeting, noting in particular that the final draft of the route selection is being produced and will be distributed for consideration at the next meeting of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee.

DEAC	06.04	Ballyshannon/Bundoran Bypass
------	-------	------------------------------

Ballyshannon Bundoran Bypass

Members noted the current status report on land acquisition on the Bundoran Ballyshannon Bypass as at the 30th January 2006 as circulated with the Agenda.

Fergus Towey, Resident Engineer, Donegal County Council and Eamonn McGill, SIAC/WILLS attended the meeting to update Members on progress in relation to the Ballyshannon/Bundoran Bypass.

Apologies were conveyed by Fergus from Aidan O'Doherty, Senior Engineer, DNRDO, Damian McDermott, Executive Engineer, DNRDO, Hugh Fox, Senior Resident Engineer, Ballyshannon Bypass and John Glynn, Contracts Manager, SIAC/WILLS who because of prior commitments were unavailable to attend.

Mr. McGill, SIAC/WILLS informed Members that the project was progressing well with the 'Kathleens Falls' bridge virtually complete. He advised that they were hoping to have the surfacing completed by mid March 2006 and that the target opening date of the complete bypass in early April 2006.

A lengthy debate followed in relation to the Bypass focusing in particular on the following:

Cllr Brady commended the contractor for the work done on the Bundoran side of the Bypass, noting that Elected Members had been kept well informed in relation to matters with queries being

dealt with promptly. He commented that other contractors could learn from SIAC/WILLS.

A number of queries raised were dealt with as follows:

In response to a query from Cllr Brady as to when traffic lights at Abbey Road roundabout and at Donegal Road Ballyshannon would be removed, Mr. McGill informed Members that it would be approximately one and a half weeks and two and a half weeks respectively.

Cllr Pringle referred to concerns from haulier's regarding the size of the 'smaller' roundabout at Finner Road. Mr. McGill informed Members that all of the roundabouts met with appropriate specification and pointed out that when the complete bypass opens, the majority of the larger vehicles will only be using the larger roundabouts.

Cllr O'Neill made a lengthy contribution in relation to the Bypass with the following being the main points:

In relation to queries he had raised in relation to the Bypass with Senior Officials in the Donegal National Roads Design Office, he was not always satisfied with the responses he had received and felt at times he was being given evasive answers.

He also raised concerns in relation to the Handrail on the bridge, footbridge and footpath near the river, which was too low and also to difficulties for some householders in relation to access to septic tanks. Issues in relation to fencing behind White Papel, at Bundoran were also raised. Mr. E McGill undertook to revert to Cllr O'Neill.

Cllr O'Neill went on to outline the major concerns he had in particular in relation to the Bypass being a 'North-South Bypass only' and he felt this was unacceptable that it did not cater fully for traffic travelling to and from Northern Ireland, which will still have to come through Ballyshannon. He felt this would be a danger for road users because of the likelihood of traffic build up trying to join/leave the Bypass and with the large volumes of traffic travelling through built up areas. He strongly felt that this issue had not been properly dealt with in the consultations and referred to the suggestion he had made to Officials that an additional roundabout to be constructed in the Mart area to address the issue. He went on to propose that the Bypass not be opened until

such time as proper consultation takes place on this issue with the Elected Members.

In response to the concerns raised by Cllr O'Neill, Mr. F Towey, Ballyshannon Bundoran Bypass, informed Members that the Bypass had been taken through an extensive public consultation in relation to the route selection and work has been undertaken in accordance with the agreed route.

He also reaffirmed to Members that the Bypass was designed as a North South Bypass for the N15 and not an East West Bypass of the N3. He assured Members that traffic coming to an from Co. Fermanagh is catered for safely with 'left in left out junctions' and that he would be happy to take Members around the route of the Bypass to demonstrate these manoeuvres.

Cllr Brady stated that he could not support the delay the opening the bypass and the message this would send in relation to progress in the area and the impact it could have on inward investment.

Following a further discussion it was unanimously agreed that an urgent meeting be requested with the Senior Officials in the Donegal National Roads Design Office to discuss the matters highlighted with the Members of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee.

This issue to be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.

DEAC	07.00	Planning & Economic Development
-------------	--------------	--

DEAC	07.01	Casual Trading
------	-------	----------------

Casual Trading

Mr. D Kelly, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development informed Members that as he had just returned to the position of Area Manager following a period of acting Divisional Manager, he was not in a position to give an update on Casual Trading other than he would be liaising with the Roads Section in relation to Donegal Town. He confirmed to Members that this matter would be progressed in the coming months.

DEAC	07.02	Consideration of Recent Refusals
------	-------	----------------------------------

Consideration of Recent Refusals

Members noted the report on recent refusals for the period from the 26th November 2005 to 13th January 2006 circulated with the Agenda.

DEAC	07.03	Planning Statistics
------	-------	---------------------

Planning Statistics

Members noted the planning statistics report for the period up to the 31st December 2005 circulated with the Agenda. Mr. D Kelly informed Members that while there had been some reduction in the number of invalid applications the volume of applications still represented a heavy workload for the Planning Service in the Donegal Electoral Area.

DEAC	07.04	Planning Enforcement
------	-------	----------------------

Planning Enforcement

Members noted the Planning Enforcement – current status summary report as at the 26th January 2006 circulated with the Agenda.

A number of queries were dealt with as follows:

Quarry at Cashelard

In response to a request from Cllr Pringle for an update in relation to a quarry at Cashelard, Mr. D Kelly informed Members that this file will be reviewed and a decision taken on how to deal with same. He undertook to revert to Members in the matter at an early date.

In relation to query from Cllr O'Neill in relation to unauthorised developments, Mr. D Kelly confirmed that if something is unauthorised then steps have to be taken to address it. He also confirmed to Members that this places a substantial pressure on resources currently available.

DEAC	07.05	Other Planning Matters
------	-------	------------------------

Special Charges

Members were advised that upon adoption of the new Development Contribution Scheme, it was agreed that Area Managers (Planning) would revert to Members at the Electoral Area Committee meetings to agree protocol in relation to imposition of Special Charges. In this regard Mr. D Kelly asked Members to accept that one off special development contributions may be imposed before he is in a position to revert to them with an agreed protocol for their consideration at the March meeting of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee. Members accepted this.

West Tyrone Market Producers

In response to a query from Cllr Pringle if there had been any progress made in relation to the queries the West Tyrone Market Producers had raised, Mr. D Kelly informed Members that he had responded and advised them of the procedures. The process involves applying for an events licence and that Planning would liaise with the Roads service when considering such an application. He had recently received one phone call in relation to this matter but was not aware of any other queries.

Cllr Kennedy stated that such markets should be looked at positively and encouraged as they bring a great buzz into a Town.

Pre Planning Enquiries

In response to a query from Cllr Boyle as to how preplanning enquiries would be dealt with following the new County

Development Plan adoption, Mr. D Kelly advised Members that a paper in relation to same was being prepared and should issue to Members shortly.

Ballyshannon Town Plan

In response to a query from Cllr O'Neill if there would be a special meeting with all of the services when working on the Ballyshannon Town Plan, Mr. D Kelly informed Members, while this is a matter for the Central Planning Unit, but this is what happens in practise.

Mast on Pier at Killybegs

Cllr Boyle referred to a mast on the Pier at Killybegs and queried what the up to date position was in relation to same. Mr. D Kelly informed Members that the mast was originally refused permission by the Council but this decision was overturned on appeal to An Board Pleanala and a period of 5 years was allowed, which will expire on the 28th May 2007. By that time, the owners of the mast will either have to remove it or receive a further permission to allow the structure to remain. File ref. 01/583 PD 6/96 refers.

Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Donegal Electoral Area Committee would be held on the 13th March 2006, in the Peter Kennedy Chamber, Donegal PSC at 2.00 p.m.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Area Manager

Caoithearlach, Donegal EAC.