

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF
GLENTIES ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE**

HELD ON 9TH MARCH 2009, IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE, DUNGLOE

Members Present: Cllr Kelly
Cllr Slowey
Cllr Bonner
Cllr Gallagher
Cllr Doherty
Cllr Alcorn

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Frank Sweeney – Senior Executive Planner
John Gallagher – Senior Executive Engineer, Water & Environment
Charles Sweeney, Area Manager, Community & Enterprise
Virginia McLoone - Area Manager, Corporate Services
Paul Mc Gill – Area Manager, Housing & Building
Brendan Mc Fadden – Area Manager, Roads & Transportation
Michael Rowsome – Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services

GEA 35/09 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20TH JANUARY 2009

On the proposal of Cllr.Gallagher, seconded by Cllr.Alcorn, the minutes of meeting of the 20th January 2009 were agreed.

GEA 36/09 REPORT FROM WORKSHOP HELD ON 20TH JANUARY 2009

On the proposal of Cllr Alcorn, seconded by Cllr Doherty, the report from the Workshop of the 20th January 2009 was agreed.

GEA 37/09 REPORT FROM WORKSHOP HELD ON 9TH FEBRUARY 2009

On the proposal of Cllr Alcorn, seconded by Cllr Doherty, the report from the Workshop of the 9th February 2009 was agreed.

GEA 38/09 VOTE OF SYMPATHY

The Committee unanimously proposed a vote of sympathy to the family of the late Martin Tourish, Council employee.

COMMUNITY, ENTERPRISE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

GEA 39/09

39.1 NOMINATION TO REGIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee discussed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Community & Enterprise Manager seeking a nomination of one member from the Glenties Electoral Area Committee onto the Management Committee of the Regional Cultural Centre.

Members highlighted the need to progress development of Aislann Gaoth Dobhar and to ensure that the Area Committee is represented on the board of this organisation.

39.2 COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND PROGRAMME

Members welcomed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Community & Enterprise Manager stating that an application for co-funding the Loch an Iúir project is currently being assessed by An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta.

Cllr. Gallagher requested the Council to erect warning signage in proximity to Council playgrounds in the interest of public safety.

39.3 MEMBERS DEVELOPMENT FUND

Members noted the schedule of allocations circulated previously.

39.4 COMMUNITY IN TOUCH /E-ZINE

The Community & Enterprise Manager informed the Committee of the availability of the second Donegal E-Zine and Cllr. Slowey asked for a Council linkage with the recently launched www.ardara.ie website.

39.5 CDB PROJECTS

The Committee welcomed the Research & Policy Unit report circulated with the agenda. Cllr. Doherty expressed satisfaction with the high percentage of persons speaking Irish on a daily basis in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

39.6**SOCIAL INCLUSION UNIT**

The Committee discussed the reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Community & Enterprise Manager, who invited Members to encourage applications for the 2009 Donegal County Pride of Place competition.

On the proposal of Cllr. Bonner, seconded by Cllr. Doherty, the Committee recommended that the County Mayor be appointed on to the panel of adjudicators for this competition.

39.7**CULTURAL SERVICES REPORT**

The Committee noted the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Community & Enterprise Manager.

39.8**DONEGAL INTERPRETATIVE PROJECT**

The Committee commended the role of the Community & Enterprise Manager in the success of this project.

WATER & ENVIRONMENT

GEA 40/09

40.1 MAJOR CAPITAL SCHEMES PROGRAMME

The Committee discussed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Water Services Manager. In response to queries from the Committee regarding the Gweedore Sewerage Scheme, the Water Services Manager advised that (i) documents on spatial planning and value for money have been submitted to the Department of Environment, (ii) a decision from An Bord Pleanála regarding the Oral Hearing is still outstanding.

Cllr. Bonner requested an updated report from the Director of Water Service in relation to the Dungloe and Glenties Sewerage Schemes.

In response to a query from Cllr. Kelly regarding the Gortahork Water Supply Scheme, the Water Services Manager agreed to liaise with Sanitary Capital to obtain updated reports from the Consultants.

40.2 SMALL CAPITAL SCHEMES PROGRAMME

The Committee discussed the report circulated previously and presented by the Water Services Manager. Members congratulated Water Services personnel for the success of the replacement of defective cast-iron water mains in the Kincasslagh area.

Cllr. Bonner and Cllr. Doherty requested that pipe replacement schemes be implemented in Glaserchoo and on the Caravan Road, Dungloe on receipt of funding.

40.3 GROUP WATER SCHEMES

The Committee discussed the reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Water Services Manager.

In response to a query from Cllr. Bonner regarding the status of the Meenmore West Scheme, the Water Services Manager advised that consultations are ongoing at the moment in relation to the option to provide water from Leitir via Doochary.

40.4 PRIVATE SOURCE GROUP WATER SCHEMES

Members discussed the reports circulated previously and presented by the Water Services Manager.

The Committee were informed that the Tully/Lettercough/Meenmore Scheme is nearing completion.

CORPORATE SERVICES

GEA 41/09

The Committee considered the draft schedule of Meetings 2009 circulated with the agenda and agreed the following dates to convene meetings of the Glenties Electoral Area Committee.

MONTH	DATE
May	5 th
July	14 th
September	8 th
November	10 th

The Committee agreed to convene the next meeting on Tuesday, May 5th at 9.30 a.m.

Cllr. Kelly expressed disappointment at the Councils poor response to erroneous claims in the media regarding Council activities and recommended a more proactive role for a Council P.R. Service.

HOUSING & BUILDING

GEA 42/09

42.1 HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Members discussed the reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Housing Manager.

The Committee welcomed the progress report on the status of the Housing Programme as at the 25th February 2009.

The Housing Manager updated Members in relation to:

- (i) The status of ongoing turnkey schemes in Creeslough and Meenanillar and informed the Committee that a number of turnkey proposals have been shortlisted by Housing Construction to address social housing needs in Dungloe and Glenties.
- (ii) Proposals to construct 8 no. units on a Council landbank in Ardara.

The Committee requested the Roads & Housing Services to liaise regarding repair of the road in proximity to the new Lettermacaward Housing Scheme.

42.2 SPECIFIC INSTANCE COTTAGES

Cllr. Alcorn commended major improvements in progressing SI applications by Housing Construction.

In response to queries from Cllr. Doherty regarding the possibility of a person in short term employment obtaining a Council Loan to build on his site, the Housing Manager advised that the person be requested to submit an application for consideration.

42.3 HOUSING AID FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Cllr. Alcorn welcomed the success of this grant scheme and the employment benefits accruing to local contractors from the Programme.

42.4 CENTRAL HEATING PROGRAMME

The Housing Manager advised the Committee that this Programme has been completed. Cllr. Slowey advised the Council to carry out an audit to ensure that there have been no omissions from this scheme.

42.5

REMEDIAL WORK PROGRAMME

The Housing Manager updated the Committee on the status of this Programme.

42.6

NEW LEASING INITIATIVE

The Housing Manager informed the Committee that the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government has established a new leasing initiative for the delivery of social housing, and that expressions of interest have been sought from property owners for the provision of dwellings under this initiative.

42.7

DUNFANAGHY PLAYGROUP

In response to a query from Cllr. Kelly regarding the group's intention to develop a crèche, the Housing Manager undertook to facilitate a meeting with the group.

Cllr. Kelly also complimented the Housing staff in Dungloe for their assistance and versatility.

42.8

CASUAL VACANCIES

The Committee noted the report circulated with the agenda detailing casual vacancies in the Glenties Electoral Area as at the 25th February 2009.

ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

GEA 43/09

43.1 ROADS PROGRAMME 2009

The Committee discussed the report circulated at the meeting and presented by the Roads Manager. Cllr. Bonner requested the addition of the Sheskinarone Road and the road from Dooley West towards the School House on the programme, if additional monies become available.

43.2 MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

The Roads Manager informed the Committee that funding in the sum of €848,600 will be available for road maintenance in 2009 after administration costs have been deducted from the overall budget. Notwithstanding the 2009 reduction in comparison to 2008 the Roads Manager stated that roads service intend to retain the level of service across the main maintenance tasks of street cleaning, drainage and pothole repair.

43.3 SELECTIVE MAINTENANCE

The Roads Manager advised Members that funding in the sum of €186,207 is available to supplement the general maintenance budget.

43.4 COMMUNITY ASSISTED SCHEMES

The Committee noted the report circulated at the meeting detailing a breakdown by Road Service Supervisor of an allocation of €176,507.10 for 2009 Community Assisted Schemes.

43.5 SURFACE DRESSING SCHEMES 2009

Members discussed the allocation of €1,157,658 funding for the 2009 Surface Dressing Programme and the Roads Manager responded to Members queries.

43.6 RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The Committee noted the 2009 allocation of €2,540,943 and the Roads Manager responded to Members queries regarding projects to be carried out.

43.7 CLÁR CLASS 2-3 PROGRAMME

The Roads Manager circulated the 3 year Programme previously prioritised and agreed, and informed the Committee that funding of this Programme remains outstanding.

43.8 NRA ALLOCATION

The Roads Manager circulated a report from the NRDO regarding National Primary and National Secondary allocations of €850,000 and €1,125,000 respectively. The Committee expressed frustration and disappointment at the minimal resources allocated to Donegal and also at the reluctance of the NRA to recognise the infrastructural deficiency in West Donegal.

43.9 LIS 2009

The Committee welcomed the increased allocation of LIS funding for the Glenties Electoral Area.

43.10 SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENT GRANTS/EU CO-FINANCED 2009

Members welcomed funding for the 4 no. Projects circulated at the meeting.

43.11 BRIDGE STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME 2009

On the proposal of Cllr. Alcorn, seconded by Cllr. Slowey, the Committee approved the Bridge Strengthening Priority Lists for the two maintenance regions in the Glenties Electoral Area.

43.12 ROAD SAFETY

In response to queries from Cllr. Doherty and Cllr. Kelly in relation to Ballymore School, the Roads Manager advised that costings have been completed and submitted to the Department for funding by the NRA Safety Engineer.

Cllr. Alcorn requested that a report issue to Members regarding proposals for road resurfacing adjacent to the new housing development in Lettermacaward.

43.13 MEMBERS REPRESENTATIONS

Cllr. Kelly acknowledged the inadequacy of staffing resources in the Dungloe Roads office but requested that a response issue in respect of all Members representations. Cllr Alcorn requested that the current Committee receive priority in relation to acknowledgement of their submissions.

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GEA 44/09

44.1 PLANNING STATISTICS

The Planning Manager updated Members in relation to planning statistics circulated with the agenda and informed the Committee that (i) 108 no. applications were received in Dungloe PSC during the first two months of the year (ii) Glenties remains the busiest electoral area and (iii) that multiple development applications are being submitted.

44.2 CONSIDERATION OF RECENT REFUSALS

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda in relation to planning refusals during the period from 1.1.2009 – 27.2.2009.

44.3 ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

The Committee noted the enforcement statistics circulated with the agenda and informed Members that Shane Donaghey was also assisting with enforcement in the Milford Electoral Area.

44.4 LOCAL AREA PLANS

The Committee recommended that the Central Planning Unit provide the necessary resources to progress local area plans in Dungloe, Glenties, Ardara and Gweedore.

44.5 REVIEW OF COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Cllr. Bonner requested the attendance of Gerry Richards at a meeting to be convened to address holiday home issues as a matter of urgency.

44.6 PLANNING STAFF

The Committee commended the ongoing assistance and co-operation of planning staff.

44.7 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRUCTION SCHEME

In response to a query from Cllr. Doherty regarding the imposition of a sewerage charge on an application not serviced by a public sewer, the Planning Manager advised that the charges were payable as part of an overall Water and Environment levy.

44.8

MEMBERS REPRESENTATIONS

In response to a query from Cllr. Kelly regarding multiple representations in respect of the same application, the Planning Manager advised that all written representations are available on the planning file.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.