

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

HELD ON 12th JULY 2011, IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE, DUNGLOE

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Seamus O Domhnaill
Cllr David Alcorn
Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher
Cllr Terence Slowey
Cllr Padraig Doherty

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Charles Sweeney-Area Manager, Community Enterprise & Cultural Services
Paul Mc Gill- Area Manager, Housing/Corporate Services
Frank Sweeney – Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development
John Gallagher – Area Manager, Water & Environment
Brendan Mc Fadden – Area Manager, Roads & Transportation
Damien McDermott – Senior Executive Engineer NRDO
Michael Rowsome – SSO Corporate Services

GEA 109/11

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

On the proposal of Cllr Doherty, seconded by Cllr Slowey the Committee unanimously elected Cllr O Domhnaill as Chairperson of the Glenties Electoral Areas Committee. Members commended the outgoing Chairperson Cllr Alcorn for his fairness and efficiency throughout the year and congratulated the newly elected Chairperson. The Corporate Manager, on behalf of all the staff in the Dungloe PSC expressed his gratitude to Cllr Alcorn for the courtesy and assistance that he afforded to all staff and congratulated Cllr O Domhnaill on his election. Cllr O Domhnaill expressed his gratitude to Members for their unanimous support of his nomination.

GEA 110/11

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19TH MAY 2011.

On the proposal of Cllr Doherty, seconded by Cllr Alcorn the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th of May 2011 were agreed.

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

GEA 111/11

UPDATE ON ROADWORKS PROGRAMME

The Roads Manager circulated and presented a report at the meeting outlining the status of

- Community Assisted schemes
- Restoration Schemes
- Surface Dressing schemes

Members were also informed that (i) Land acquisition for the Crolla to Carrickfin EU scheme is progressing and (ii) The survey of the presence of pearl water mussels in the vicinity of Mullantyboyle Bridge is imminent.

In response to a query from Cllr Gallagher regarding value for money efficiencies in respect of minor allocations, the Roads Manager undertook to circulate Members with details of Road work costings and stated that smaller allocations reduce maintenance costs in future years.

Members also highlighted additional road maintenance issues in many locations throughout the electoral area and the Roads Manager undertook to address these matters where possible.

GEA 112/11

CHAPEL ROAD DUNGLOE

Cllr Alcorn and Cllr Gallagher expressed disappointment at the lengthy delay in repairing this road and the resultant negative publicity.

The Roads Manager circulated and presented a report outlining the background and issues that impeded progress at this location. Members were advised that works will commence on the 13th July with a duration of 4 days and that total expenditure on completion of the works will be in the sum of €95000.

Cllr Alcorn commended the Roads Service for their successful negotiations with the Developer of the housing scheme on the Chapel Road. Cllr Gallagher and Cllr Alcorn requested the Council to ensure that footpaths and carparking areas in proximity to the Chapel road also be repaired.

GEA 113/11

SPEED LIMITS

The Committee expressed disappointment that the NRA have advised that sections of the roadway on the Carnmore Road Dungloe and at Meenacuing are not considered to be sufficiently built up.

GEA 114/11

PAVEMENT AND SAFETY SCHEMES

Damien McDermott Senior Executive Engineer with the NRDO presented a report detailing the status of pavement and safety schemes in the electoral area. Cllr O Domhnaill requested replacement of safety lines on the Main Street, Gortahork particularly outside the national school. Cllr Doherty asked that the parapet be repaired at Corcreggan Bridge along with remedial works to the narrow soft margin. Cllr O Domhnaill requested the Council to ensure that the allocation in respect of the Tirlin to Drumnaraw project is expended.

GEA 115/11

SIGNPOSTING

The NRDO Senior Executive updated the Committee in relation to the rolling programme of re-signing the N56 route and advised Members of the limit to the amount of information that can be detailed on a sign. Cllr O Domhnaill and Cllr Doherty requested improved signage of the Falcarragh, Bunbeg, and Gweedore Areas on the route from Letterkenny.

GEA 116/11

N56 DUNGLOE TO GLENTIES

The Committee welcomed the presentation by the NRDO Senior Executive Engineer in relation to the work in progress on the Type 3 single carriageway road proposed for the National Secondary Road from Dungloe to the Kilraine Junction.

In response to a query from Cllr Gallagher regarding the employment of local people during construction work, the Senior Executive Engineer advised that it is not permissible to insert any such clause in project contracts. Damien McDermott further advised that it is a probability that a major proportion of workers to be employed and materials to be engaged on the project will be sourced locally due to the geographical remoteness of the scheme.

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GEA 117/11

PLANNING REFUSALS

The Committee noted the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Planning Manager in relation to planning refusals during the period from 5th May 2011 to 28th June 2011.

GEA 118/11

PLANNING STATISTICS

Members noted the report circulated previously and presented by the Planning Manager in respect of up to date comparative planning statistics.

GEA 119/11

ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Planning Manager in relation to enforcement statistics as at the 31st May 2011. In response to a query from Cllr O Domhnaill the Planning Manager confirmed that unfinished housing estates are a major enforcement issue and that the relevant developers are being pursued in this regard.

GEA 120/11

ONE OFF HOUSING APPLICATIONS

The Planning Manager informed the Committee that the number of one off housing applications submitted annually as a proportion of total planning submissions were as follows;

<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
56%	48%	49%	50%

GEA 121/11

SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS

Cllr O Domhnaill informed the meeting of confusion that had arisen at the earlier meeting of the Islands Committee in relation to a public notice regarding Special Protection Areas. The Planning Manager advised Members that the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht proposes to designate Falcarragh to Meenlaragh, Fanad Head, Inishbofin, Inishdoohy, and Inishbeg, Malin Head, Tory Island and the West Donegal Islands as Special Protection Areas for wild birds in accordance with Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC known as "The Birds Directive". The Planning Manager further advised Members that the proposed designations will be taken into account when assessing any further development proposals in or near Special Protection Areas, and that ecological assessments will have to accompany planning submissions in these areas.

Cllr Gallagher requested a meeting between Members, the Central Planning Unit, and local planning staff in relation to the impact of the proposed plan on the Glenties Electoral Area and stressed that accommodation of the indigenous population should be a priority in any development plan.

Cllr O Domhnaill highlighted the strict interpretation of planning guidelines by council staff in respect of applications relating to entrances on to the N56 in the Gaeltacht Region from Bloodyforeland to Gortahork.

COMMUNITY, ENTERPRISE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

GEA 123/11

FUND MANAGEMENT

Cllr Gallagher informed the meeting of discussions held at SPC level in which Donegal Airport was to be allocated 30k from the Strategic Transport Fund. Member unanimously supported Cllr Gallaghers recommendation that the C & E Manager liase with the Director of Service to request an increase in this allocation to that previously agreed in the sum of 50K.

Cllr O Domhnaill requested that a meeting be scheduled on the morning of the Council meeting at which Members of the Glenties Electoral Area Committee could discuss issues surrounding the allocation of the Strategic Transportation Fund with the Director of Service and Colin McNulty, Administrative Officer.

GEA 124/11

DONEGAL – COMMUNITY IN TOUCH IN E ZINE

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda in relation to publication of the 12th edition of the Donegal E-Zine in early June.

GEA 125/11

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Committee welcomed the report circulated with the agenda in relation to plans for Social Inclusion Week 2011 during the period from the 19th to the 23rd of September. The C & E Manager invited Members to submit ideas for possible events or activities.

Cllr Gallagher recommended that an impact assessment be carried out in respect of poverty in the Gaeltacht region of the County.

GEA 126/11

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN DONEGAL

Members discussed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the C & E Manager. Cllr Gallagher commended the success of the seminar held on the 27th of May and in particular the presentation ‘West Cork; A Fuchsia Vision, A future vision?’

GEA 127/11

RURAL BROADBAND SCHEME

Members welcomed the report circulated previously and presented by the C & E Manager regarding the provision of a basic broadband service to premises in rural locations, which are not serviced by existing Internet service providers.

GEA 128/11

LEABARLANN GHAOTH DOBHAIR

Cllr Alcorn expressed disappointment that an opening date has yet to be finalised and the C & E Manager advised that Cultural Services Personnel are addressing staffing issues in this regard.

GEA 129/11

DONEGAL ISLANDS FILM AND RADIO DIGITAL ARCHIVE

The C & E Manager invited Members to the launch of this archive by RTE North West Correspondent Eileen Magnier on the 14th July in Leabharlann Ghaoth Dobhair.

GEA 130/11

EARAGAIL ARTS FESTIVAL

Cllr O Domhnaill commended the role of the C & E unit in the success of this Festival and requested that a letter issue to Paul Browne acknowledging the positive benefits accruing to the area and county from the Earagail Arts Festival.

GEA 131/11

DONEGAL YOUTH COUNCIL

The Committee discussed the report circulated with the agenda and Cllr Alcorn requested that Members be kept updated in relation to the status of the Youth Council Co-ordinator.

GEA 132/11

ONLINE ACCESS TO HISTORICAL COUNTY COUNCIL MINUTES

Members welcomed the report circulated with the agenda regarding the microfilming, scanning, and online access to historical County Council minutes. Cllr Slowey requested that the minutes of Electoral Area Committee meetings be available online and that all staff profiles be updated.

GEA 133/11

WIFI HOTSPOTS

In response to a query from Cllr O Dochartaigh regarding the provision of Wifi in Public Services Centres, the C & E Manger undertook to liaise with the IS Section of the Council.

GEA 134/11

MC GILL SUMMER SCHOOL

The C & E Manger informed the Committee that the Councils IS Section would be organising Podcasts from the McGill Summer School, which is scheduled to take place from the 24th to the 29th July 2011. Members of the Glenties Electoral Area Committee support this event through their Development Fund.

WATER, ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

GEA 135/11 MAJOR CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Committee welcomed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Water Service Manager outlining the status of

- Gweedore Sewerage Scheme
- Dungloe & Glenties Sewerage Schemes
- Falcarragh Sewerage Scheme
- Gortahork Water Supply.

GEA 136/11 WATER CONSERVATION WORKS

The Committee welcomed the report circulated previously and presented by the Water Services Manager detailing progress in respect of pipe replacement works at Calhame and Crolly.

In response to a query from Cllr O Domhnaill regarding the Magheraroarty Pipe replacement scheme, the Water Services Manager advised that all personnel involved in the project are aware of the need to minimise disruption to water supply. The Water Services Manager advised the Committee that a budget has been secured to commence pipe replacement works on the Caravan Road Dungloe during September.

GEA 137/11 GROUP WATER SCHEMES

Members noted the reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Water Services Manager detailing the current status of Group Water Schemes under construction and private source group water schemes in the Glenties Electoral Area.

GEA 138/11 PUBLIC TOILETS

The Water Services Manager advised Members that a report is being brought to the Council meeting on the 21st July to conclude the Part 8 planning process in respect of Burtonport Public Toilets. In response to a query from Cllr Gallagher the Water Services Manager undertook to liaise with representatives of Ionad Teampall Chroine regarding the provision of toilet facilities in Dungloe.

GEA 139/11

WAITING ROOM IN BURTONPORT

Members welcomed the report on the opening of the waiting room in the existing ice plant building in Burtonport.

GEA 140/11

ILLEGAL DUMPING

Members welcomed the deployment of covert surveillance equipment in the Glenties Electoral Area.

Cllr Doherty commended the Council on the clean up of the illegal dumping site at Corveen.

In response to a query from Cllr Gallagher regarding the penalties imposed on offenders, the Water & Environment Manager advised that penalties are set nationally in accordance with legislation.

GEA 141/11

GLENTIES WATER SUPPLY

In response to a query from Cllr Slowey the Water Services Manager confirmed the status of the UV disinfection system.

HOUSING AND BUILDING

GEA 142/11 HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Members discussed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Housing Manger in respect of the status of the Housing Capital Programme as at the 30th June 2011.

(i) Lettermacaward

The Housing Manager advised the Committee that interviews with prospective tenants have taken place over the last few weeks and it is anticipated that letting of the 13 no. units will take place at the earliest possible date. Cllr Alcorn requested the council to upgrade the Church Car Park.

(ii) Dungloe

The Housing Manager informed the Committee that the 28 no unit turnkey scheme in Dungloe is 30% complete. In response to a query from Cllr Gallagher, the Housing Manager clarified that the allocation of units will be determined in accordance with the scheme of letting priorities.

(iii) Long Term Leasing Scheme

Cllr O Domhnaill and Cllr Gallagher expressed dis-satisfaction with the Long Term Leasing Scheme and criticised the imposition of National Housing Policy in Donegal.

(iv) Housing Need

The Committee discussed the report circulated at the meeting detailing a housing need of 499 units in the Electoral Area. Cllr Gallagher requested the Council to liase with the HSE and other state bodies and to commence a plan to purchase housing to address the Housing Need.

(v) Specific Instance Cottages

The Committee welcomed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Housing Manger, who clarified the status of the SI Programme as at 30th of June 2011.

GEA 143/11 SOCIAL HOUSING PROGRAMME

Members discussed the report circulated previously and presented by the Housing Manager in relation to the status of the Social Housing Programme as at 30th of June 2011.

In response to a query from Cllr. Alcorn regarding the restrictive qualifying criteria applicable to older Persons Grants, the Housing Manager clarified that there is a provision to relax criteria in situations where there are medical issues pertaining to the applicant.

GEA 144/11 CASUAL VACANCIES

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Housing Manager in relation to casual vacancies as at the 30th of June 2011.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

