

**MINUTES OF THE INISHOWEN ELECTORAL AREA
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15th JANUARY, 2008 IN
THE CARNDONAGH PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE**

Councillors Present:

Councillor Francis Conaghan
Councillor Rena Donaghey
Councillor Pdraig Mac Lochlainn
Councillor Marian McDonald
Councillor Denis McGonagle
Councillor Bernard McGuinness

Officials Present:

Community, Cultural & Enterprise Services:

Aideen Doherty, Administrative Officer

Corporate Services:

Eunan Kelly, Area Manager
Marie Deeney, Acting Senior Staff Officer

Planning & Economic Development Services:

Clare Cronin, Area Manager

Roads & Transportation Services:

Pat Gillespie, Area Manager/Senior Executive Engineer
Stephen Flynn, Senior Executive Engineer
Jim McLaughlin, Executive Engineer
Donal Walker, Executive Engineer
Eamon Boyle, Executive Engineer, NRDO
Eamonn Browne, Road Safety Officer
Jamie Gallagher, Road Safety Engineer

Water, Environment & Emergency Services:

Jim Hyland, A/Area Manager/ Senior Executive Engineer
Eamon Barr, Executive Engineer

Apologies:

Patsy Lafferty, Area Manager

08/01 WELCOME ADDRESS

The Chairperson, Cllr Rena Donaghey, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Pat Gillespie informed the Committee that he would be moving from his post as Area Manager, Roads and Transportation Section, Carndonagh, to a post in the Machinery Yard, Lifford in the near future. Pat Gillespie introduced Stephen Flynn, Senior Executive Engineer, as his replacement in the Roads Office. Pat thanked the Members for the encouragement and patience given to him and hoped that the same would also be offered to his replacement.

The Members expressed their appreciation of Pat and wished him well in his new post. The Members also welcomed Stephen Flynn and wished him well in his new role.

08.1.1 Buncrana Town Clerk

The Chairperson, Cllr Rena Donaghey, paid tribute to Paul Doyle, Town Clerk of Buncrana Town Council for over 30 years who had retired recently. Cllr Donaghey, on behalf of the Committee wished Mr. Doyle well in his retirement.

02.1 Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th November, 2007

On the proposal of Cllr Francis Conaghan, seconded by Cllr Marian McDonald, the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November, 2007 were agreed.

02.2 Progress Report

Members noted the statistics in the Progress Report in relation to transactions carried out in the Carndonagh Public Services Centre for the period 2007

Cllr Bernard McGuinness queried the space available to rent to agencies within the building and the income received from such accommodation. Cllr McGuinness stated that it is imperative that the building is able to justify its existence. Eunan Kelly advised that Teagasc are full-time tenants and pay rental on an annual basis, and that the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the H.S.E. and F.A.S. also have a presence in the building.

02.3 Outreach Office in Buncrana

Cllr Francis Conaghan queried the progress in relation to the development of an Outreach Office in Buncrana. Eunan Kelly advised that it had been intended to launch a web-site, however, this had been put on hold due to the retirement of the Town Clerk. Eunan Kelly agreed to follow up on this matter and to update Members in relation to the provision of the Outreach Services in Buncrana.

02.4 Schedule of Meetings

The following Schedule of Meetings for 2008 was agreed: -

10th March, 2008

12th May, 2008

14th July, 2008

15th September, 2008

10th November, 2008

03.1 Planning Agenda

Clare Cronin circulated the Planning Agenda and apologised for the lateness, as a result of her being on leave.

03.2 Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th November, 2007

On the proposal of Cllr Marian McDonald, seconded by Cllr Francis Conaghan, the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November, 2007 were agreed.

03.3 Barrack Hill

Clare Cronin advised the Committee that Part VIII approval for Phase 3 of Barrack Hill had been granted by Donegal County Council in December, 2007. Proposals for the progression of Part VIII now to be agreed with the Members in the Inishowen Electoral Area in advance, however, further amendments may require Part VIII approval. Clare Cronin also informed the Members that the preparation of Tender Documents for Phase 1 is nearing completion and designs for the proposed Town Park are also being progressed through C&E. Local groups were continuing to develop their proposals and prepare plans in preparation for planning/pre-planning applications.

03.4 Advising Councillors & Agents of Refusals in Advance of Decision Issuing

Clare Cronin informed the Members that this matter had been discussed with the Senior Planner, who has advised that half day slots have been made available to both applicants and agents in order to discuss current planning files. Through this forum, applicants and Agents can be generally appraised on the progress of their application and, as their prerogative, to request an Extension of Time of withdrawal of the application. The key concern of the Planning Authority in advising Councillors/Agents of refusals in advance being that the report of the Planner remains a recommendation until such time as the Manager's Order is signed, and in accordance with the principles of due process and established practice, the applicant is the first to be made aware of a decision to grant or refuse permission or to look for further information by way of a formal written communication.

Members requested that options be explored regarding the possibility of advising Councillors/Agents of refusals in advance of a decision issuing in order to allow opportunity to apply for an extension of time/withdrawal of application.

03.5 Planning Statistics

Clare Cronin advised Members that there has been a reduction of approximately 22% in the number of planning applications made in 2007 as compared to the 2006 figures. The Inishowen Electoral Area continues to have the largest number of applications in the county.

At the request of Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn, Clare Cronin agreed to advise Members of the number of housing units approved in 2007 and also to advise on the ratio of planning applications dealt with by each planner.

03.6 Site Meetings

Cllr Francis Conaghan queried the best way forward in relation to solving some issues on planning files. It was agreed that the possibility of site meetings as opposed to pre-planning enquiries was the best way to go. Clare Cronin agreed to raise the issue of resources with the Senior Planner in this regard and report back.

03.7 Multiple Applications

Members requested that the Central Planning Unit be requested to attend the next Inishowen Electoral Area Committee Meeting to discuss the issue of multiple applications within urban generated areas.

03.8 Invalid Applications

The Committee expressed their dissatisfaction at the continued high level of invalid applications given the fact that Agents have been provided with information talks from the Planning Authority. At the request of Cllr Francis Conaghan it was agreed that Agents be contacted and encouraged to carry a greater burden of responsibility in relation to planning applications submitted.

03.9 Enforcement of Planning Conditions

The Committee requested that Council contact the Developer of Mill Glen, Moville as Public Lights in the estate are still not lit two years after houses were occupied and the Developer of Crawford Square, Moville where lights are also out of order.

04.1 Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th November, 2007

On the proposal of Cllr Marian McDonald, seconded by Cllr Francis Conaghan, the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November, 2007 were agreed.

04.2 Grianan Of Aileach

At the request of Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn, Aideen Doherty agreed to arrange a meeting with John Cochrane, Office of Public Works, with the Members, in An Grianan Hotel on 12th February, 2008 at 10.30 a.m. to discuss works, which were being carried out.

04.3 Workshop

It was agreed that a Workshop on Walking Trails and Development Fund Initiatives also be held in An Grianan Hotel on 12th February, 2008. Cllr Francis Conaghan requested that Garry Martin be requested to attend the Development Fund Initiatives Workshop.

04.4 World Wetlands Day

Aideen Doherty advised Members that World Wetlands Day was due to take place on 2nd February, 2008. Aideen agreed to get further information on events to be held and advise Members accordingly.

04.5 Barrack Hill

Members welcomed the news that Diarmuid Gavin, Celebrity Gardiner, would be commencing consultation with the local community and also the schools, regarding the design of the play park at Barrack Hill. Aideen Doherty also advised that she is currently in contact with the Planning Section with a view to commencing the clearing of the play park area in the near future.

04.6 Community, Culture and Enterprise Services Reports

The Committee noted the Community, Culture and Enterprise Services Report as circulated with the Agenda.

04.7 Funds Update

Members were requested to submit their applications/proposals as soon as possible in regard to the 2008 Development Fund, as the allocation needed to be spent by September, otherwise the funding would be lost.

Cllr Bernard McGuinness expressed his dissatisfaction that funding for the Lough Swilly Ferry would be taken out of the €90,000 allocated for the Inishowen E.A.

At the request of the Members it was agreed to contact Letterkenny Town Council, Donegal Tourism and Failte Ireland and seek a contribution towards the cost of the Buncrana/Rathmullan Ferry.

04.8 Forest Link Project

Aideen Doherty updated Members on the progress to-date in relation to the Forest Link Project, which is currently underway. The project is scheduled for a two and a half year period and Donegal County Council has committed it's support for the duration of the project.

04.9 County Childcare

The Members noted the reports on County Childcare and Community Childcare Subvention Scheme 2008-2010 as circulated with the Agenda. Aideen Doherty advised that Maria Gallo has now resigned from the Committee and also stated that a more comprehensive report would be presented at the March Inishowen Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

04.10 Carrickfin and Derry City Airports

In response to a query from Cllr Francis Conaghan, Aideen Doherty agreed to clarify the source of funding for both Carrickfin and Derry City Airports.

04.11 Cycle Route

Following a query from Cllr Francis Conaghan, Aideen Doherty agreed to advise Cllr Conaghan as to when cycle route signs would be erected in Inishowen.

04.12 Diaspora Project

Cllr Francis Conaghan queried the funding contribution by Donegal County Council for the Diaspora Project. Aideen Doherty advised that the project is funded by Peace II and agreed to check out the contribution and advise Cllr Conaghan.

04.13 Energy Conservation

The Committee noted the report on Energy Conservation as circulated by Aideen Doherty.

At the request of Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn it was agreed that the Office of Public Works be contacted and requested to install Renewable Energy Heating System in the new Buncrana Decentralised Offices.

05.1 Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th November, 2007

On the proposal of Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn, seconded by Cllr Marian McDonald, the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November, 2007 were agreed.

05.2 Traffic Calming Requests

Pat Gillespie advised the Members that it was expected that a Report on Traffic Calming would be presented at the March Inishowen Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn requested that Radharc Na Tra Beaga be included on this report.

05.3 Pedestrian Crossing Muff

Pat Gillespie informed the Committee that he had been in contact with the Chairperson of the Residents Committee to advise that Road Design were considering the best location of the Pedestrian Crossing. When he received their recommendation he would give it to the Chairperson of the Residents Committee to have them comment before progressing.

05.4 Members Lights

Pat Gillespie advised that he was advised by the E.S.B. all old public light requests would be erected by the end of February and that the light at Fahan Chapel, which had originally been requested by the late Cllr Jim Sheridan, would be erected by the end of March.

05.5 Take-Over of Private Housing Estates

The Members requested that Vincent Lynn attend the Roads Workshop scheduled to take place on 25th February 2008 and update Members on the Take-Over of Private Housing Estates and also provide a full up-date report on the current status of all estates.

05.6 Village Public Lighting Programme

Following a request from Cllr Francis Conaghan, Pat Gillespie agreed to clarify the funding available under the Village Public Lighting Programme and also update Members on the current situation of the programme.

05.7 Crawford Square, Merville

At the request of Cllr Marian McDonald, Pat Gillespie agreed to investigate 2no. lights which are out of order at Crawford Square, Merville.

05.8 Moss Road

Following a query from Cllr Bernard McGuinness regarding the Moss Road, Pat Gillespie agreed to follow up with Road Design in relation to the proposed design for the Moss Road.

05.9 Roads Workshop

It was agreed that a Roads Workshop would be held in the Carndonagh Public Services Centre on 25th February, 2008 commencing at 10.00 am.

The following items to be included on the Agenda:

- Road Works Programme 2008
- Take-Over Of Private Housing Estates
- Public Lighting
- Surface Dressing
- EU Co-Finance
- Moss Road

05.10 Road Safety at Schools

Eamonn Browne, Road Safety Officer, informed the Committee that concerns had been raised in relation to traffic and parking issues at schools and that he was now attending all Electoral Area Committee Meetings seeking submissions from Members in this regard. Members outlined issues in relation to the following schools, which they considered required assessment/attention/follow-up:-

- Coxtown N.S. Carrigans
- Newtowncunningham N.S.
- Bridgend N.S. Bonemaine
- Tooban N.S.
- Scoil Mhuire, St. Oran's Road
- St. Oran's N.S. Cockhill
- Cloontagh N.S. Clonmany
- Rasheeny N.S.
- Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana
- St. Mura's - opposite Library, Buncrana
- Scoil Íosaigan, Buncrana
- St. Egney's N.S. Desertegney
- Drumfries N.S.

St. Joseph's N.S. Illies
Glassalts N.S. Carndonagh
Collon N.S. Carndonagh (dangerous junction)
Craigtown N.S.
Greencastle N.S.
Moville N.S.

Eamonn Browne advised Members that he would be taking all the issues raised on board and agreed to clarify the issue as to who is responsible for the provision of parking at National Schools. Eamonn Browne further agreed to consider the possibility of erecting signage at all schools, advising motorists that they are approaching a school.

At the request of Members it was agreed to consider contacting all National Schools and invite them to make submissions regarding traffic, parking and safety issues at schools. It was also agreed that consideration be given to ways of assisting schools in ensuring that road safety measures at schools are used properly.

05.11 Oil Spillage at Newtowncunningham

Following a query from Cllr Francis Conaghan regarding a recent oil spillage on the road at Newtowncunningham which resulted in 3no. accidents, Pat Gillespie agreed to contact the Gardai at Newtowncunningham to establish the facts in the case.

06.1 National Primary Schemes

Pat Gillespie introduced Eamon Boyle, Executive Engineer, National Road Design Office to the meeting and also circulated a report on National Primary Schemes Update for 2008 (Appendix 1).

Eamon Boyle outlined the schemes for which the Donegal National Road Design Office has applied for funding from the National Roads Authority to progress to construction in 2008 and also the schemes for which funding has been sought to progress to be designed and documents prepared ready for construction in 2009.

Appendix 1

National Primary Schemes

SCHEME UPDATE

Inishowen Electoral Area Meeting

January 2008

Donegal National Road Design Office has applied for funding from the National Roads Authority to progress the following schemes to Construction in 2008.

N13 / N15 Stranorlar to Cavancor Pavement

N3 Ballyshannon to County Boundary

N14 Four Lane Road, Letterkenny

N14 Lifford to Letterkenny Pavement 1 (Ballyholey Junction)

N14 Lifford to Letterkenny Pavement 2 (Feddyglas to Tulyrap)

N15 Meenglas to Cappry Junction.

Funding has been sought to progress the following schemes to be designed and documents prepared ready for construction 2009.

N13 Lurgybrack

N13 Newtowncunningham to Drumbarrett / Veagh

N13 Veagh to Pluck Roundabout

N15 Barnesmore Gap.

An application for funding for all the listed schemes does not guarantee funding. Confirmation of funding from the National Roads Authority is expected at the beginning of February.

07.1 Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th November, 2007

On the proposal of Cllr Marian McDonald, seconded by Cllr Francis Conaghan, the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November, 2007 were agreed, subject to the following amendment at 48.4 of the minutes.

48.4 Civic Amenity Site in Buncrana

Jim Hyland updated Members in relation to 2no. recycling services due to be provided by private operators in Buncrana. Cllr Rena Donaghey queried as to when these facilities would be available to public, the type of recyclables that will be accepted and also the fee involved. Jim Hyland agreed to contact the Recycling Officer and to update Members on this matter.

Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn expressed his dissatisfaction at the fact there is no saving on recyclables, stating that there is no incentive to recycle as it costs the same to recycle as it does to transport waste to landfill sites. Cllr MacLochlainn requested that a detailed report clarifying the costs associated with transporting waste to landfill sites as compared to costs of recycling be presented at the next Inishowen Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

07.2 Follow Up Report

The Members considered the report from Jim Hyland dated 12th January, 2008 in relation to follow-ups from the Inishowen Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 12th November, 2007.

07.3 Recycling

In response to a query from Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn regarding charges involved in the collection of waste/recyclables and the transporting of same to landfill sites, Jim Hyland agreed to investigate as to why private waste contractors in the Inishowen area are not using the services of Inishowen Recyclers at Umricam, Buncrana. Jim Hyland further agreed to get clarification of the difference in the cost involved in the disposal of recyclables.

07.4 Civic Amenity Site in Buncrana

At the request of Cllr Bernard McGuinness, Jim Hyland agreed to enquire regarding the possibility of entering into a Private Public Partnership for the development/provision of a Civic Amenity Site at Buncrana.

07.5 Litter Warden

Cllr Marian McDonald queried as to when a Litter Warden would be in place in the Inishowen area. Jim Hyland advised that the post had been advertised and applications received, but no interview date had been set as yet. Jim Hyland agreed to contact the HR Section and follow up on this matter.

07.6 Blue Flag Beach at Shroove

In response to a query from Cllr Marian McDonald regarding quads, which are racing on the beach at Shroove, Jim Hyland agreed to investigate the erection of signage prohibiting the use of quads on the beach.

07.7 Merville Bring Banks

At the request of Cllr Marian McDonald, Jim Hyland agreed to check progress on a new location of the Bring Banks in Merville.

07.8 Members

Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn requested that correspondence issue to Peadar MacRory outlining Members dissatisfaction at the lack of follow-up on decisions taken by Members and not being implemented.

07.9 Bridgend/Burnfoot/Tooban Sewerage Schemes

Following a request from Cllr Francis Conaghan, Jim Hyland agreed to update Cllr Conaghan on the current position in relation to the Bridgend/Burnfoot/Tooban Sewerage Schemes.

07.10 St. Johnston & Carrigans Sewerage Schemes

Cllr Francis Conaghan queried if there are proposals to link St. Johnston and Carrigans Sewerage Schemes. Jim Hyland agreed to follow up on this matter and advise Cllr Conaghan. Jim Hyland further agreed to update Cllr Conaghan on the current situation with regards Carrigans Sewerage Scheme.

07.11 Killea Sewerage Scheme

In response to a query from Cllr Francis Conaghan, Jim Hyland agreed to advise Cllr Conaghan in relation to the operation of Killea Sewerage Treatment Works.

07.12 Carrigans and Quigley's Point Sewerage Schemes

Members requested that proposals be advanced in relation to both the Carrigans and Quigley's Point Sewerage Schemes.

07.13 Glengad Water Supply

Cllr Bernard McGuinness queried the current position in relation to the extension of the water main from Culkeeny to Glengad. Jim Hyland agreed to get a report on this matter and advise Cllr McGuinness

08.1 Consideration of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th November, 2007

On the proposal of Cllr Marian Mc Donald, seconded by Cllr Francis Conaghan, the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2007 were agreed.

08.2 Land at Rockytown, Buncrana

Following requests from Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn and Cllr Rena Donaghey, it was agreed that a letter should issue to the Integrated Childcare Project, Buncrana, outlining the decision taken regarding the disposal of land at Rockytown, Buncrana. Cllr Donaghey stressed the urgency in issuing this letter as soon as possible as there is a danger of funding being lost if a satisfactory letter does not issue in the immediate future.

Cllr Pádraig MacLochliann advised that as the lands at Rockytown would facilitate a number of community groups, there is a need for the appointment of a Co-ordinator to co-ordinate any requests to purchase parcels of land and to advance the development of lands at Rockytown.

08.3 Housing Estates, Merville

Cllr Marian McDonald requested that signs be erected at the new Housing Estate at Ard Na Gulla Dubha and also at the new Housing Estate nearing completion in Merville.

08.4 Castle Park, Newtowncunningham

In response to a query from Cllr Francis Conaghan regarding the provision of a play area/grass area at Castle Park, Newtowncunningham, it was agreed that this matter would be followed up.

08.5 Affordable Housing, Buncrana

At the request of Cllr Pádraig MacLochlainn, it was agreed that the provision of affordable housing in Buncrana be expedited.

08.6 Affordable Housing, Carndonagh

In response to a query from Cllr Denis McGonagle regarding the allocation of a 1no. 2 bedroomed house in Carndonagh, it was agreed that this matter be investigated and Cllr McGonagle advised.

08/09

DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the IEAC will take place in the Carndonagh P.S.C. on Monday 10th March, 2008 commencing at 10.00 am.