

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF STRANORLAR ELECTORAL
AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 5TH SEPTEMBER 2006 IN THE
REGIONAL TRAINING CENTRE, STRANORLAR**

Members Present:

Cllr Alice Bonnar (Chairperson)

Cllr JJ Reid

Cllr Patrick McGowan

Officials Present

Gerry Gilroy, Area Manager, Corporate

Barney McLaughlin, Community and Enterprise Development Officer

Mary Hannigan, Area Manager, Housing and Building

Tommy Doherty, Area Engineer, Housing and Building

Tony Brogan, Housing Assessment Officer/Tenant Liaison Officer

Denis Kelly, Area Manager, Planning and Economic Development

Peadar Thomas, Area Manager, Roads and Transportation

Adrian McCool, Assistant Engineer, Roads and Transportation

Claire McGeever, Executive Engineer, Roads and Transportation

Michael Breslin, Area Manager, Water, Environment and Emergency Services

Shane Sweeney, Assistant Engineer, Water, Environment and Emergency Services

Suzanne Tinney, Waste Information Officer, Environment Section

Ann Harvey, A/Staff Officer, Corporate Services

SEC 30.00 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

30.01 Adoption of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr Alice Bonnar, seconded by Cllr Patrick McGowan, the Minutes of the Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 17th July 2006 were adopted.

It was agreed that matters arising would be dealt with under the relevant service.

SEC 31 PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

31.01 Follow up on issues from previous meeting

Denis Kelly advised Members that a complete report on these issues would be presented at the next meeting.

31.02 Environmental Improvement Schemes: Convoy and Castlefin

Members noted that a Report regarding these Schemes would be available for the October meeting.

Members expressed frustration that these Schemes had not been started despite their having been informed that the schemes would be practically completed by this time. Cllr Bonnar queried whether the funding for the Schemes would be lost if they were not completed this year.

Gerry Gilroy advised Members that he understood the funding had been secured under the Town and Village Renewal Programme and that there was no indication from the service that funding would be lost under those circumstances. This will be checked.

Denis Kelly undertook that he would bring the Members' concerns back to the relevant staff in Planning and would advise Members in writing of the up-to-date situation before the next Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

31.03 Consideration of Recent Planning Refusals

Members noted Report circulated with the Agenda.

31.04 Planning Enforcement

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

In reply to a query from Cllr J J Reid regarding the number of Planning Enforcement Officers in the Stranorlar Electoral Area, Mr Kelly advised that at the moment this process involves input from a number of staff from Planning and other services. He advised that a review of the resources to address unauthorised development was well underway and he hoped to be in a position to brief members in detail at the next meeting.

31.05 Planning Statistics

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

SEC 32.00 HOUSING AND BUILDING

32.01 Follow up on issues from last Meeting

Proposed commemorative tree-planting at Drumkeen

Gerry Gilroy advised Members that the Director of Corporate Services had asked that he advise members that as this matter related to a motion adopted by the full Council was proposed that a Status Report would be presented to the next Meeting of Donegal County Council on 25th September 2006.

Derelict houses at the Curragh, Killygordon and Ard McCarron, Ballybofey

Members noted report circulated with the agenda.

Mary Hannigan advised Members that the owner of the property at the Curragh had recently enquired about a Loan to carry out repairs to the property under the Improvement Works in Lieu Scheme. Ms Hannigan confirmed that once an application had been received, consideration would be given to the provision of assistance to improve/upgrade this property.

With regard to the property at Ard McCarron Ms Hannigan advised that this property was currently for sale but that a dispute within the family concerning ownership of the property may delay the sale. Ms Hannigan confirmed that the Environment Section has served appropriate notices with regard to litter pollution problems at this property.

Ms Hannigan also advised that, in accordance with the Department guidelines the County Council urged to refrain from purchasing houses originally supplied by the local authority. The current policy is to purchase properties from within private sites to encourage greater social integration.

32.02 Housing Capital Programme/Social Housing

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda

33.03 Casual Vacancies

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda

33.04 Progress Reports Loans/Grants

Members noted Reports circulated with Agenda.

33.05 Central Heating Programme 2006 – Update

Members noted Report Circulated with Agenda.

33.06 Office Accommodation

Gerry Gilroy conveyed an apology from the County Manager and advised Members that he had spoken that morning to Mr Fitz Howard and was advised that the Manager of the HSE had submitted a Business Plan to their Headquarters and a formal response was awaited. He confirmed that there was regular contact between Fitz Howard and the Health Service Executive locally regarding this matter.

Members expressed their frustration with the lack of progress with this matter and also what they perceived as the general neglect of the Stranorlar Electoral Area, citing the lack of proper Library facilities, Swimming Pool and the stalling of the proposed Ballybofey/Stranorlar Bye Pass as examples.

Cllr J J Reid proposed, seconded by Cll Patrick McGowan that an early meeting be sought with the County Manager, to discuss this matter. Members asked that Senior Officials of the HSE and the two local Government Ministers also be invited to attend. Later in the meeting it was agreed to add the Ballybofey / Stranorlar Bye Pass and the Library in Ballybofey be added to the agenda for this meeting. The appropriate Senior Officials from Roads, DNRDO and the Library Service also to be invited to attend. Members suggested that the meeting be on the morning of the next County Council Meeting on 25th September 2006 if not before.

33.07 Transfer of Right of way at Stragally, Cloghan

On the proposal of Cllr Alice Bonnar, seconded by Cllr Patrick McGowan, Members agreed to transfer a right of way over S.I. site at Stragally, Cloghan (Occupants of dwelling Seamus and Frances Doherty).

33.08 Other Matters Arising

Introduction of Tony Brogan Housing Assessment/Tenant Liaison Officer

Cllr Bonnar welcomed Tony Brogan to the Meeting in his role as Housing Assessment/Tenant Liaison Officer with the Donegal/Stranorlar Electoral Area.

Mr Brogan gave Members an outline of his work since he was appointed as Housing Assessment Officer on 1st March 2006. He advised that his first major task was to compile a Housing Assessment Register and interview all applicants for housing in the Donegal/Stranorlar Area. He advised Members that there were approximately 350 applicants for re-housing in Ballybofey and Stranorlar and that he had processed 80% to-date.

His work as Tenant Liaison Officer involved working with tenants in local authority estates, encouraging them to become involved in the management of their estates, attempting to address various problems within these estates.

He would also assist in the provision of funding to help with estate management, set up residents associations, etc.

Members congratulated Mr Brogan on the progress he has made to-date.

Alleyway at back of Ard McCool Estate

Cllr McGowan queried whether the Council could close off an alleyway to the rear of Ard McCool as anti-social behaviour was occurring there. In reply, Ms Hannigan advised that agreement between all the tenants involved would need to be secured before this could be undertaken.

Replacement of broken light at rear of Mrs Foy's House

Cllr Reid was advised that a new light has been ordered for this location.

Lights at Anne McDaid's, Railway Road

Mary Hannigan undertook to follow up on this issue.

Grass Cutting

Following a query from Cllr McGowan regarding funding support for residents of Killygordon and Ard McCool, Ms Hannigan advised that a cheque would issue this week for Killygordon and a cheque had been issued in July for the Ard McCool estate.

Cllr McGowan requested a report on collaboration between Housing and Roads sections with regard to grass cutting.

Tony Brogan indicated that it was envisaged that when the two new schemes in Ballybofey and Stranorlar come on-stream that the residents would take responsibility for grass cutting and that the same policies would be in place for all schemes in due course. Members were in agreement with this.

Footpath at Liscooley

Cllr McGowan referred to lack of progress with the provision of a footpath from Liscooley Villas Estate to Liscooley village. He stressed that this road was dangerous and afforded no protection to walkers.

In reply, Tommy Doherty advised that the Council could not provide a footpath as they did not own the ground. Mary Hannigan added that a footpath had been provided at the estate with funding obtained from Peace 2 but that the Housing section would not have sufficient funds to purchase land and provide a footpath down into the village.

Cllr McGowan stated that a special request should be made for funding as a footpath was urgently needed at this location. He urged the Roads and Housing Sections work together on this issue.

Crossroads and Killygordon Community Playgroup

Cllr Bonnar raised the issue of the cost of land Transfer from the Council to this group. She stated that the sum involved, €20,000, was excessive and that they should be charged a nominal amount.

Mary Hannigan advised that she would follow up the matter and update Members at a later date.

Repair of fence at Castlefin School

Tommy Doherty agreed to follow up regarding this matter and report back to Members.

Seats for Ard McCool Estate

Following a request for assistance with funding for provision of seating at Ard McCool, Mary Hannigan agreed to follow up.

Glen Patrick Sign

Mary Hannigan advised Cllr Bonnar that a sign would be erected at Glen Patrick Estate.

SEC 34.00 COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE

34.01 Community Consultations

Ballybofey Stranorlar Integrated Community Co

Mr McLaughlin advised that the group suspended their meetings for the Month of August and is continuing with the preparation of the Integrated Area Plan.

STAG

Further discussions about developing a River Walk have taken place between the Walking Routes Officer and the Group with regard to route selection and property ownership.

This walk will form part of the Masterplan for Brogan's Lands.

Stranorlar Interagency Initiative

The Stranorlar Interagency Initiative are now providing an information service.

Donegal Local Development Company Ltd

Mr McLaughlin that the first reports from DLDC will be provided at the next Electoral Area Meeting.

County Strategy: An Straiteis 2002-2012

Mr McLaughlin advised Members that a report would be provided at the next Electoral Area Meeting.

Local Area Teams

Mr McLaughlin advised Members that the next meeting of the Castlefin LAT takes Place on 13th September 2006.

34.02 Cultural Services Report

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

34.03 Members Development Fund

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

34.04 Donegal County Childcare Report

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

SEC 35.00 WATER, ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES
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35.01 Stranorlar Leisure Centre

Michael Breslin advised Members that discussions are still ongoing between the groups involved.

35.02 Capital Programme

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

35.03 Ballybofey Sewer Network

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

Mr Breslin advised Members that three separate documents had been prepared for the Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Castlefin and Lifford schemes but that the Department had requested that the three schemes be combined and resubmitted. He added that these schemes were now combined in a single proposal and would be submitted to the Department Inspector at the next steering group meeting next month.

Members requested a report clarifying the situation regarding these schemes for the next Electoral Area meeting.

Cllr Bonnar also requested a report on the findings of the Hydraulic Analysis study for the next meeting.

35.04 Group Schemes

Letterbrick Group Water Scheme

Mr Breslin informed Members that a report had now been received for the Consultants looking at the options to improve the supply of water to the Fintown area. He advised that the Capital Section is studying the report at present to select the most feasible option:

- Lough Mourne
- Glenties
- Upgrade of the Treatment plant at Fintown

Members were advised that a pilot treatment plant on the Fintown Public water supply would be set up on 3rd October by P.C.I. Membrane Ltd to determine whether this type of treatment is suitable for this supply. Following the results of the pilot treatment plant, the three options will be considered and a recommendation made.

Mr Breslin advised that once the final recommendation was made a Fintown Project and Budget would be required.

Members enquired if the problem was quantity and not quality of supply.

Liskeerin/Meenavoy Group Water Scheme

Mr Breslin advised Members that the construction of this scheme is now in progress and that about 50% of the pipeline have been laid.

Letterbrick Group Water Scheme

Cllr Bonnar queried whether funding would be available for this scheme or whether there was a waiting list. Michael Breslin advised that money would be available when the scheme was approved.

Meenalaught Group Water Scheme

Michael Breslin to report back to Members regarding this scheme.

35.05 Civic Amenity Site

Suzanne Tinney, Waste Information Officer gave a presentation of the work, which is ongoing in her section. Ms Tinney advised Members that under the Green Schools Programme 41 schools were awarded the Green Flag with 104 schools registered for the programme. Of the 41 schools awarded the Green Flag, 8 were in the Stranorlar Electoral Area.

Ms Tinney also advised that preparations were underway for the National Recycling Week, 2nd – 8th October and that various events would be arranged during the week to increase the awareness of the public about recycling. These events included: National and local advertising campaign, Green Piece, School Tours of Civic Amenity Site, Distribution of Reusable Recycling bags and a National competition.

Members welcomed Ms Tinney and congratulated her on her work to-date. Cllr Bonnar praised the efforts in educating the children about recycling and felt it would be a good idea to provide education for adults also. Cllr Bonnar suggested that a model should be built from which the best methods of recycling could be demonstrated.

Cllr McGowan felt that the Civic Amenity site was being under- utilised because of the limited opening hours and suggested that bottle banks should be accessible all the time outside the gates of the centre. He added that information should be available about what happens to the recycled material as people have a perception that it goes to landfill sites.

Michael Breslin advised that he was reluctant to moving the bring-banks outside the gate of the Civic Amenity site as serious problems had arisen in the past with illegal dumping at bottle banks. Mr Breslin added that he was not trying to stop people recycling and that he would discuss this with staff and endeavour to find a solution to the problem. He advised Members that he would report back to them on the issue.

Ms Tinney advised that the issue of informing people of what happens to recycled material would be addressed during National Recycling Week.

Members thanked Ms Tinney for her presentation.

35.06 Restoration Scheme

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

Brockagh/Corradoie

Mr Breslin advised Members that work on this scheme was to proceed immediately and was due for completion by the end of this year.

Lough Mourne

Mr Breslin advised Members that advance works have been approved for Improvement Works to Lough Mourne, which will improve the water quality. He added that work was expected to commence sometime next year after Tenders have been sought.

35.07 Other Matters Arising

Cross/Killygordon Sewerage Scheme

Michael Breslin to report back to Members with regard to this Scheme.

Convoy Sewerage Scheme

Mr Breslin updated Members with improvement works to date on this Scheme:

- Inlet Screening
- Grit Removal
- Storm Tank
- Sludge Holding Tank
- Modifications to Imhoff tank
- Site Works
- Money spent to date - €750,000

He also advised that the Preliminary Report has been forwarded to the Department for Phase 2 and the Department Inspector has to approve this document before this Scheme can progress to the next stage. Mr Breslin advised that the land has been purchased for Phase 2.

Cllr McGowan raised the matter of a foul odour in the Convoy area over the past week and Mr Breslin advised that this had been caused by a private developer using the wrong connection to connect to the public sewer. Mr Breslin informed Members that Officials would contact this developer and instruct him on the correct procedure and that this would rectify the problem.

SEC 36.00 DEPUTATION FROM CONVOY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Two members of the Committee of Convoy Presbyterian Church, Mr Sammy Callan and Ms Jane Laird attended the Electoral Area Meeting to highlight concerns over issues regarding parking, safety for pedestrians using Church facilities and road safety for all road users while services and functions are taking place on Church property.

Ms Laird presented a report to Members, which outlined these concerns including provision of safe car parking which will not disrupt traffic, and the safety of pedestrians and other road-users during services and functions. They requested that the following issues be addressed in the proposed new works;

- Sufficient car parking is left for two rows of cars end-to-end after completion of works.
- Lowered kerbs and footpath be put in across the full length of footpath between the entrance/exit.
- The existing Council fence be repaired and a proper footpath from Oak Park created for the residents.
- Tar the surface of the car park in lieu of monetary compensation for loss of Church property.
- Low wall at back of footpath, which is mentioned in Convoy Renewal Scheme.

Mr Callan advised that these issues were on-going for six years and that the Committee were anxious that they would be given due consideration. Members expressed their support in relation to the issues raised.

Peadar Thomas invited the deputation to attend a Meeting in the Roads Office in Ballybofey where these issues could be looked at in more detail. A meeting was arranged for Thursday, 7th September 2006 at 2.30pm. Cllr McGowan requested and it was agreed that a written report on the outcome of this meeting be provided to the Members.

Cllr Bonnar thanked Mr Callan and Ms Laird for their attendance at the Meeting.

SEC 37.00 ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

37.01 Roadworks Programme

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

Peadar Thomas pointed out that the Roads Budget had increased from €3.65 million in 2005 to €5.6 million in 2006. The number of LIS schemes was up from 40 in 2005 to 100 in 2006. This meant a huge increase in the workload for staff.

Mr Thomas also advised that certain issues also had an effect on Schemes. These included Tender Procedures, Health and Safety requirements which required staff training, planning issues, PMDS, etc.

The Council was also experiencing difficulties in getting agreement in purchasing land for schemes and this was resulting in delays whilst CPOs were being prepared.

37.02 Local Improvement Schemes

Members noted Report circulated with Agenda.

Mr Thomas advised that funding had been secured under Clar and that applicants on the circulated list were being contacted at present.

37.03 Dreenan Bridge Update

Members noted report circulated with Agenda.

37.04 Ballybofey/Stranorlar Bypass

Members expressed frustration at the lack of progress on this issue and requested that it be put on the Agenda for the Meeting with the County Manager on 25th September 2006.

37.05 Glenfin Area Council

Mr Thomas furnished Members with a letter sent in reply to issues raised by Glenfin Area Council.

37.06 Unnamed Roads within Ballybofey/Stranorlar

Members considered report circulated at the meeting and following detailed discussion the following Street names were agreed.

1	“Park Lane”	Road from Main Street as far as the top of Navenny Car Park. – <i>(Road to the side of the Junction Pub).</i>
2	“Finn View Road”	New One Way Road along the Front of View with McHugh. – <i>(Between Crossroads with Main Street as far as the Junction onto Main Street close to the Bridge.)</i>
3	“MacCumhaill’s Way”	Road from the junction on the Regional Road (outside entrance to Jackson’s Hotel) as far as the Crossroads outside the new Villa Rose Hotel.
4	“Chestnut Close”	New Road into back of McElhinney’s Store.
5	“Dr. Johnston’s Avenue”	Road along the side of the new Health Centre in Stranorlar. This is a cul-de-sac road from the Main Street.
6	“McConnell’s Arch”	Road along the Gable of Mr. John McConnell’s Butcher Shop as far as the Crossroads outside the new Villa Rose Hotel.
7	“Church Avenue”	Branch Road between Chapel Street and the Dunwiley Road.
8	“Woodview Lane”	Road behind “Woodview Terrace”, along Stranorlar Main Street, across from Drumboe Avenue. The road emerges onto the Main Street at either end.
9	“Frances Browne Avenue”	This is the Main Road through the New Master Plan Area just off the Railway Road, which will eventually link up with the new Dreenan Road.

Misunderstanding regarding the naming of both “Steeple View” and “Harps Way”.

Members were advised that back in 2004 Mr. John Patton, ASO Roads attended a meeting with the Youth Council held in the John Paul Youth Centre, Garvan Court,

Ballybofey. At this meeting the Street names agreed were that the Road from Navenny Street, past Conker's Restaurant to C Bonner's was to be named **Harps Way** and the Road from Donegal St to Trusk Rd was to be named **Steeple View**. The pay and display machines were set up this way.

After the meeting a report was submitted by the Youth Council Committee dated 20th April 2004 to the Electoral Area Meeting proposing the naming of the two roads. Unfortunately this report was different to that which was agreed. The adopted minutes reflect the Youth Council's letter dated 20th April 2004, and not what had been intended.

The members were asked to agreed the original proposal, and name the roads as per the preliminary meeting attended by Mr. Patton.

Members agreed that the Road from Navenny St past Conker's Restaurant to C Bonner was to be named Harps Way and the Road from Donegal St to Trusk Rd was to be named Steeple View.

(4) Suggested Termination points of Continuous Roads/ Streets within the Town.

The members confirmed their agreement to the following list of Termination points for the following list of continuous Roads/ Streets within the Town.

1	Donegal Road/ Donegal Street	Donegal Street ends/ Donegal Road begins at the Centre of the Junction with "Steeple View" (i.e. the road across from Dr. Mulrine's House.)
2	Glenfin Street/ Glenfin Road	Glenfin Street ends/ Glenfin Road begins at the Centre of the New revised Junction into Jackson's Hotel.
3	Ballybofey Main Street/ Donegal Street.	Ballybofey Main Street ends/ Donegal Street begins at the centre of the Junction of Glenfin Street.
4	Stranorlar Main Street/ Pound Street	Stranorlar Main Street ends at the Centre of the Millbray Road.
5	Pound Street/ Lifford Road	Pound Street ends at the Centre of road into Woodlawn Housing Estate.
6	Chapel Street/ Drumboe Lower	Chapel Street ends at Bridge over the Stream outside the entrance into McCool's Sawmill.
7	Meeting House Street/ Letterkenny Road	Meeting House Streets ends at the Centre of the Dunwiley Road. Letterkenny Road starts at the centre of this junction.

(5) “Navenny Lane”.

The members had agreed at a previous Electoral Area Meeting to name the Road from the Old Market Square as far as Navenny Street “Navenny Lane”.

Consideration was given to a recent article published by the Finn Valley Voice, suggesting that this name should be “Flail Lane” as this has a historical meaning. It was also noted that a number of businesses along this lane and in the market square have suggested that the Lane should be called “Market Lane”.

Following a short discussion the members agreed that this road be named ‘**Market Street**’.

37.07 Other Matters arising

Footpath at Castlefin

Cllr McGowan referred to the request by Castlefin Tidy Towns Committee to construct a footpath between Grahamsland and Lower Donoughmore Church. Cllr McGowan advised that the NRA had indicated that they had plans to construct a hard shoulder along this road at some future date. There was as yet no plan prepared for this nor was there any budget proposed. They were also not in favour of lighting being provided outside built up areas.

Members felt that this footpath was necessary and that as the NRA had no definite plans drawn up for construction of the hard shoulder, Cllr McGowan proposed that the construction of the footpath should go ahead. Cllr Bonnar seconded and this was agreed

Resurfacing work at Ard McCool

Mr Thomas advised Cllr J J Reid that the contract for this work was out to Tender at present.

Traffic Calming at Ballybofey

Cllr J J Reid raised a query in relation to the traffic calming measures being installed on the Letterkenny Road, Ballybofey. Her submitted that large vehicles were experiencing difficulties turning into premises in this area. In reply, Mr Thomas advised that the NRA designed these three Traffic islands.

SEC 38.00 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

38.01 The next scheduled Meeting of the Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee will take place on Tuesday 17th October 2006 at 2.00pm in the Regional Training Centre, Stranorlar.