

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE,  
HELD IN THE RESOURCE CENTRE, MANORCUNNINGHAM, ON MONDAY,  
23RD JANUARY 2006.**

***LEC 01/06***     **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllr. Damien Blake, Mayor of Letterkenny  
Cllr. Ciaran Brogan  
Cllr. Gerry Crawford  
Cllr. Jimmy Harte  
Cllr. Dessie Larkin  
Cllr. Tony Mc Daid

***LEC 02/06***     **OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Aideen Doherty, CEDO, Community, Enterprise & Cultural Services  
Pat Gillespie, Area Manager, Roads & Transportation, Letterkenny &  
Inishowen Electoral Areas  
Trevor Gordon, Executive Engineer, Mountain Top  
Sinead Harkin, Executive Planner, CPU  
Jim Hyland, Executive Engineer, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,  
Eunan Kelly, Area Manager, Corporate Services, Letterkenny & Inishowen  
Electoral Areas  
Patsy Lafferty, Area Manager, Housing, Letterkenny & Inishowen Electoral Areas  
Mary McBride, Acting Executive Planner, CPU  
John McFeely, Graduate Planner, CPU  
Con McLaughlin, Area Manager, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,  
Letterkenny & Inishowen Electoral Areas  
Tommy McNulty, Clerk of Works, Housing  
Rose Patton, Staff Officer, Corporate Services  
Gerry Richards, Senior Planner, CPU  
Ronnie Sayers, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation  
Frank Sweeney, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development

Cllr Tony Mc Daid chaired the meeting.

***LEC 03/06***     **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY  
ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21ST  
NOVEMBER 2005.**

On the proposal of Cllr. Gerry Crawford and seconded by Cllr. Dessie Larkin  
the Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 21st  
November 2005 were agreed.

## MATTERS ARISING

### Priority List for Tourism Projects

A query was raised by Cllr Tony McDaid regarding Minutes 61.03 and it was clarified that €14,000 was the amount available for Letterkenny Electoral Area under Tourism projects for 2005 and 2006 and that it had been agreed at the previous meeting that this amount would be spent on the Approach Roads to Lifford and on the Roundabout and that any additional finance that becomes available be spent on the approach to Manorcunningham.

### *LEC 04/06*    **HOUSING & SOCIAL SERVICES**

#### *04.01*        **Central Heating Programme 2005**

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that works are ongoing under this programme at Dr Mc Ginley Road, St Eunans Terrace and at a number of S.I. Houses and it is expected that the work will be completed next month.

He also intends to bring proposals for the 2006 Programme to the March Meeting.

#### *04.02*        **Remedial Works/Regeneration Programme 2005**

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that the Department has selected the St. Eunans Terrace Estate in Raphoe for funding under the above Programme.

Tenders have been sought for the works, which include the following:

- Refurbishment of remaining rented houses that are not being purchased by tenants.
- Upgrading the roads and footpaths in the Estate.

Mr Lafferty stated that he would update the Members when tenders have been received.

This was welcomed by the Members who urged that the Residents be consulted regarding completion of the works in advance of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the Estate

#### *04.03*        **Allocation of Houses**

The Committee was informed that the new scheme at Raphoe (Parc na Bealtaine) should be ready for allocation next month and that it is intended to allocate the houses as soon as they are completed .The process of assessing applicants has already begun.

The Committee was also informed that 2 New Houses were purchased and allocated at Carnmuggagh before Christmas.

The Committee raised concerns of the slopes of some of the back gardens and the potential for subsidence. Patsy Lafferty, in reply, stated that the matter had been raised with the Council's Architects who didn't foresee any problems. Each property would be fenced off for children's safety.

**04.04**      **Affordable Housing**

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that they have 4 Affordable Houses for sale at Carnamuggagh, Letterkenny at a cost of €129,000. An advertisement has been placed in the local newspapers, a copy of which was circulated at the Meeting.

This advertisement is not only seeking applications for the houses at Carnamuggagh, but for future houses that will arise in the town also, as it is the intention to create a list of eligible applicants at this stage. These houses will generally be located in new private schemes in the town, and sourced through the mechanism of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

A 35-house scheme is due to commence in Manorcunningham that will also have 14 Affordable Houses.

The closing date for receipt of applications for the current houses will be Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2006.

The Members welcomed this development and asked for an update at the next Electoral Area Meeting on the replies to the advert.

**04.05**      **Fairgreen Hill**

Cllr Dessie Larkin requested an update on the Council's efforts to advance plans to enhance this area as outlined by the Chairperson of the Residents Group.

Patsy Lafferty agreed to follow up on this matter.

**04.06**      **Section 183 at Raphoe**

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that the decision taken a number of years ago to swap Council and Church lands at Raphoe had run into difficulties due to Title problems with the Church lands. The Committee recommended that in the event of this matter not being resolved, the Council proceed to develop its lands.

***LEC 05/06    COMMUNITY CULTURAL AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES***

Aideen Doherty updated the Committee on a number of issues that were included in the Reports circulated with the Agenda.

***05.01    Rapid Programme***

The Committee expressed their dissatisfaction that Letterkenny E.A. does not qualify for funds from Dormant Accounts, as there is no Rapid Programme in the county.

They requested that the Council seek a deputation with the Minister Eamonn Ó Cuiv regarding this issue.

***05.02    Skateboard Park***

The Committee was advised that the Skateboard would go to Planning in March with a view to being opened next year.

This was greatly welcomed by the Members who acknowledged the work done by Aideen and her staff on the project.

***05.03    Peace 11 Task Force***

The Committee were informed that over 140 applications with a total value of €8.5m were received under Peace 11 and evaluations were ongoing and successful applications will be notified in March. The total Budget available is €2.4m.

The Committee welcomed this.

Cllr Tony Mc Daid acknowledged that this was Aideen Dohertys last meeting before she goes on Maternity Leave and on behalf of the Committee thanked her for her assistance and wished her well.

***LEC 06/06    WATER, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES***

***06.01    Lagan Water Supply-Phase 3 (Water Audit)***

Con McLaughlin informed the Committee that they would be advised when approval for Lagan Water Phase III is received.

***06.02    Letterkenny Water Supply***

Cllr Dessie Larkin raised the issue of the water supply being disrupted again at the weekend in the Listillion and Dooballagh areas and stressed that it wasn't

satisfactory and he had received complaints from Residents. He also stated that these disruptions seem to happen at weekends when Water Service staff were not contactable and requested that the matter be investigated.

He also requested that a contact number be given to the Members in such instances.

In response Con McLaughlin noted that problems occurring at weekends were most likely a factor of the additional demand on the system at those times. He reassured the members that the service continues to be monitored throughout the weekends / after hours by the staff responsible for that operation. He further noted that the only contact number being made available was that of the call centre already operating.

Con McLaughlin agreed to further examine any emerging patterns in the disruptions reported.

**06.03 Lough Greenan/Lough Mourne**

Cllr Dessie Larkin requested an update on Lough Greenan and Lough Mourne Improvement Works as soon as possible.

**06.04 Major Capital Programme**

The Committee considered the Report on Major Capital Schemes, which was circulated with the Agenda

**06.04.1 Lifford Sewerage Scheme**

Cllr Gerry Crawford requested an update on advancing Lifford Sewerage Scheme. In response, the meeting was informed by Con McLaughlin that the scheme was on the Water Services Investment Programme, and currently in the early stages of the planning / design process, he would keep Members informed of any progress.

**06.05 Small Capital Schemes**

The Committee considered the Report on Small Capital Schemes, which was circulated with the Agenda.

**06.06 Serviced Land Initiative Schemes**

The Committee considered the Report on Serviced Land Initiative Schemes, which was circulated with the Agenda.

**06.07 Group Water Schemes**

The Committee considered the Report on Group Water Schemes, which was circulated with the Agenda

**06.07.1**      **Drumoghill/Labbadish GWSS**

Cllr Dessie Larkin asked whether Drumoghill/Labbadish G.W.S.S would be included as part of Lagan Water Supply Phase III or progress separately.

Con McLaughlin stated that the water source for the GWSS was Phase III and both projects would progress in parallel.

**06.08**      **Kerbside Recycling**

Cllr Gerry Crawford asked when the Kerbside Recycling would commence in the Lifford, St Johnston and Manorcunningham areas. Con McLaughlin stated that he would investigate this and update the Committee as soon as possible.

**06.09**      **Letterkenny C.A.S.**

On the proposal of Cllr Dessie Larkin seconded by Cllr Damien Blake the Committee recommended that the Council should seek tenders for construction of a Civic Amenity Site at Letterkenny in advance of finalising land purchase from the Health Service Executive to expedite the matter.

**06.10**      **Woodlands**

The Committee recommended that the water supply issues in the Woodlands area be attended to.

**LEC 07/06**      **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**07.01**      **Fairways Estate**

Frank Sweeney informed the Committee that a meeting was being arranged between the Developer and the Golf Club regarding the outstanding issue of the buffer zone and he would update the Members on the outcome.

**07.02**      **Ballymacool**

Frank Sweeney advised the Committee that Part 8 Planning was going ahead and would address the outstanding issue of the provision of a footpath. The Members welcomed this.

**07.03**      **Ard na Mealla, St Johnston**

The Committee were informed that the Agent has indicated that a timescale will shortly be submitted regarding the completion of works.

**07.04**      **St Jude's Court**

Frank Sweeney apologised to the Committee regarding the lack of progress on the outstanding issues of Lighting and Road cleaning and assured that all efforts were being made to resolve these issues.

Cllr Gerry Crawford and Cllr Tony McDaid requested that a Progress Report be presented to the next Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

**07.05**      **Woodlands**

John McFeely, Graduate Planner, Central Planning Unit made a presentation to the Committee on the Woodland Study, prepared by him, that had been circulated with the Agenda.

This is a Study into the effect of the Rural Service Centre Policy in the "Woodlands" Area of Letterkenny and proposals for the future planning and development of the area. The final output of the study will consist of:

- A Non-Statutory Development Strategy, which will in turn help to inform future policy makers making decisions in Woodlands and other similar areas.
- A Set of Recommendations both regulatory and developmental for the future planning and development of the area.

The summary was broken down under several headings:

**Planning Context**

**Planning History**

**Local issues /Feedback from Public Consultation Process**

**Overall Analysis**

**Strategic Options Considered**

**Strategic Development Option recommended** being to guide the development of the area in line with the policies outlined in the County Donegal Draft Development Plan 2005.

**Additional Recommendations** were drawn up with regard to the overall objectives for the area under various headings including:

**Housing-Policy** RH4 County Donegal Draft Development Plan 2005 whereby "applicant must demonstrate that he/she has roots in the area". In this regard applicants was born in the relevant town land or resided there for a period of at least 15 years.

**Transport**-Recommending that the Council complete various projects including the realignment and widening of Woodlands Junction by the end of 2006.

**Water & Environment**-Recommending inter alia that the Council complete the upgrading of the water supply in the Upper Woodlands area.

**Protection of the Environment**-Recommending inter alia that the Council adhere to best practice to siting and design when assessing applications for new residential developments.

**Economy**-Recommending that the Council favourably consider proposals for small neighbourhood retail outlets and ensure the efficient use of existing and future infrastructure through careful land use planning.

**Community and Recreational**-Recommending that the Council will favourably consider applications for childcare facilities throughout the study area.

**Built Heritage/Archaeology**-Recommending that the Council protect the archaeological heritage within the study area by ensuring that proposed developments are not detrimental to recorded archaeological monuments or their settings.

The Committee thanked John Mc Feely for his detailed summary and a lengthy discussion followed, the main comments being:

- Opposition to Policy RH4-Recommend extending the criteria for Urban Generated Rural Housing to include children of people born in Woodlands and those generating employment.
- Opposition to the Special Development Charges Scheme for the study area.
- Small Service Centres to be encouraged in Woodlands area

It was agreed to adjourn the discussion and hold a joint Workshop between Letterkenny Electoral Area and Letterkenny Town Council on Woodlands Study on 31<sup>st</sup> January.

#### **07.06**

#### **Drumardagh**

The Committee considered the contents of letter from Stephen Lambert, Regional Road Safety Engineer, North and West Region, National Road Design Office to the Planning Section was circulated at the Meeting advising that the NRA is currently carrying out a survey and design of the N 14 Dual Carriageway between Manorcunningham and the Dry Arch Roundabout. This work is to improve safety along the section including such measures as the provision of a Crash Barrier along the section and reviewing the junctions along the road. The possibility of closing the junction at Trimragh is being considered. The large number of planning applications, which have been granted on the Drumardagh side of the junction, is detrimental to road safety in the area.

Stephen Lambert advised that no further planning consents should be considered which use the Trimragh Junction as an access.

The Committee recommended that this issue be discussed at the Planning Workshop on 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**07.07**      **Planning Statistics at 31/12/05**

The Committee considered the contents of the report on Planning Statistics up to 31/12/05, which was circulated with the Agenda.

**07.08**      **Consideration of Recent Refusals**

The Committee considered the report on applications refused since the last meeting, which was circulated with the Agenda.

**LEC 08/06**      **ROADS & TRANSPORTATION**

**08.01**      **N56 Mountain Top to Illistrin Road Realignment**

The Committee considered the Progress Report that was circulated with the Agenda. Trevor Gordon, Project Engineer on this project also updated the Committee on the project.

The Committee welcomed this Report and Cllr Ciaran Brogan confirmed that a meeting was to be held by Mr Gordon with some businesses in the Pinehill Estate on 24/01/06 to address their concerns.

The Members also requested that the entrance to Foxhills be finalised and re-aligned and that the Contractor be followed up for re-instatement of roads in the Mountain Top area.

Mr Gordon agreed to follow up on these matters.

**08.02**      **Roads Workshop**

It was agreed to hold a Roads Workshop on Tuesday 21/02/06 regarding the Roadworks Programme for 2006 and Surface Dressing Programme for 2006.

**08.03**      **Manorcunningham**

The Committee commented on the poor state of the roads and footpaths on Main Street in Manorcunningham and on the amount of muck that was being washed onto the street from developments in the area and requested that some attention be given to them as soon as possible.

**08.04**      **Road Maintenance**

The Committee requested that plans be prepared for innovative methods of dealing with pothole repairs, drainage etc and also a report on the success of the pothole-repairing machine is to be circulated.

The Members felt that Road Maintenance monies should be divided on the basis of the volume of traffic rather than on road mileage to properly reflect the demands on the Letterkenny Electoral Area.

**08.05**      **Crash Barrier on Dual Carriageway**

Cllr Ciaran Brogan suggested that the Roads Section should investigate paving of area along the Barrier on the Dual Carriageway to make maintenance easier and the planting of daffodils /tulips along the central margin.

**08.06**      **Works Programme**

The Committee requested that an update be given on the Carnamuggagh to Lisnennan and that works on the Golf Course Junction be advanced.

**LEC 09/06**      **CORPORATE SERVICES**

**09.01**      **Progress Report**

The Committee considered a Progress Report on business conducted in Letterkenny Public Services Centre during 2005.

**09.02**      **Schedule of Meetings**

A Schedule of Meetings for 2006 was agreed as listed:

Thursday 23rd March  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November

**LEC 10/06**      **DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2006, commencing at 10.00 am in the Resource Centre, Raphoe.

*Appendix 1*