

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF INISHOWEN ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE
HELD ON 7TH MARCH, 2005 IN THE CARNDONAGH PUBLIC SERVICES
CENTRE**

Councillors Present:

Councillor Francis Conaghan
Councillor Philip Diggin
Councillor Rena Donaghey
Councillor Marian McDonald
Councillor Denis McGonagle
Councillor Bernard McGuinness
Councillor Pádraig MacLochlainn

Officials Present:

Community, Enterprise & Cultural Services:

Ms. Aideen Doherty, Community, Cultural & Enterprise Development Officer

Corporate Services:

Mr. Eunan Kelly, Area Manager
Ms. Bernadette Quinn, Senior Staff Officer

Housing & Building Services:

Mr. Patsy Lafferty, Area Manager

Planning & Economic Development Services:

Mr. Frank Sweeney, Acting Area Manager

Roads & Transportation Services:

Mr. Pat Gillespie, Area Manager
Mr. Jim McLaughlin, Executive Engineer

Water, Environment & Emergency Services:

Mr. Con McLaughlin, Area Manager
Mr. Donal Casey, Executive Chemist

Inishowen Partnership Company Ltd

Ms. Shauna McClenaghan

Inishowen Rural Development Ltd

Mr. Andrew Ward
Ms. Gillian McColgan

Youth Council:

Mr. Andrew McNulty, Project Officer

Mr. Kevin Kelly, Youth Councillor

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Denis Mc Gonagle

05/11 CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF INISHOWEN ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17TH JANUARY, 2005.

On the proposal of Cllr Rena Donaghey, seconded by Cllr Marian McDonald, the minutes of the meeting of the Inishowen Electoral Area Committee held on 17th January, 2005 were agreed.

05/12 WATER ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Con McLaughlin circulated Progress Report dated 7th March 2005 (Appendix 1).

12.1 Bridgend/Burnfoot Serviced Land Initiative:

Con Mc Laughlin advised the Committee that the recommendation from Capital Design Section at this stage is for stand-alone schemes at each location. He also pointed out that the apparent demand for development at Bridgend has not been evident following the recent Public Consultation process.

The Committee expressed concern at the prospect that multiple housing schemes may be granted Planning Permission at Burnfoot subject to the provision of individual Packages Sewerage Treatment Plants.

Con McLaughlin said that an S.L.I would not be advanced unless there are definitive proposals from Developers.

It was agreed that if the critical mass necessary couldn't be achieved, that other options be explored to avoid the use of Package Sewerage Treatment Plants.

12.2 Buncrana SLI's:

It was noted that €275,000 has been approved for S.L.I.'s at Ballymacarry and Milltown. Cllr Rena Donaghey said that the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government had informed her that there is, currently no design proposals for SLI's in Buncrana with this Department.

The members expressed concern at the lack of communication from Water and Environment in respect of Capital Projects and lack of leadership from officials in Capital Design.

Con McLaughlin asked, that the members encourage Developers in Buncrana to write into Capital Design with their proposals, in an effort to progress the schemes at Milltown and Ballymacarry. Cllr Padraig MacLochlainn said that Buncrana Town Council also had a role to play in promoting these schemes.

It was proposed by Cllr Rena Donaghey, seconded by Cllr Bernard McGuinness and agreed that Jim Holohan, Director of Service, Water, Environment and Emergency Services and staff from Capital Design be requested to attend a special meeting to brief the IEAC on Capital Projects proposed in Inishowen and to present proposals to advance S.L.I.'s.

Cllr Francis Conaghan asked that a staff member from Capital Design contact him, tomorrow (8th March) in relation to Newtowncunningham Sewerage Scheme.

12.3 Movice/Greencastle Sewerage Scheme:

The members discussed the proposed site for Movice/Greencastle SS and stated that there was general agreement that local residents would not object to the proposed site, provided that Tertiary Treatment is provided.

12.4 Carndonagh Community School- Display Cabinet

Con McLaughlin circulated copy of correspondence he had received from the Principal of Carndonagh Community School, seeking permission to place a Display Cabinet showing some of the students work, in the Foyer of the Public Service Centre. It was agreed to accede to the request on condition, space permitting, that the display be relocated to the Library at a later date.

05/13 PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

13.1 Planning Statistics

The members noted Planning Statistics and Recent Refusals. Cllr Rena Donaghey said she wished to acknowledge that the number of planning applications for Inishowen, processed within the two-month period, was well ahead of the national average and also commented that the amount collected in Development Charges must also be above the national average.

Cllr Pdraig MacLochlainn asked that a breakdown of Development Charges collected be provided to the members.

13.2 Planning Refusals:

On the proposal of Cllr Rena Donaghey, it was unanimously agreed that it would be no longer necessary to supply a copy of each Planning Refusal with the Agenda and that instead, a list of refusals only be submitted. It was further agreed that one set of refusals would be made available at the EA Meeting for examination.

13.3 Take-Over of Housing Estates:

Frank Sweeney informed the members that a policy document on "Take Over of Housing Estates" had been submitted to the Senior Management Team and upon receipt of their response, it will be submitted to the S.P.C. He said that Vincent Lynn had indicated his intention to attend an EA Meeting, thereafter to present the final proposals for consideration by the members.

Cllr Francis Conaghan proposed and it was unanimously agreed, that Vincent Lynn and Martin Flanagan be invited to the next EA meeting to give an update on Take-Over of Housing Estates.

13.4 Registration of Quarries - Planning and Development Act 2000:

Frank Sweeney informed the members that in accordance with the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, all quarry owners who haven't received Planning Permission in the five years up to 28th April 2004, must register their Quarries with the Council before 27th April, 2005. If the Quarries are not registered they will be deemed unauthorised and the Council will take action against the Owners. The members welcomed this requirement.

13.5 Planning Conditions:

Cllr Bernard McGuinness asked that steps be taken by the Planning Office to ensure that planning conditions, particularly for multiple housing are being complied with as he considered that some developers were not complying with conditions e.g. tree planting.

13.6 Barrack Hill

The members requested an updated report on the proposals for lands at Barrack Hill.

14.0 ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

14.1 Roads Workshop:

Pat Gillespie circulated copies of Report of Roads Workshop held on 2nd March, 2005, and read out the Report to the members.

Cllr Rena Donaghey referred to the Meenaward GWSS and proposed that the roadworks scheduled for this area should proceed and the Contractor for the GWSS scheme be required to re-instate the section of roadway serving the scheme upon completion.

14.2 Surface Dressing Programme - Roadway at Urris leading to McConway's:

It was unanimously agreed at the request of Cllr Padraig MacLochlainn to amend the Report of the Roads Workshop to read "that the roadway at Urris leading to McConway's would be a suitable candidate for Clar funding".

14.3 CONSIDERATION OF REPORT ON ROADS WORKSHOP HELD ON 2ND MARCH, 2005.

On the proposal of Cllr Rena Donaghey, seconded by Cllr Marian McDonald, the Committee recommended that the Report on the Roads Workshop held on 2nd March, 2005, subject to amendment detailed above be agreed.

The members congratulated Pat Gillespie on his presentation of the Report for the Roads Workshop.

14.4 Schedule of Works for 2005 - Road Design:

Pat Gillespie agreed to obtain a schedule from Road Design for works for 2005 and to circulate it to the Committee.

14.5 Green Road, Merville:

It was agreed that possible sources of funding for Green Road, Merville, would be explored.

14.6 Public Lighting:

The members expressed their dissatisfaction with the service being provided by the ESB Call Centre for reporting faults in public lighting. Pat Gillespie asked that the members email him with details on any occasion that they experience difficulty in reporting a fault and he would refer the matter to Paul Doherty, ESB.

Pat Gillespie agreed to follow up on the repair of 8no. lights presently out of order on the Tiernaleague Road

14.7 Main Street, Buncrana

Cllr Rena Donaghey requested that the lamp standards on the ornate lighting on Buncrana Main Street be painted and the glass cleaned prior to the Tidy Towns Competition, as the Committee were concentrating their efforts on the Main Street in Buncrana this year. Pat Gillespie agreed to arrange this.

14.8 Pedestrian Islands at Burt:

Cllr Francis Conaghan requested that lighting be provided on the Pedestrian Islands at Burt.

14.9 Marine Matters:

It was proposed by Councillor Bernard McGuinness, seconded by Councillor Marian McDonald and agreed that the Marine Engineer be requested to submit a report to every Inishowen Electoral Area Meeting.

14.10 Erosion at Lagg Beach:

The Chairperson informed the members that Vincent Lynn, Marine Engineer, had arranged a meeting concerning coastal erosion Lagg Beach. The meeting to take place at Knockamany Bends, on Friday, 11th March, 2005 at 12.00 noon to coincide with favourable tide conditions. All the EA members were requested to be in attendance. Representatives of Inishowen Tourism also to be invited to attend.

15 INISHOWEN E.A. YOUTH COUNCIL:

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Andrew McNulty, Project Officer and Mr. Kevin Kelly, elected representative for Inishowen EA Youth Council, to the meeting. Kevin Kelly presented the case for the provision of a Pedestrian Crossing to serve the Carndonagh Community School and adjacent Boys N.S. He said he had forwarded a letter to the Principal of the Community School on the matter and intended to raise the issue with the Board of Management.

The members unanimously agreed that a Pedestrian Crossing is vital at this location and said they would support Kevin in his campaign. Pat Gillespie informed the meeting that a Pelican Crossing is being provided in Buncrana this year, which is also on the R238 route and he could not guarantee that a second would be provided this year, but could possibly be provided in 2006. He indicated that an approximate cost for the job would be €12,000 to €13,000.

16 HOUSING

16.2 Assessment Housing Needs 2005:

Patsy Lafferty advised the Committee that the Statutory Assessment of Housing needs is being carried out at present. This has involved writing to everyone on the Housing List and asking them to complete an updated Application Form.

Advertisements have also been placed in the Local Press seeking applications from others who haven't applied. Staff are currently processing Housing Assessment applications, of which approximately 60% of forms have been returned, reminders will be sent out to the remaining applicants on the housing waiting list.

16.3 Housing Allocations:

It was noted that the next schemes for allocation are 10no. houses at Malin, 30no. houses in Buncrana and 30no. houses at Carndonagh, which, are expected to be completed in late Spring/early Summer.

16.4 Central Heating Programme 2005:

Patsy Lafferty informed the members that the programme is designed to address the lack of central heating, smoke detectors, insulation and draft proofing in older houses. He was seeking the member's approval to have the remaining rented houses in the following schemes in the application for funding under the 2005 Programme (23 houses in total):

- Bonemaine (old) Bridgend
- Ballymena Cottages, Glengad
- 3no. S.I.'s (constructed pre 1980) in Newtowncunningham and Carrigans.

On the proposed of Cllr Francis Conaghan seconded by Cllr Rena Donaghey the Committee recommended that the 3no. schemes as outlined be included in the application for funding in the Central Heating Programme 2005.

Councillor Bernard McGuinness requested that 6no. houses that are presently experiencing problems with back boilers systems, be considered for central heating, in the event that additional monies become available in 2005. Patsy Lafferty advised that only houses with no central heating can be considered under the programme.

16.5 Clár Programme 2005/06 - Local Authority Housing Estate Enhancement Scheme:

On the proposal of Councillor Bernard McGuinness, seconded by Councillor Marian McDonald, the Committee recommended that the Council include Seaview Terrace, Culdaff in the application for funding under the Clár Programme 2005 for Housing Estate Enhancement Scheme.

Patsy Lafferty pointed out that up to €20,000 is available and that 5% must be contributed locally and that the local contribution was funded in 2003 through the Members Development Fund.

16.6 Housing Capital Allocation Programme 2004-2008:

Patsy Lafferty informed the members that the Council had been allocated 1300 new starts for the county under the 2004-2008 Capital Allocation. He hoped to have details of the new programme for Inishowen EA available at the next meeting.

16.7 Cashel Na Cor Learning Centre:

Councillor Rena Donaghey queried the possibility of Cashel Na Cor Learning Centre being considered for inclusion in proposals for the Council's land bank in Bunrana. The Group wish to provide sheltered housing for persons with disabilities. It was noted that the Centre are now registered as developers and could draw down funding immediately if a site became available for this proposal.

Patsy Lafferty undertook to investigate the matter and revert to Councillor Donaghey.

16.8 Affordable Housing Scheme:

Councillor Pdraig MacLochlainn requested that the Council make the provision of Affordable Housing a priority in Inishowen and expressed concern at the delay in progressing the scheme.

16.9 Voluntary Housing:

Councillor Philip Diggin raised concerns at the Council's policy whereby tenants who are allocated a house in a Voluntary Housing Scheme cannot purchase this house and are afraid to decline the offer, as the Council may not offer them another house. He considered that these tenants should not be removed from the Council's Waiting List.

Councillor Bernard McGuinness express concern at the level of rents being charged by some Voluntary Housing Groups (excluding St. Vincent de Paul).

Patsy Lafferty said that the matter of tenants purchasing houses provided by Voluntary Bodies was a national policy matter, but he advised that there is Mortgage Allowance available to tenants of Voluntary Housing who surrender their

house in favour of either purchasing in the private market or making application for a house under the Affordable Housing Scheme.

17 COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND ENTERPRISE

17.2 Rehab People of the Year Awards:

The members unanimously agreed the following amendment to the minutes of the meeting of 17th January, 2005:

It was proposed by Councillor Padraig MacLochlainn, seconded by Councillor Bernard McGuinness and agreed that:

Mr. John A. McLaughlin, Carrowmenagh be nominated for the Rehab People of the Year Awards.

It was proposed by Councillor Bernard McGuinness, seconded by Councillor Padraig MacLochlainn and agreed that

Mr. Clement MacSuibhne, Ballyliffin be nominated for the Rehab People of the Year Awards.

It was noted that the presentations are to be made at a function in Ballybofey on 2nd April, 2005.

17.3 Inch Lake:

Aideen Doherty said that this item has been placed on the Agenda again following the Minister's visit to the county. A meeting will now take place with Joe Gatins, National Parks and Wildlife.

17.4 Naming of Housing Estates:

An Post has requested that the Council include the townland when naming a new housing estate, as this facilitates location, for postal deliveries.

17.5 Film Commission:

The members unanimously congratulated Aideen Doherty and staff for their work in promoting Inishowen as the location for a new film, currently in production and acknowledged the economic and tourism benefits it brought to the area.

17.6 Playgrounds:

Aideen Doherty re-assured the members that the policy for funding playgrounds, ensures that there will be one provided per Electoral Area.

17.7 Donegal Diaspora Initiatives:

Aideen Doherty outlined the initiatives being undertaken to contact Donegal Diaspora worldwide in an effort to create a virtual community of Donegal natives both nationally and internationally through the use of information technology.

17.8 Scheme of Arts Grants 2005:

It was noted that the closing date for Arts Grants 2005 is 14th March, 2005.

17.9 Sea Life Centre:

Aideen Doherty circulated copy of a report prepared by Kevin O'Connor, Co-Ordinator, outlining events in relation to proposals for a Sea Life Centre in Donegal.

Councillor Padraig MacLochlainn asked why Greencastle had been included as a possible location for the Sea Life Centre as he was not aware of any source that had been seeking to have the area considered for this project.

Councillor Francis Conaghan proposed and it was unanimously agreed that the Council should examine a total tourism package incorporating An Grianan of Aileach, Inch Lake, Fahan Marina and facilities in Bunrana town.

17.10 Harry P. Swan Collection:

Councillor Philip Diggin referred to the Harry P. Swan collection of artefacts from all over the world, which he had bequeathed to the people of Bunrana. It was noted that the material was deposited with the Royal Irish Academy as there was no suitable display facilities in Bunrana and that it is now housed in the National Museum.

It was proposed by Councillor Bernard McGuinness, seconded by Councillor Padraig MacLochlainn and recommended that funding for an extension to Bunrana Library to accommodate the Swan Collection be applied for.

Aideen Doherty advised that she would contact Judith McCarthy, Museum Curator concerning the matter.

17.12 Tourist Office in Bunrana:

Councillor Philip Diggin raised concerns about the small number of opening hours in operation at Bunrana Tourist Office. It was proposed by Councillor Diggin, seconded by Councillor Bernard McGuinness and recommended that a representative from North West Tourism be invited to the next EA meeting.

Councillor Francis Conaghan conveyed apologies for being unable to remain for the rest of the meeting.

18 CORPORATE SERVICES

18.2 Citizens Information Centre:

Eunan Kelly informed the members that the Citizens Information Centre is provided by Donegal Information Services on behalf of the partner agencies and has been funded on a partnership basis by the agencies for a three-year pilot period. The initial pilot period is due to expire in June 2005.

Plans are currently being drawn up, in consultation with the partner agencies to evaluate the project with a view to setting out the development programme for the coming two to three years. The role of the Independent Information Units will be reviewed as part of this work and the evaluation will be expected to make recommendations on the ongoing provision of information advice and advocacy in the Public Service Centres.

It was proposed by Councillor Bernard McGuinness, seconded by Councillor Padraig MacLochlainn and unanimously agreed that the service being provided by Anne Owens and Dermot Curran is essential and expressed a wish that it be continued.

18.2 The Old Fire Station Site in Carndonagh.

Eunan Kelly advised the meeting that arising from the recommendation of the Committee at the January IEAC Meeting Fitz Howard intends to discuss with Pat Gillespie Senior Executive Engineer Roads Service the implications for the transfer of this Asset to the Roads Service.

It should be noted that the Capital Allocation for new Fire Stations takes into consideration the recoument of the asset value of the old fire Stations.

Councillor McGuinness stated, and the Members unanimously agreed a number of years ago that proposals should be considered for improving the junction, the provision of bus parking and public toilets, waiting area and a Tourist Information Centre.

18.3 Schedule of Meetings 2005:

The Schedule of EA Meetings for 2005 were considered and unanimously agreed by the members.

18.4 Progress Report:

The members requested that a Progress Report for all Services be provided on an annual basis.

19.0 INISHOWEN PARTNERSHIP COMPANY:

The Chairman welcomed Ms. Shauna McClenaghan, Manager, IPC to the meeting. Ms. Mc Clenaghan gave a Power Point presentation outlining a brief overview of their work comprising three different areas - Services to the Unemployed, Community Development and Community-Based Youth Initiatives. The Chairman thanked Ms. McClenaghan for her comprehensive presentation.

20.0 INISHOWEN RURAL DEVELOPMENT LTD:

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Andrew Ward and Ms. Gillian McColgan, IRDL, to the meeting. Mr. Ward circulated copies of his presentation outlining their activities to date. He said he was examining ways of bringing money into the region and was exploring the possibility of establishing territorial links with Scotland. He informed the members that Inter-Reg funding post 2006 will provide 75% co-funding for projects including Tourism and Cross-Border Environment projects. There are requirements that the areas must have a cross border within 175 km, of which Inishowen/Scotland would qualify. He said there is a legal requirement that local authorities must advance the project and, he had arranged to meet with the County Manager and Michael Heaney in this regard.

Mr. Ward said that he had never approached the County Council for assistance and not received it.

With regard to the progressing of an Inter-Reg Link between Scotland and Inishowen, he emphasised the need for forward planning and said there is a demand from Scotland and from Inishowen to make this link.

Greencastle/Scotland Ferry:

Councillor Bernard McGuinness referred to previous proposals by the Council to provide a ferry between Greencastle and Scotland and asked how it could be advanced through this funding. Andrew Ward said that Gerry Finn from the BMW Committee is very interested in promoting this link.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Ward and Ms. McColgan for their presentation.

Appendix 1

WATER & ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

Report to Inishowen EAC Meeting 7th March 2005

AGENDA Item no.2 - Update reports from previous meeting:

From minutes of previous meeting 17th January 2004, using same notation:

8.5 Landfill Site in Inishowen

The Members were informed that work is presently in progress in order to locate a suitable landfill site for Inishowen. Proposals for a suitable site should be submitted to Donal Casey, Senior Executive Chemist, Letterkenny, who will attend today's meeting.

8.6 Reservoir at Culdaff

The possibility of obtaining funding for the provision of a reservoir at Culdaff and of having it included on the Water Services Investment Programme, has been referred to our Capital Design section for consideration.

Request for meeting with members and Director of Service re progression of the Water Service Investment programme, has been referred to Divisional Manager, Capital Design for consideration with the Director.

AGENDA Items no. 3-6 - Progress Reports:

Await updated progress reports for:

Capital Programmes:

Major Capital Programme

Service Land Initiative (SLI's)

Rural Water Programme:

Small Capital Programme

See attached Progress Report for
Group Scheme Programme

Capital Programmes (General Comments):

Lagan Water Supply.

This is substantially complete except for snagging, testing, and commissioning of M&E works for the water audit meters as previously described.

Malin Sewerage Scheme.

We met with the Department in Dublin and they have given us a steer on what is required to progress the scheme. In a nutshell they will not accept the scale and scope of the scheme submitted and have requested that the Council 'phase' the scheme to make it 'affordable' and 'better value for money'. This requires us to redo the water pricing report and to submit the anticipated phasing. This is being worked on at present and we have a review meeting with the consultants next week.

Moville Sewerage Scheme

Progress as per the templates. Regarding the site we are advancing the site between Moville and Greencastle as the recommended site and EIA and outfall modelling is ongoing.

Bridgend & Burnfoot

We have indicated that our recommendation for Bridgend and Burnfoot at this stage is stand alone schemes at each location. Although I would again stress that the apparent demand for development in Bridgend has not been demonstrated by the recent public process we have gone through.

General SLIs

There is a need for clarity on SLIs, their purpose, and the resources and financing required to implement them. Our policy is that no SLI will be considered for advancement unless developers clearly demonstrate the demand for such a scheme through definitive proposals. In this context I have seen no real demand for the advancement of SLI schemes for Ballymacarry and Milltown.