

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF STRANORLAR ELECTORAL  
AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY  
8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2005, IN JACKSON'S HOTEL, BALLYBOFEY**

**Members Present:-**

Cllr J J Reid (Chairperson)  
Cllr Patrick McGowan  
Cllr Alice Bonner

**Officials Present:-**

Gerry Gilroy, Area Manager, Corporate Services  
Eileen Doherty, Staff Officer, Corporate Services  
Michael Breslin, Area Manager, Water/Environment/Emergency Services  
Brendan Porter, Area Engineer, Water/Environment/Emergency Services  
Peter Donaghy, Senior Executive Engineer, Water Services Design Office  
Mary Hannigan, Area Manager, Housing  
Denis Kelly, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development  
Conal McGettigan, Area Planner  
Claire McGeever, Area Engineer, Roads  
Adrian McCool, Assistant Engineer, Roads  
Claire Mulhall, Community & Enterprise Development Officer

**Youth Councillors Present:-**

Andrew McNulty, Project Officer  
Fiona Gallen  
Jessica Stag

**Apologies:-**

Peadar Thomas, Area Manager, Roads  
Cliodhna Campbell, Senior Engineer, Road Design

<b>SEC 08/00 ADOPTION OF MINUTES</b>
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**08.01 Adoption of Minutes**

Cllr McGowan raised an objection to Minute Ref 03.06 requesting that this matter be struck from the minutes.

He submitted that minutes were for the purpose of noting actions agreed by Members and not for personal interactions between Members.

Mr Gilroy confirmed that the Draft minutes were submitted for member's approval and can be amended in accordance with member's wishes.

Following a short discussion on the matter it was agreed to defer the adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2005 until the next meeting and request Mr Eunan Sweeney, Meetings Administrator to attend and clarify the position regarding what is to be recorded in the minutes.

**08.02 Votes of Sympathy**

The committee wished to express their sympathy to Eileen Doherty, Corporate Services & Patrick Doherty, Town Clerk, Letterkenny on the recent death of their grandmother, Margaret Moy.

The committee also wished to express their sympathy to Marie Quinn, Finance on the recent death of her mother-in-law, Kitty Quinn.

**08.03 Vote of Congratulations**

The committee wished to congratulate Gary Murray on his recent success in the Cross Country Championships.

<b>SEC 09/00 WATER/ENVIRONMENT/EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>
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**09.01 Group Schemes**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda.

**Stranlongford/Trentabouy** - Mr Breslin advised the Members that the group had now purchased the pumps for the scheme and they would be installed by the beginning of April.

**Creggan** - Most of the houses on the scheme are now connected. The group are currently awaiting pumps required to serve the remainder of the scheme. Cllr Reid raised a query in relation to the house at the end of the line that wasn't connected to the scheme. Mr Breslin agreed to check out this matter.

**Gleneely** - Following a query from Cllr Reid, Mr Breslin advised that this scheme had not yet been taken over by the Council. Cllr Reid submitted that there was no pressure at the end of the scheme at Corradoeey. Mr Breslin agreed to examine.

**Cloughroe** - Mr McCool submitted that there was road works scheduled for this location shortly and if possible any pipe laying for the scheme should be carried out before then. Mr Breslin advised that this scheme was only at the preliminary stages of planning.

Cllr Bonner submitted that the Roads Section and Water Services Section should be working closely together when planning their respective schedule of works as the Council were spending large sums of money on road surfacing and then going back at a later stage digging up the roads again for pipe-laying. This was agreed.

**Admiran Group Sewerage Scheme** - Members were advised that the contractor's insurances are currently being examined and once these have been approved works may commence.

## **09.02 Sanitary Capital Projects**

Mr Donaghy made a presentation to the meeting outlining the various Sanitary Capital projects in the Water Services Programme. He also outlined the relevant legislation/policy and the various stages involved from the planning process to the construction process of capital projects for Members' information.

Members thanked Mr Donaghy for his presentation and raised a number of queries regarding the current capital projects in the Stranorlar Electoral Area as detailed below.

### **Ballybofey/Stranorlar Sewer Extension**

Cllr Bonner raised a query in relation to the up to date position on this scheme. Mr Donaghy advised that the field works were now complete and that a report should be available within 2 weeks. The next step is to prepare a model of the existing network. This model will indicate the existing crisis points in the sewer network and also highlight where further crisis points are likely to arise in the future. It is hoped this model will be complete in 4-5 months. This process will dictate the design of the upgrading works.

It is hoped that the preliminary design will be prepared and forwarded to the Department for approval before the end of the year. Following a query from Members Mr Donaghy advised that funding was only available at present for upgrading the existing network and the preliminary report would only be for these upgrading works.

Members raised a query in relation to funding for the extension of the scheme. Mr Donaghy advised that it may be possible to source funding from other programmes to extend the scheme however such extensions would have to be developer led.

#### **Upgrade Wastewater Treatment Plant at Convoy**

Mr Donaghy advised that funding was available from the Small Schemes Programme and the SLI programme to progress these works. It is hoped to issue tenders for the contract by the end of the week and that construction would commence during the summer. The works will involve upgrading the pipeline going into the treatment works, new preliminary treatment and storm holding tanks. The scheme can be further upgraded at a later stage under the large capital schemes.

#### **Castlefin Sewerage Scheme**

Mr Donaghy advised that this scheme was still at planning stage. Due to the size of the town and the lack of existing infrastructure he advised that the brief going to the Department must be 100% accurate.

#### **Killygordon Sewerage Scheme**

Mr Donaghy advised that this was being progressed as a joint scheme with a private developer. He has met with the developer and is expecting a planning application to be submitted shortly. An agreement has been

reached with the developer who will put the infrastructure in place and the Council will contribute to this work. The scheme will be developed as a Council scheme at a later stage and will have the potential to cover the crossroads area.

#### **09.03 Civic Amenity Centre**

Mr Breslin advised Members that the tenders for this project were currently being considered and it is hoped that works would commence shortly.

#### **09.04 Other Matters Arising**

##### **Ballybofey/Stranorlar Leisure Centre**

Cllr McGowan questioned why this matter wasn't listed as a separate item on the agenda as was agreed at a previous meeting. Members also expressed their dissatisfaction at the fact that it was agreed at the previous meeting to organise an urgent meeting with Mr Holohan and Mr Kilcoyne to discuss this matter however this meeting has not yet happened. It was agreed that this meeting would now take place on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March in Lifford. Mr Breslin agreed to follow up this matter with the Director.

Mr Breslin circulated a report at the meeting outlining the up to date position. Members raised a query in relation to the report on shared arrangements that was to be available at the end of February 2005. Mr Breslin advised that the report wasn't quite complete at this stage however it would be available for the meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

<b>SEC 10/00 ROADS &amp; TRANSPORTATION</b>
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#### **10.01 Dreenan Bridge**

Mr McCool advised Members that the final account had not yet been handed over to the local area office. Members requested that a report be made available for the meeting already arranged for March 24<sup>th</sup> outlining the funding received for the project and a bill of costs for the project in order that the current financial position may be ascertained. Mr McCool advised that the next priority would be to purchase the house at the junction and a flood study would also have to be carried out.

### **10.02 2005 Roadwork's Programme**

Ms McGeever circulated a draft programme to Members at the meeting. She requested Members to examine the report and it was agreed to hold a Roads meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> March where the programme could be discussed in further detail and agreed. Cllr Bonner submitted that the draft programme circulated was not the same as the one circulated at a previous roads meeting in October 2004. Ms McGeever agreed to check the report previously submitted and would have same available for the meeting with Members on the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

Cllr Reid proposed that €100,000 be taken from the overall Roads budget for the Stranorlar area to begin the purchase the land for the development of the link road from Glenfin Street to Donegal Road as no funding would become available until the land was purchased.

Cllrs McGowan and Bonner opposed the proposal submitting all the money was needed for the road works programme.

Cllr McGowan submitted that the purchase of this land could be funded from the Development Contribution Scheme. Mr Denis Kelly advised Members that the Development Contribution Scheme adopted by the Council did not allow for development charges to be imposed on commercial properties to fund roads but that Special Development contributions can be imposed where specific exceptional costs not covered by a scheme are incurred in respect of public infrastructure and gave examples relating to special road's development contributions levied in respect of Barry Jackson's developments within hotel complex and also Thomas Gallen's development at rear of Villa Rose. He confirmed that these contributions were liable to appeal. Members submitted that this fact was not highlighted to them at the time the scheme was being adopted.

### **10.03 Stranorlar Car Park**

Members noted the report circulated at the meeting. Ms McGeever advised that the footpath realignment at this location would be completed by the end of March. The Council are currently waiting for Eircom to move the poles.

Cllr Reid expressed his concern at the current condition of the car park in Stranorlar submitting that the area is an eyesore and that the

businesses in the area don't have a decent car park. He further submitted that the Stranorlar area is being badly served by the Council.

#### **10.04 McClay's Corner**

Ms McGeever advised the Members that design works were ongoing for this location. Members requested that Ms Campbell be requested to attend the Roads meeting organised for 24<sup>th</sup> March to update them on progress.

#### **10.05 Adopted Policy on Members Public Lighting**

Ms McGeever highlighted the main issues in the policy: -

Each Members has a budget of €3,200

Applications may be submitted any time during the year however lights are only installed twice a year - springtime and September.

Cllr Bonner submitted that if there are problems with applications Members should be notified immediately and not when lights are being installed.

Cllr Bonner sought clarification in relation to the budget whether it had to be spent in a particular year or whether it rolled over. She submitted if budgets weren't rolling over then Members would need to be notified. Cllr McGowan submitted that the policy adopted by the Members states that budgets do roll over therefore this can only be changed by Members.

Cllr Reid acknowledged the fact that the new policy was in place however he submitted this did not improve the service being provided by the ESB. He also submitted that the ESB gave an undertaking at a previous Electoral area meeting to improve their service to the Council however this has not happened.

#### **10.06 Road Design Projects**

Members noted the report circulated at the meeting by Ms McGeever on behalf of Ms Campbell.

#### **Galwolie Bridge**

Ms McGeever advised Members that this project was now being progressed through the Part 8 Planning process.

She also presented a drawing to the Members showing the proposed realignment of the road. Following a query from Cllr Bonner Ms McGeever advised that funding for the project was coming from a Gaeltacht Programme.

### **Glenfin Street to Donegal Road Link Road**

Ms McGeever advised Members that this project was going through the Part 8 planning process on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Drawings for the project were available for inspection.

### **Twin Towns Traffic Study**

Members were advised that all submissions received regarding the traffic study have now been reviewed and a draft final report has been issued by the Consultants for review. A final report is expected by the end of March 2005 and will be available for Members at the next Electoral Area meeting.

## **10.07 Other Matters Arising**

### **Walls at Stranorlar**

Cllr Bonnar requested that the walls outside the houses on the Letterkenny Road be plastered.

### **Traffic Calming at Stranorlar**

Ms McGeever advised that an allocation of €30,000 had been received from the NRA for the provision of two extra traffic islands at this location.

### **Environmental Works Ballybofey Bridge**

Cllr Bonnar asked that the works on Ballybofey Bridge be completed at an early date.

### **Kerbing at Ard McCarron**

Cllr Bonner requested that kerbing be carried out at this location.

### **Castlefin Partnership Initiative**

Cllr Bonnar asked that a right hand turning lane be provided into this premises at an early date.

### **Surface Dressing at Ard McCool**

Ms McGeever advised that she had examined the road at this location and advised that surface dressing would not be viable. The road would have to be placed on the road-strengthening programme. It was agreed to discuss this matter further at the roads meeting on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

Ms Hannigan submitted that she may be able to seek funding from Peace II funding and would discuss the matter further with Ms McGeever and Mr McCool.

### **Navenny Bridge**

Following a query from Cllr McGowan Ms McGeever advised that funding of €15,000 was available to do the works at this location.

Members proposed and it was agreed that all bridges should now be left wide enough in order that they can be stone faced. Members submitted that FAS Schemes should be employed to carry out the stone facing and that local stone should be used. These works should be included in the original costing for the upgrade of the bridge.

### **Bridge Programme**

Ms McGeever advised that the bridge programme also had to be prioritised however this could be discussed at the meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Castlederg Road**

Cllr McGowan requested that road strengthening works be carried out at this location following a recent incident. Ms McGeever advised that the situation was being examined at present.

### **Grass Cutting**

Cllr McGowan asked what arrangements were put in place by the Roads and Housing services for grass cutting this year. Ms Hannigan advised that the Housing Section would be employing the same contractor this year again.

Cllr Bonnar submitted that the Chamber of Commerce were sponsoring men to do the grass cutting at Ard McCool and requested the Council sponsor the purchase of a suitable lawnmower for them.

It was agreed that the Housing and Roads Sections would discuss the matter further and report to the next meeting.

<b>SEC 11/00 PLANNING &amp; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>
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#### **11.01 Matters arising from previous meeting**

##### **Enforcement Notice - P622221358**

Mr Kelly advised the Members that this Court case had been adjourned until the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2005 when the Judge will give his final decision.

#### **11.02 Recent Refusals**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda.

#### **11.03 Enforcement Notices**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda.

Mr Kelly advised the Members that a number of cases in the Stranorlar Electoral area were being pursued at present.

#### **11.04 Planning Statistics**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda.

## **11.05 Other Matters Arising**

### **Increase in Fees for Planning Appeals**

Mr Kelly notified Members of the recent increase in planning appeal fees introduced by An Bord Pleanala.

He also advised that further information was available on An Bord Pleanala's Internet site.

### **Casual Trading**

Mr Kelly advised the Members that the Appeal hearing was scheduled for the following week and he would keep them informed of the outcome.

### **Place Names Committee**

Cllr McGowan referred to the above committee submitting that it was preferable that new housing developments must be of local significance. He requested that contact numbers and lists of suitable names be circulated with relevant Planning decisions.

### **Rural Housing Policy.**

Clr Reid advised that Mr Jim Harley had requested members to attend a Workshop to discuss Rural Housing Policy on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> March at 9:30am in Lifford. This was agreed.

<b>SEC 12/00 HOUSING &amp; BUILDING</b>
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## **12.1 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting**

### **Voluntary Housing Project Mullindrait Stranorlar**

Ms Hannigan advised the Members that funding of €3,532,926 had been approved by the Department for this project.

### **Voluntary Housing Project Convoy**

Ms Hannigan advised the Members that North & West Housing had not yet finalised the purchase of the site. The money was currently with the Council's solicitors however it cannot be released until the purchase of the site is complete. Following a query from Cllr Reid regarding the reason for the delay Ms Hannigan advised that there were a lot of legalities to be sorted however made it clear that the Council was not holding up the process. Members agreed to invite a representative from North & West Housing to the next meeting.

A copy of correspondence recently received from the Convoy Playgroup Development Committee was given to each elected member.

### **12.2 Housing Capital Programme**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda.

Following a query from Cllr Bonnar regarding the response to the Turnkey Development advertisement Ms Hannigan advised the Members that an application for 47 houses had been received for the Ballybofey/Stranorlar area. An expression of interest was also received for the Castlefin area. Final costs for these projects had yet to be agreed however the Housing Design Section was currently working closely with the relevant contractors.

Again Cllr Reid submitted that progress in relation to S.I houses was very slow. Ms Hannigan acknowledged this fact and referred to the document currently being prepared to speed up the process. Cllr Reid submitted that a stipulation in relation to time frame should be placed on contractors building the houses. Ms Hannigan submitted that the 2 main items that hold up progress are title and suitable water supply.

Cllr McGowan referred to queries raised at the previous meeting in relation to individual applications and expressed his annoyance that no correspondence had yet been received. Ms Hannigan advised that she had referred these queries to the Housing Design Section for response and would follow this up.

### **12.03 Social Housing**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda.

#### **12.04 Casual Vacancies**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda.

#### **12.05 Other Matters Arising**

##### **Central Heating Programme**

Members noted the report circulated at the meeting.

Ms Hannigan advised that the amount of the allocation is not yet known however she presented a draft priority list for Member's approval and advised that this list may be increased/decreased depending on the amount of the allocation received. Members will be kept informed of progress. Members agreed the list.

##### **Peace II Programme**

Ms Hannigan advised Members that the amount of funding under this initiative was not yet known however she expected the funding to be in the region of €60 - €65,000 as in previous years.

Ms Hannigan proposed that revitalisation works be carried out at the following housing estates when funding became available:

Ard McCool/Mulreany Terrace, Stranorlar

Glen Patrick Park, Ballybofey

Liscooley

Members accepted this proposal.

##### **CLAR Local Authority Housing Estate Enhancement Scheme 2005**

Ms Hannigan advised the Members that this initiative was also being continued this year and a request has been received from the Council to submit details of proposed eligible projects for consideration. As in the previous year the only eligible estate in the Electoral area is in Cloghan however it doesn't meet the criteria. The Department had accepted the application last year however no indication has been given that the same dispensation will be given this year. Ms Hannigan requested Member's views on the matter.

### **Playground Development Programme**

In response to Community & Enterprise Section's request for expressions of interest under the above programme Ms Hannigan advised the Members that she submitted Glen Patrick Park, Ballybofey for consideration. Members agreed.

### **12.06 Office Accommodation**

Members noted the correspondence circulated at the meeting received by Mr Howard from the Department in response to the Council's submission for funding for the proposed One Stop Shop in Stranorlar. Ms Hannigan advised Members that Mr Howard is currently preparing a response for the Department. Following a short discussion Members agreed to request a further meeting with the County Manager.

<b>SEC 13/00 COMMUNITY &amp; ENTERPRISE</b>
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### **13.01 Community, Culture & Enterprise Section**

#### **Playgrounds**

Ms Mulhall advised Members that application forms had been sent to all groups from whom expressions of interest were received. The closing date is in 2 weeks time and all applications are to be returned to Ms Eadhaoin Doherty, Carndonagh Public Service Centre. Ms Mulhall advised the Members that a list of all applications received for the Stranorlar area would be available for the next meeting for Members to prioritise.

#### **Tourism Brochure**

Ms Mulhall advised Members that the tourism brochure went for printing the previous day. She advised Cllr McGowan that copies would be available for him for his trip to New York.

### **Donegal Sport Partnership**

Ms Mulhall advised Members that the AGM had taken place the previous week. The closing date for the club development programme had now expired.

### **Pilot Integration Areas**

Members noted the report circulated at the meeting outlining the work carried out by the County Development Board to date.

### **Peace 11 Task Force Funding**

Ms Mulhall circulated a report at the meeting outlining all the funding allocated under this initiative since 2002 - approximately €7m.

Ms Mulhall advised that it is proposed to extend the programme for a further two years and it is envisaged that further funding will be made available to the County through the County Council led Task Force. Subject to funding being available a call will be made for applications in early to mid 2005.

### **RAPID**

Cllr McGowan submitted that the twin towns of Ballybofey/Stranorlar is the third biggest town in the county but does not have any specific status such as Town Council, Clar/Gaeltacht area. He proposed that some sort of special status should be sought for the towns and that there may be an opportunity to do so under the RAPID programme to achieve this.

Ms Mulhall advised that the County Development Board /County Council were seeking the extension of this scheme to County Donegal.

### **13.02 Cultural Services**

Members noted the report circulated at the meeting.

### **13.03 Youth Council**

Ms Stag raised the issue of Employment Rights for young people and in particular the issue of lack of information on issues such as pay, employment rights, and minimum wage. A copy of the Youth Councillors' Information Poster was circulated to Members for their information.

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Cllr Bonnar pointed out that this was not an issue for the County Council but as an employer herself she felt that all employers are aware of these matters.

Mr McNulty advised that young people themselves had raised this issue with the Youth Councillors' and as agreed they were just keeping Members informed of issues raised and under discussion.

Ms Gallen advised Members that Donegal Youth Council in partnership with Youth Information Centres in Letterkenny and Stranorlar have made an application to Leader to host a Conference on young people's rights.

Mr McNulty informed the Members that the Youth Councillors were also feeding into a focus group as part of the Family Resource Centre application that a Twin Towns Community Group were working on in relation to "Facilities for Young People".

Cllr Bonnar submitted that the Youth Councillors should have full access to the media to highlight issues and encouraged members of the Press present to give their support.

Cllr Reid thanked the Youth Councillors for attending and for their fine presentations to the meeting.

### **Departure of Ms Claire Mulhall**

Ms Mulhall advised the Members that she was transferring from the post of Community Development Officer for the Donegal/Stranorlar Electoral Areas and being reassigned to Headquarters in Lifford. This was her last electoral area meeting and her replacement Mr Barney McLaughlin would be present at the next meeting.

Members paid tribute to Claire for all her hard work over the last number of years, adding that she did her job in an efficient and helpful way and they were sorry to be losing her. All members wished her the best of luck in her new position.

<b>SEC 14/00 DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>
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It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2005 at 2pm.

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