

## **MINUTES OF MEETING OF**

### **GLENTIES ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2009, IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE, DUNGLOE**

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**Members Present:** Cllr Kelly  
Cllr Slowey  
Cllr Bonner  
Cllr Gallagher  
Cllr Doherty  
Cllr Alcorn

#### **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Frank Sweeney – Senior Executive Planner  
John Gallagher – Senior Executive Engineer, Water & Environment  
Virginia McLoone - Area Manager, Corporate Services  
Paul Mc Gill – Area Manager, Housing & Building  
John Hegarty – Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation  
John Mc Elwaine – Executive Engineer, WEE, Central Services  
Damian Mc Dermott, Senior Executive Engineer, NRDO  
Berni Gallagher, Staff Officer, Corporate Services

**APOLOGIES:** Brendan Mc Fadden, Area Manager, Roads & Transportation  
Charles Sweeney, Area Manager, Community & Enterprise

#### **GEA 45/09 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2009**

On the proposal of Cllr. Bonner, seconded by Cllr. Alcorn, the minutes of meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009 were agreed.

#### **GEA 46/09 VOTE OF SYMPATHY**

The Committee unanimously proposed a vote of sympathy to Cllr. O Dochartaigh on the recent death of his sister-in-law.

## **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**GEA 47/09**

### **PLANNING STATISTICS**

**47.1**

The Planning Manager updated the Committee in relation to planning statistics circulated with the agenda and informed Members that there had been a 40% reduction in the number of applications when compared to the same period in 2008.

**47.2**

### **CONSIDERATION OF RECENT REFUSALS**

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda in relation to Planning refusals during the period 28.2.2009 – 23.4.2009.

**47.3**

### **ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS**

The Committee noted the enforcement statistics circulated with the agenda. Cllr. Bonner expressed dissatisfaction in the delay in responses being received from the Council's legal advisors especially in one particular case which had been referred for legal advice five months ago. The Area Manager explained that staffing issues within the legal team are delaying replies.

**47.4**

### **LOCAL AREA PLAN PREPARATION**

The Area Manager informed the Committee that he had requested Gerry Richards to attend the meeting. The Members expressed disappointment that Mr. Richards was unable to meet with them.

**47.5**

### **DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME**

In response to Members queries on the levying of sewer charges on developments outside the sewer area, the Area Manager confirmed that all applicants are liable for said charges. The Area Manager suggested that with regard to multiple developments, developers should enter into discussions with the Planning and Water & Environment Services to come to a mutual solution.

Cllr. Alcorn requested that all queries on Development Charges be scrutinised individually and that the terms for payment by instalment be clearly explained to applicants.

**47.6**

### **LETTER RE. BONA FIDE APPLICANTS**

In reply to a query from Cllr. Kelly, the Area Manager informed the Committee that letters submitted by Councillors and Senators confirming that applicants for planning permission are local/indigenous Members of the community are accepted and not questioned by Planning Staff. Cllr. Doherty suggested that if there is any question on the validity of any bona fide letter, Members should discuss directly with the Planning Service.

**47.7 ENTRANCES ONTO N56**

The Area Manager confirmed that no changes had taken place in the NRA Legislation regarding entrances onto the N56.

**47.8 CASUAL TRADING**

In response to a query from Cllr. Bonner regarding Casual Trading in the new car park in Dungloe, the Members were informed that as a court case is pending in relation to Casual Trading, no progress can be made on this matter.

**47.9 PLANNING STAFF**

In response to Members queries regarding the staffing situation, the Area Manager informed the Committee that the Section will be losing a Technician in August and an Assistant Planner in July. Two more Assistant Planners will have their contracts ended in 2010.

The Committee thanked the Area Manager and his staff for all their co-operation and assistance.

## **ROADS & TRANSPORTATION**

**GEA 48/09**

### **UPDATE ON ROAD WORKS PROGRAMME 2009**

**48.1**

John Hegarty, Executive Engineer informed the Committee that following agreement of the original Roadworks Programme in February 2009, subsequent cuts in funding had resulted in some amendments.

**48.2**

### **SURFACE DRESSING PROGRAMME 2009**

The Committee noted that the status of the Surface Dressing Programme agreed with members in March 2009 remains unchanged.

**48.3**

### **RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES**

Members agreed at workshop to minimise the allocations on each job in the Restoration Programme following a 40% reduction in the overall allocation. The Executive Engineer informed Committee that drainage and preparatory work had been carried out on 50% of the Programme and it is hoped to start the completion works next week.

Cllr. Alcorn requested that works would not be carried out in bad weather in order to make most use of the funding.

**48.4**

### **MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME**

The Committee expressed concern at the reduction in the maintenance allocation. Cllr. Kelly advised that it is vital that the employment of the 43 no. outdoor staff be continued and suggested that FAS Schemes be applied for to assist with drainage and stone works. In response to Cllr. Alcorn's query regarding the involvement of Arranmore Co-op in maintenance works on the island, the Executive Engineer stated that due to cut backs, works will be carried out solely by Council staff and the Co-op will not be involved.

**48.5**

### **EU CO-FINANCE**

Cllr. Doherty expressed major concerns at the reduction in funding for Back of Errigal, Gweedore/Gortahork via coast, Glenties/Frosses, Fintown/Ballybofey roads.

Cllr. Bonner supported by Cllr. Gallagher emphasised his frustration at the current state of the R252 road at Kingarow, Fintown and stated that this road needs to be prioritised.

The Committee also voiced their concerns in relation to the dangerous conditions of a number of bridges, which have been coned off and left unattended to for long periods.

The Executive Engineer informed Members that due to financial constraints the Ballinamore section would be completed using Direct Labour.

**48.6 NATIONAL SECONDARY PAVEMENT SURFACING WORK 2009**

Damien Mc Dermott, Senior Executive Engineer, NRDO presented the members with a priority list of remedial works to be completed on the N56 in 2009. The priority of some of the schemes was challenged by members who were particularly annoyed that Falcarragh Main Street had such low priority.

The SEE stated he would re-examine the priority list in light of the Members concerns.

**48.7 JUNCTION AT GREENE'S CORNER**

Members expressed ongoing concern at the layout of the junction at Greene's Corner and emphasised the urgent need for a new design at this location.

**48.8 BEND AT PETE GREENE'S, GWEEDORE ROAD**

In response to Cllr. Gallagher's query regarding the dangerous bend at Pete Greene's, Gweedore Road, the Executive Engineer confirmed that a design is in place but monies are not forthcoming. Cllr. Gallagher requested that some form of safety measure be put in place in the interim.

**48.9 BALLYMORE SCHOOL JUNCTION**

Cllr.O Dochartaigh requested that works be carried out to improve safety for school children and church goers.

**48.10 CARNMORE ROAD, DUNGLOE**

Cllr. Alcorn requested that the 100km speed limit at Supervalu be extended to the bend at Dungloe Lake.

Cllr. Bonner requested that consideration be given to the extension of public lighting from Carnmore Road to Little Bridge.

## **HOUSING & BUILDING**

**GEA 49/09**

### **HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

**49.1**

Members noted the reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Housing Manager.

The Committee congratulated the Area Manager on the progress of the provision of turnkey schemes and requested that all snags/repairs be attended to as soon as possible.

Cllr. Bonner emphasised that the large demand for Social Housing that still exists in relation to single men and unmarried mothers and requested that schemes at tender stage be pursued vigorously.

Cllr. Kelly requested an up to date list on the number of applicants currently on the housing waiting list. The Area Manager undertook to circulate the most recent figures.

**49.2**

### **CASUAL VACANCIES**

The Area Manager presented the Casual vacancies report as at 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Members noted that the majority of vacancies are ready for letting but awaiting BER Certificates and anticipated that these BER Certificates would not cause added delays.

**49.3**

### **SPECIFIC INSTANCE COTTAGES**

The Committee welcomed the improvement in the processing of SI applications in a shorter timeframe.

**49.4**

### **STAFFING**

Members expressed concern at the backlog of grant applications unable to be dealt with due to staff shortages, and requested that their concerns be noted at Head Office.

## WATER & ENVIRONMENT

**GEA 50/09**

### **MAJOR CAPITAL SCHEMES PROGRAMME**

**50.1**

Members discussed the reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Water Service Manager regarding the status of Major Capital Schemes.

**50.2**

### **GWEEDORE SEWERAGE SCHEME**

The Area Manager informed the Committee that further documentation was required by the Department in relation to the section from Clady Bridge to Clady Knit.

Cllr. O Dochartaigh requested that the Council pursue the Department for an increase in the Department's allocation of 50% of the cost of the Gweedore Sewerage Scheme.

**50.3**

### **DUNGLOE AND GLENTIES SEWERAGE SCHEMES**

With regard to the Dungloe and Glenties Sewerage Schemes, Cllr. Bonner requested that the Director of Service meet with the Committee to explain the new contract proposals.

**50.4**

### **SMALL CAPITAL SCHEMES PROGRAMME**

The Committee noted the report circulated previously and presented by the Water Services Manager. Cllr. Alcorn complimented the Area Manager on the works carried out to replace defective cast iron mains in Kincasslagh and also the quality of the re instatement works.

**50.5**

### **GROUP SCHEME PROGRAMME**

Members discussed the report presented by the Area Manager which had been circulated with the agenda.

The Area Manager informed the Committee that it is proposed in the interim to improve water quality on Tory using UV treatment which won't deal with the salinity issue but will treat the bacteriological elements.

Members were informed that the Consultant's report was not as yet available in relation to Meenmore West GWSS.

**50.6****CIVIC AMENITY SITE**

The Committee was informed that the Dungloe Civic Amenity site which officially opened on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2009 was being well received. The area Manager responded to members queries regarding charges imposed for paper, plastics and furniture.

**50.7****PAPER BANK AT GWEEDORE**

The Area Manager informed the Committee that there are no proposals to locate Paper Banks in Derrybeg.

**50.8****ILLEGAL DUMPING**

Cllr. Alcorn voiced concern regarding illegal dumping along Mountjoy Road and at Kerrytown Bridge. The Area Manager agreed to follow up on this matter.

## **COMMUNITY, ENTERPRISE & CULTURAL SERVICES**

### **GEA 51/09                      APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Charles Sweeney, Area Manager, Community, Enterprise & Cultural Services, regarding his inability to attend the meeting.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **GEA 52/09                      ACTIVITY REPORT**

**52.1**                      The Committee noted the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Corporate Manager detailing the comparative activity levels during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2008 and 2009.

### **52.1                              CONVENING OF MEETINGS**

The Members paid tribute to the Area Manager on the administration of meetings and the support and advice given to the various Chairpersons. The Committee also acknowledged Corporate services contribution to the provision of services 'as Gaeilge'.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.**