

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE,
HELD IN LETTERKENNY PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE, ON TUESDAY, 11TH
MARCH 2008.**

LEC 12/08 **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllr. Ciaran Brogan
Cllr. Jimmy Harte
Cllr Dessie Larkin
Cllr. Tony McDaid

LEC 13/08 **OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Eamonn Boyle, Executive Engineer, NRDO
Charlie Cannon, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation
Aideen Doherty, Area Manager, Community & Enterprise
Stephen Flynn, Area Manager/Senior Executive Engineer, Roads
Eunan Kelly, Area Manager, Corporate Services,
James Kelly, Executive Engineer, WEES
Patsy Lafferty, Area Manager, Housing
Michael McFadden, Executive Engineer, Road Design
Conall McGettigan, Executive Planner, Planning & Economic Development
Tommy McNulty, Clerk of Works, Housing
Rose Patton, Staff Officer, Corporate Services
Ronnie Sayers, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation

APOLOGIES

Cllr Gerry Crawford
Cllr Jean Crossan
Jim Hyland, WEES
Claire Cronin, Planning

Cllr Dessie Larkin chaired the meeting.

LEC 14/08 **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY
ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21ST JANUARY
2008.**

On the proposal of Cllr. Tony McDaid and seconded by Cllr. Ciaran Brogan the Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 21st January 2008 were agreed.

15.01 **Mini-Pitch Scheme**

Aideen Doherty informed the Committee that lack of funding was causing a major problem regarding the development of the Mini- Pitches in the county but in the case of Ballymacool the same issues don't arise as the contractor was looking after the groundworks. It is hoped therefore that there will be sufficient funds to complete.

The Members asked to be kept updated on the matter.

15.02 **Public Art**

The Members asked to be updated on the work of Public Art Committee that Members were selected to sit on some time ago.

15.03 **Heart II Funding**

Cllr Dessie Larkin asked that Manorcunningham be considered for inclusion in Heart II funding as major improvement works have been planned.

15.04 **Letterkenny CDP**

The Committee were advised of the current position regarding the proposed capital development project being led by the CDP. Due to changes in the capital infrastructural funding climate it is increasingly difficult to ascertain how this project might be funded. At the moment built costs are estimated about €5m. As there are a number of other groups in the town also looking for facilities the CDP has proposed that a meeting be facilitated with interested parties to investigate if their needs could be met in this proposed facility. The Members asked that the process between the Groups interested in the Community Project be facilitated.

15.05 **Rehab People of the Year Awards**

The Committee were informed of the people who had been selected for Rehab people of the Year Awards and that the Rehab Awards would be presented at a function in the Mount Errigal Hotel on 29th March 2008.

The Committee asked that letters of congratulations be issued to Alan Doherty, Paul McBride and Margaret Toner, winners in the Rehab People of the Year Awards in the Letterkenny E.A.

15.06 **Bowling Club**

The Committee welcomed the proposed development of a clubhouse in the Town Park for the Bowling Club and requested that they be assisted with funding applications.

15.07 **Donegal Film Commission**

Aideen Doherty advised the Committee that the Film Office had secured production of a film “A Shine of Rainbows” which is due to start shooting towards the end of April in Inishowen and Letterkenny. The budget is €6m and it is estimated that €3m would be spent locally.

15.08 **Arts Grants 2008**

Aideen Doherty advised the Committee that applications for assistance under the Council’s Arts Grants 2008 are currently being invited. The latest date for receipt of applications is 7th March at 4.30 p.m.

15.09 **County Childcare Committee**

Aideen Doherty advised the Committee that Maria Gallo has left her post as Manager with DCCC and that Avril Sweeney is replacing her. She also advised that Bridgid Casey is the new Childcare Development Officer with responsibility for Inishowen, Anita Nicholson is the new Support and Information Assistant and Angela Mc Ginty is the new Childcare Advisory Worker.

LEC 16/08 **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

16.01 **Ard na Mealla, St Johnston**

Conall McGettigan informed the Committee that Public Lighting was now operational and the Planning Section and the Section dealing with Housing Estates Takeover were to meet to finalise further outstanding issues.

16.02 **Fairways, Letterkenny**

Cllr Dessie Larkin raised the issue of non-compliance with Planning Conditions in respect of the Fairways, Letterkenny and asked to be updated on this issue.

16.03 **Raphoe Flooding**

The Committee were informed that the Planning Office would continue to work with the Roads Directorate to follow up, through appropriate enforcement action, sites where non-compliance with planning conditions is contributing to problems with surface water.

The Committee asked that developments in Raphoe be inspected to ensure planning conditions relating to drainage are complied with.

16.04 **Invalid Applications**

In a report circulated at the Meeting, the Committee were informed that the high level of invalid applications is a countywide issue despite the best efforts

of the Planning Service, which has provided guidance through the Workshop with Agents held following the introduction of the new Planning Regulations in 2007.

By way of an additional level of internal quality control, Planners now sign off on the recommendations of the Technicians with regard to the validation process, thus having the added benefit of identifying consistent themes in terms of validation issues.

Cllr Ciaran Brogan voiced his concern that some applications were declared invalid and then found to be valid on further investigation and asked that the matter be investigated and a report circulated at the next Electoral Area Meeting.

16.05 **Consideration of Recent Refusals**

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

16.06 **Unauthorised Development Report**

The Committee considered the Unauthorised Development Report that was circulated with the Agenda.

Following a query from Cllr Larkin regarding the role of the Enforcement Officer to the Town Council area, Conall McGettigan stressed that the workload was so huge most of his time would be spent dealing with the County Council area and only a small amount of time was spent on Town Council files. It was very difficult for one person to cover both County Council and Town Council areas.

The Committee requested that both Roads and Planning Services agree a schedule of works with Developers in Glencar, Lismonaghan and Lisnenan areas to ensure that all Planning Conditions are complied with in these areas. A Report to be presented to the next Meeting of the Committee.

It was agreed that a Workshop be held with the Director of Services on 13th May 2008 to discuss a number of Planning issues including level of Invalid files, Enforcement and level of Planning Service provided by DCC to Letterkenny Town Council.

LEC 17/08 **WATER, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES**

17.01 **Letterkenny Civic Amenity Site**

James Kelly informed the Committee that it was expected that work would commence on the site after Easter.

The Members welcomed this progress.

17.02 **Letterkenny Boreholes Scheme**

The Committee were informed that work is ongoing on commissioning this Scheme and it is hoped to have water in the network by the beginning of April. James Kelly stated, in reply to a query from Cllr Dessie Larkin, that the Boreholes would supply the new Rahan Reservoir, which would in turn, supply the Listillion Reservoir which had previously been fed from Lough Salt and that this would in turn alleviate problems with supply in the Glencar area. Mr Kelly also stated that the consistency of the water would be monitored.

The Committee welcomed the progress to date.

17.03 **Glenmaquinn Group Water Supply Scheme**

James Kelly informed the Committee that on three dates in February the reservoir supplying Glenmaquin emptied and supply had to be curtailed in the area resulting in many complaints from consumers in the area.

Following a query from Cllr Tony McDaid as to cause of problem, Mr Kelly replied that many factors could have caused problem and telemetry had since been installed on the pumps to highlight when water in reservoir is low.

Cllr Ciaran Brogan asked that consumers in the area be kept informed of any developments.

17.04 **Glenwood Park**

The Committee were informed that remedial works had commenced which should alleviate the flooding problems being experienced within the Estate.

The Members asked that these works be progressed as soon as possible to resolve problems with sewer and storm water in conjunction with the Town Council and Planning.

The Committee also requested that the level of Storm water infiltration into sewers in Letterkenny be investigated and remedial actions explored.

17.05 **Business Park Road, Letterkenny**

James Kelly informed the Committee that a meeting had taken place on 13/02/08 with IDA and another was scheduled for 14/03/08 to discuss the connection of two private Housing Schemes in Carnamuggagh to the IDA sewer and also regarding the takeover of the sewer.

The Members asked to be advised on the outcome.

17.06 **Group Water Supply Schemes**

The Committee considered the Report on Group Water Supply Schemes circulated with the Agenda.

Jmaes Kelly advised that he had contacted the Trustees of the Rareagh/Letterleague and Dooballagh Group Water Schemes and advised them on how to progress these Schemes.

The Committee stressed the importance of metering Group Water Supply Schemes for assisting with leak detection.

LEC 18/08 ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

18.01.01 Roadwork's Programme for 2008

Stephen Flynn circulated the proposals for the Roadwork's Programme for 2008 (Appendix 1).

On the proposal of Cllr Dessie Larkin and seconded by Cllr Ciaran Brogan the following proposals were agreed:

Strengthening Programme
Surface Dressing Programme for 2008
EU Co-Financed Programme
Discretionary Improvement Proposals
Selective Maintenance Proposals

It was agreed to consider the Strengthening Programme Proposals at a future meeting, as Cllr Gerry Crawford was absent.

18.01.02 Bridge Strengthening Programme – 2008

On the proposal of Cllr Dessie Larkin, seconded by Cllr Tony McDaid, the Letterkenny Electoral Area Bridge Strengthening Priority List (Appendix 2), circulated with the Agenda, was agreed.

18.02 National Primary Pavements

18.02.01 N14 Four Lane Road

Eamonn Boyle, National Road Design Office, circulated a Report updating the Committee on the proposals for N14 Four Lane Road from Dry Arch Roundabout to the Port Road Roundabout stating that subject to NRA approval the project should be completed in November 2008. The allocation of €650,000 for 2008 only allows for certain areas of pavement, which have failed to be replaced or strengthened. The allocation does not allow for the entire overlay of the N14 Four Lane Road.

The Members expressed their disappointment at the lack of progress on the provision of a Central Median on this stretch of Road, which has been ongoing since 2005 and stressed the importance of same for safety reasons.

They asked that funding options for a complete overlay of N14 Four Lane including repair of footpaths from Dry Arch to Port Bridge be investigated and also problems with flooding at Clanree Hotel be addressed.

Detailed plans on how it is proposed to spend the €650,000 allocation to be circulated to the Members.

18.02.02 **N13 Veagh to Pluck Roundabout Design**

The Committee were advised that an allocation of €100,000 had been made under Pavement and Minor Improvement Grants on N13 Veagh to Pluck Roundabout Design and that it is proposed to carry out Surveying, FWD Testing, Preliminary Design and Detailed Design in 2008 and to progress the scheme to construction in 2009 subject to NRA approval.

18.02.03 **National Primary Retentions 2007.**

Eamonn Boyle advised the Committee that an allocation of €50,000 had been made.

The following is the Breakdown of Retentions:

N13 Dual Carriageway 2006	€25,000
N13 Dual Carriageway 2007	€50,000
N15 Ballintra to Laghey 2006	€25,000
N13 Bohillion to Newtowncunningham	€50,000
Total	€150,000

The deficit of €100,000 to be transferred from National Primary Design Allocation

The Committee asked that Aidan O'Doherty attend the next Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee.

18.02.04 **Roads Workshop**

The Committee asked that a Workshop be arranged with the NRDO on 25th March 2008 to discuss the N56, Bunagee Link and the N14 Four Lane Projects.

It was also agreed that the Local Improvement Schemes be discussed at the Workshop on 25th March 2008.

18.02.05 **N14/N13 Manorcunningham to Lifford/Strabane Road**

The Members asked to be kept updated on any progress on this Scheme.

18.03 **Tara Court**

Cllr Dessie Larkin requested that a costing be prepared for completing WEES works required at Tara Court in order to allow Surface Dressing to be carried out. The Costing to be forwarded to the D.O.S. WEES for consideration.

18.04 **Surface Dressing Programme**

Cllr Ciaran Brogan asked that in view of the judging of Tidy Towns and the Entente Florale Competitions taking place in July 2008, all Surface Dressing works in and around Letterkenny be completed before then including turn in at Lurgybrack School and outside Ramada Hotel.

18.05 **Road Design**

The Committee requested that Road Design attend Workshop arranged for 25th March to discuss Pedestrian Crossings on Paddy Harte Road/Canal Road and also ramping of Pedestrian Crossings.

18.06 **Planning Conditions**

Cllr Ciaran Brogan requested a report for the May Electoral Area Meeting on the follow up on Planning Conditions, which hadn't been, adhered to, especially in relation to drainage, footpaths and public lighting in Lisnenan, Glencar and Lismonaghan areas in particular.

18.07 **Car Parking Study**

Stephen Flynn circulated an Update on a Countywide Car Parking Study prepared by Michael Mc Fadden, Road Design. The Study is to be carried out by the Road Design Forward Planning Team in response to the Donegal County Development Plan 2007 – 2012, Policy TC2 that sets out to establish the parking requirements of 2nd tier towns in Donegal identifying the current and future parking needs around the County. The survey would take place between the hours of 8.30am and 5.30 pm. It would look at parking restrictions, shoppers/workers requirements also type of vehicle parked, taxis, hackney Heavy Goods Vehicles, private vehicles etc. Also, the extent of disabled parking, legal and illegal parking. The surveyor walks a route and records vehicle registrations every half hour, which in turn will indicate demand and duration of parking.

Lifford and Raphoe were the proposed towns in the Letterkenny Electoral Area to be surveyed.

Cllr Tony McDaid queried the accuracy of the population figures quoted for each of these towns especially taking into account the volume of traffic from other towns and also asked that the study include Disabled Parking Spaces.

Cllr Ciaran Brogan suggested that Road Design should work more closely with Letterkenny area regarding one-way systems etc for Lifford and asked for a briefing on what projects they are currently involved in.

The Committee requested that consideration be given to zoning car parking into Long term, Medium term and Short term and set Parking Charges accordingly.

18.08 *Signage on Approach Roads to Letterkenny*

The Committee requested that the unauthorised signage on the approach roads to Letterkenny be removed.

LEC 19/08 HOUSING

19.01 Affordable Housing

In a report circulated at the Meeting, the Committee were informed that applicants are currently being assessed and letters of offer will be issued after Easter.

Regarding Affordable Housing in Manorcunningham, an Information Evening was held recently and applications for it are currently being awaited. Mr Lafferty stated that there was a very low level of interest as yet in these units. The Members requested that options be explored for improving awareness of Affordable Housing.

19.02 Remedial Works/Regeneration Programme 2007

The Committee were informed that works in the S.I. element of this programme have commenced.

19.03 Central Heating Programme

Patsy Lafferty stated that the Central Heating Programme for 2007 is now complete.

Cllr Tony McDaid asked that options be explored for improving heating and insulation in single person dwellings, as dampness was a major problem and was informed by Mr Lafferty that these will be included in the 2008 Central Heating Programme.

19.04 Playground at Ard Na Rí

The Committee were informed that a Contractor has been selected and is expected to commence works in April.

The Committee welcomed this.

19.05 **Shared Ownership**

Cllr Dessie Larkin asked that the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government be contacted regarding the terms of the current Shared Ownership Scheme.

19.06 **Grant Report**

The Committee considered the Grant Report at 28th February, 2008 that was circulated with the Agenda.

19.07 **Loan Report**

The Committee considered the Loan Report at 28th February, 2008 that was circulated with the Agenda.

19.08 **Casual Vacancy Report**

The Committee considered the Casual Vacancy Report at 28th February, 2008 that was circulated with the Agenda.

LEC 20/08 **DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee on 13th May, 2008, commencing at **9.30 am** in the Letterkenny Public Services Centre.