

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE,
HELD IN LETTERKENNY PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE, ON MONDAY, 23RD
JULY 2007.**

LEC 30/07 MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr. Ciaran Brogan
Cllr. Dessie Larkin
Cllr. Tony McDaid
Cllr. Gerry Crawford

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Jimmy Harte
Cllr. Jean Crossan

LEC 31/07 OFFICIALS PRESENT

Collette Beattie, Assistant Planner, Planning Central Services
Claire Cronin, Area Manager, Planning & Economic Development
Aideen Doherty, Administrative Officer, Community Enterprise & Cultural
Emmet Gavan, Graduate Planner, Planning Central Services
Pat Gillespie, Senior Executive Engineer/Area Manager, Roads
Fitz Howard, Senior Executive Engineer, Capital Building Programme
Jim Hyland, Executive Engineer, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,
Eunan Kelly, Area Manager, Corporate Services,
James Kelly, Executive Engineer, Water, Environment & Emergency Services,
Patsy Lafferty, Area Manager, Housing,
Rose Patton, Staff Officer, Corporate Services
Ronnie Sayers, Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation
Fergus Towey, Senior Resident Engineer, Roads & Transportation

ALSO PRESENT

Mario Gallo, Manager, Donegal County Childcare Committee

LEC 32/07 ELECTION OF AREA CHAIRPERSON

On the proposal of Cllr Ciaran Brogan, seconded by Cllr Tony McDaid, Cllr Dessie Larkin was elected as Chairperson for the coming year. There were no other nominations for the position of Chairperson.

Cllr Gerry Crawford, as outgoing Chairperson, thanked the Members, the Staff and the Press for their support over the past year and wished Cllr Larkin well in his position as Chairperson for the coming year.

Cllr Larkin thanked his Proposer and Seconder and commended Cllr Crawford for his efficiency and fairness as Chairperson over the past year. The other Members reiterated this.

LEC 33/07 **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17th MAY 2007.**

On the proposal of Cllr. Tony McDaid and seconded by Cllr. Ciaran Brogan the Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 17th May 2007 were agreed.

LEC 34/07 **CONSIDERATION OF REPORT ON TOURISM WORKSHOP HELD ON 17TH MAY 2007**

On the proposal of Cllr Ciaran Brogan, seconded by Cllr Tony McDaid, the Report on Tourism Workshop held on 17th May 2007 was agreed.

LEC 35/07 **COMMUNITY CULTURAL AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES**

35.01 **Donegal County Childcare Committee**

Maria Gallo, Manager of Donegal County Childcare Committee, presented a Report on the Committee to the Meeting (Appendix 1)
Ms Gallo, in the Report, gave an overview of the Committee, stating its role and objectives. Listed also were the priorities in relation to childcare needs within Letterkenny Electoral Area and the Childcare Committee's response to these priorities.

The Members thanked Ms Gallo for her detailed Report and Cllr Larkin stressed the importance of liaising with the Planning and Housing authorities in relation to the provision of childcare within large housing developments. Cllr Larkin also asked that the possibility of using the Crèche Facility in Letterkenny Public Services Centre be investigated whether by Donegal County Council or LYIT who are commencing a new Degree course in Early Childhood Education.

Cllr Larkin also urged that the Childcare Committee explore the using of school premises for Pre-School and After-School childcare to facilitate working parents.

Cllr McDaid queried the support available for families in traumatic situations and Ms Gallo stated that they were working closely with the HSE to improve services.

Cllr Crawford welcomed the new Childcare facility for Lifford that is due to be opened in January 2008.

35.02 **Development of Former Town Council Offices Site**

The Committee asked that Ciaran Martin update the Committee on development of facilities at the old Town Council site and on Information and Social venues for Foreign Nationals in Letterkenny.

Aideen Doherty explained that this project is at information gathering stage, looking at the needs of the Youth Service and no proposal had been drawn up yet.

35.03 **Lifford Athletic Club**

Cllr Crawford welcomed the €30,000 successfully secured by Lifford Athletic Club from Sports & Community Facilities Capital Scheme to complete the ongoing project there.

35.04 **Flight of the Earls**

Cllr Crawford expressed his disappointment that the plaque to be erected in Ballindrait as a memorial to where the Clans met, prior to the Flight was not included in the Flight of the Earls Brochure. Aideen Doherty agreed to look into the matter.

35.05 **Lifelong Learning**

Cllr Larkin requested that with the suspected decline in the construction industry, consideration be given to educating people in renewable energies through the Lifelong Learning Scheme.

LEC 36/07 **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

36.01 **Highland View, Letterkenny**

Claire Cronin in her report circulated with the Agenda stated that an Enforcement Notice had been successfully served on Hugh McGinley, McGinley Construction Ltd and a response had been received. The Planning Authority would now monitor the case to ensure compliance within the specified period.

The Committee asked that they be kept updated.

36.02 **Carolina Park, Letterkenny**

Claire Cronin in her report circulated with the Agenda stated that correspondence had issued to Dunree Construction by the Council's Solicitor on 30th April 2007 requesting a written undertaking that the unauthorised development would cease and the unauthorised works be removed and the lands restored by close of business on 14/05/07.

The Planner is currently assessing the response received from Dunree Construction and will undertake discussions with the Council Solicitor in advance of recommending the next course of action.

36.03 **Ard na Mealla, St Johnston**

Claire Cronin informed the meeting that the site is to be inspected and it is likely that an Urgent Enforcement Notice will have to be served when a comprehensive report is compiled on the overall development and extent of non compliance with conditions.

Cllr Crawford requested a written update on this development.

36.04 **Cathedral Hill, Raphoe**

Cllr Gerry Crawford requested a written update on this development.

36.05 **Big Isle**

Claire Cronin stated that the request for a Masterplan for the Big Isle has been referred to the Central Planning Unit for consideration and a response will be circulated to Members when received.

This was welcomed by the Committee who outlined the possible uses, which could be made of this extensive property.

Cllr Crawford stated that he had a Motion passed to explore the provision of an Academy for Driving Skills in the Big Isle and Cllr Brogan asked that the development of a Horse Racing course be considered for this facility.

The Committee recommended that the Council explore the development of an Academy for Driving Skills and Horse Racing Course at Big Isle, Letterkenny in conjunction with the preparation of a Master Plan

36.06 **Workshop for Agents and Members**

Clare Cronin informed the Committee that commitment has been given for a workshop on the County Development Plan in the autumn. Consideration will be given to hosting the event in Letterkenny.

The Committee welcomed this.

36.07 **Staffing**

Claire Cronin informed the Committee that Conal McGettigan, Enforcement Officer has been in place for six weeks but due to the holiday season part of his duties have included dealing with applications.

The Members expressed the importance of having someone dealing solely with Enforcement issues.

36.08 **Proposed Additions to Record of Protected Structures**

The Members considered the report on the Proposed Additions to the Record of Protected Structures as circulated with the Agenda. Collette Beattie, Central Planning Unit, advised Members that this report was brought before them as in information item only before it would go to the full Council Meeting on 30th July, 2007. The list contained one property in the Letterkenny E.A. that had been nominated by its owner.

It was agreed that the list goes forward to the full Council for adoption.

36.09 **Consideration of Recent Refusals**

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

36.10 **Unauthorised Development Report**

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

Claire Cronin stated a number of cases within Letterkenny Town Council area will now be referred to the Town Council Planner and reports and updates relating to these will be given at the Town Council Meetings

36.10.1 **Fairways Estat, Letterkenny.**

The Committee were informed that this matter is currently being reviewed and progressed by the Executive Planner for the Town Council.

36.10.2 **Lismonaghan, Letterkenny**

The Committee were informed that a number of multiple developments are located in this area and it will be necessary to review the conditions associated with each individual development to determine any outstanding matters of non-compliance with the conditions.

Enforcement action may be taken if it is established that works have not been completed in accordance with the permission granted.

LEC 37/07 **WATER, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The Committee considered the Progress Report (Appendix 1) which was circulated with the Agenda.

37.01 **Non Domestic Metering Project (N.D.M.)**

The Committee were informed that arising from representations seeking to exempt Primary Schools and Community Halls from Water Charges, due to their limited means and community service, the County Manager has written to the Water Services Sub Committee of the C.C.M.A. seeking guidance in these areas.

No response has yet been received and the Committee requested a follow up be done.

37.02 **Letterkenny Civic Amenity Site**

The Committee were informed that a meeting had been arranged with the HSE for Tuesday 17 July 2007 to finalise matters. No report was as yet available from that Meeting.

The Members requested an update as soon as possible.

37.03 **Odours at Ballymacool, Letterkenny**

Jim Hyland informed the Committee that the measures already in place e.g. frequency of pumping and venting of pumped sewer have been checked and are in order. The problem is being monitored, in order to find an interim solution pending upgrade of the sewer on the Oldtown Road.

A second vent may be required and will be installed if necessary.

37.04 **Sewers at The Diamond Lifford**

Jim Hyland informed the Committee that this sewer runs through private back gardens and has been built over in places. A CCTV survey has been carried out which shows defective pipes. The possibility of having it re-laid in the service road, in conjunction with a local development is currently being investigated.

37.05 **Letterkenny Boreholes Scheme**

A summary of the current progress on this Scheme was circulated with the Agenda detailing expected dates of each stage of the Scheme with expected handover in mid December.

The Committee welcomed this.

37.06 **Group Water Supply Schemes**

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

37.06.01 **Rareagh/Letterleague GWS**

Jim Hyland informed the Committee that the Group were informed that reduced Scheme is now cost effective and advised to inform a Design Engineer to amend Plans.

The Members requested consideration should be given to organising an Information Meeting for Rareagh residents.

37.06.02 **Glenmaquinn Group Water Scheme**

In response to queries regarding the proposed extension to Glenmaquinn Group Water Supply Scheme Jim Hyland informed the Committee that the proposed extension to the Glenmaquinn GWS can go ahead with the price to be agreed in advance. The same contractor will do the work when his other work commitments are completed.

The Committee welcomed this and they asked to be kept updated on any progress.

37.07 **Small Capital Schemes**

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

37.08 **Lough Greenan**

The Committee requested an update on the current position with regard to the development of Lough Greenan including costings.

37.09 **IDA**

The Committee requested that the connection of two private Housing Schemes in Carnamuggagh to the IDA sewer be progressed.

The Committee also recommended that the I.D.A. be contacted regarding the takeover of this sewer and an updated report to be presented at the September LEAC Meeting.

LEC 38/07 **ROADS & TRANSPORTATION**

38.01 **N56 Mountain Top to Illistrin Road Realignment – Phase II**

Fergus Towey updated the Committee on progress being made on Phase II N56 Mountain Top to Illistrin Road Realignment Project. Mr. Towey stated that progress is good and most of the major earthworks would be completed in the coming week and that the job should be complete by Easter 2008. Works are being carried out around the school during July and August. He stated that the traffic management was working well and acknowledged the patience of the road users during the works.

The Committee commended the work being done with minimal disruption to the public.

38.02 **N14/N13 Junction (Manorcunningham to Lifford/Strabane)**

The Committee requested that funding for grass cutting on the Dual Carriageway and Pluck Roundabout be examined and consideration be given to seeking sponsorship for future maintenance of Pluck Roundabout.

38.03 **N56 Letterkenny Inner Relief Road**

The Committee were informed that no route has as yet been selected and they urged the importance of progressing this project as a matter of urgency.

The Members requested that funding options be investigated for the provision of two outward lanes from Ballyraine Roundabout to Port Bridge Roundabout and also to examine the possibility of providing a right turning lane at the roundabout at Keys Garage.

Pat Gillespie agreed to have this matter investigated.

38.04

N14 Four Lane Road

The Committee considered the report circulated with the Agenda, on this Scheme, which outlined the history of the scheme and estimated programme. It is estimated at this stage that construction should be completed in June 2008 subject to NRA approvals.

Cllr Brogan expressed his concern regarding the safety of that stretch of road and requested clarification as to whether or not the monies allocated to N14 Four Lane Road in previous years is still available and examine the possibility of transferring this to the Dual Carriageway, as construction on the N14 will not commence until 2008, to make up the shortfall in funding.

Cllr Larkin also expressed his disappointment at the delay in commencing this project and requested a full report on same to be presented to the September LEAC Meeting.

38.05

Lifford Tidy Towns

Pat Gillespie informed the Committee that a design had still not been completed and the Committee urged that works progress as soon as possible on Lifford Roundabout.

38.06

Local Improvement Schemes Programme & Clar Roads Scheme

The proposed list of Local Improvement Schemes for 2007(Appendix 2) was circulated at the Meeting and on the proposal of Cllr Dessie Larkin, seconded by Cllr Brogan the Committee recommended that list be agreed.

38.07

Lisnennan Road/Junction

The Committee requested that the safety of the existing junction from Business Park/Lisnennan Road onto Gortlee Road be examined pending the provision of a new Junction.

38.08

Raphoe Flooding

Pat Gillespie circulated a summary of Donegal County Council's response to the flooding in Raphoe that occurred on 12th June , which also listed matters to be progressed.

Cllr Gerry Crawford stressed the severity of this issue and the human suffering involved and urged that the Road Design Report on Drainage, which will address the both instances of flooding in Raphoe, be circulated on completion.

Cllr Tony McDaid stated that long-term solutions were required and requested a Meeting be arranged with the Raphoe Residents Sub-Group regarding drainage issues.

Cllr McDaid also asked that the entrance from Meadowhill Estate at John Ward's house and Railway Road be inspected.

Pat Gillespie stressed that DCC were not responsible for the bigger picture regarding the flooding. In other parts of the country this was the responsibility of the OPW. The OPW had shown a willingness to get involved and the Members would be kept updated on any meetings regarding this issue.

LEC 39/07 HOUSING & SOCIAL SERVICES

39.01 Affordable Housing, Letterkenny

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated with the Agenda, reported that arrangements are being finalised for the procurement of a number of Affordable Units in Letterkenny, under the Part V Mechanism. At this stage it is expected that the houses will initially be offered for sale in the region of €130,000 to €140,000. It is intended that these will be advertised in September 2007 and he agreed to update Members when details have been finalised.

39.02 Affordable Housing, Manorcunningham

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated with the Agenda, reported that the Affordable Units in Manorcunningham are expected to have a final sale price between €15,000 and €20,000. It is hoped to advertise this Scheme in a number of months as it nears completion.

39.03 Remedial Works/Regeneration Programme 2007

Patsy Lafferty, informed the Committee that Tenders would be sought shortly for this Programme.

39.04 Central Heating Programme 2006 – Croaghan Heights, Lifford

Patsy Lafferty informed the Committee that these works are now completed.

39.05 Central Heating Programme 2007

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated with the Agenda, informed the meeting that tenders have been sought and the successful tenderer has been selected. The houses selected are as follows:

- Meadowhill Estate, Raphoe
- Ard Baithin, St Johnston
- A number of S.I. dwellings

Members will be kept updated when an expected start date is known.

39.05.1 Windows and Doors, Meadowhill Estate.

Patsy Lafferty advised Members that he hoped to obtain funding for the replacement of windows and doors at the Meadowhill Estate, Raphoe, and would be seeking tender prices shortly, to enable him to make a case for funding. He advised that this was being proposed as the windows and doors needed replacement, and it would be preferable to have same carried out in tandem with the installation of central heating

39.06 **Peace Programme 2006**

Patsy Lafferty, in his report circulated at the Meeting, informed the meeting that landscaping work at Glendale Drive, Letterkenny has been completed and works at Ard na Rí, Letterkenny is underway and should be completed shortly. Cllr Larkin asked that the provision of playground facilities at Ard na Ri be progressed.

39.07 **Grant Report**

The Committee considered the Grant Report at 5th July, 2007 that was circulated with the Agenda.

39.08 **Loan Report**

The Committee considered the Loan Report at 05th July, 2007 that was circulated with the Agenda.

39.09 **Casual Vacancy Report**

The Committee considered the Casual Vacancy Report at 5th July, 2007 that was circulated with the Agenda.

39.10 **Disposal of Assets**

Fitz Howard, Capital Building and Development Programme advised the meeting that at the Council Meeting held on 28th May 2007 it was agreed that the Disposal of the Pearse Road Site would be discussed at the next LEAC Meeting. He outlined the background to Councils decision to embark on the Decentralisation Programme to construct the 5 no. Public Service Centres and to upgrade the County House and advised that it will now be necessary to dispose of some assets in order to complete this programme.

He circulated a report on “Disposal of Assets” (Appendix 3) to the meeting and explained in detail the contents of the report in which he requested the Committees endorsement to the following transactions:

1. Reconciliation of Inter Authority transactions between Donegal County Council and Letterkenny Town Council with a balance of €1,642,717 to be paid to Donegal County Council
2. Disposal of c. 4.3 acres at Pearse Road, Letterkenny for €6,500,000
3. Disposal of c. 10.3 acres of land at Kiltyoy for €6,100,000
4. Approval to continue negotiations with the O.P.W. in relation to the disposal of the Old Fire Station, Letterkenny with estimated value of €1,500,000
5. Approval to placing the following properties on the market: - Site of Ernaact Building and Lands at Lifford Common, Lifford.

He explained that the Council had spent c. €40,000,000 to date on the Decentralisation Programme with the construction of the five Public Service Centres and the Refurbishment of the County House.

There are a number of other projects that need to be prioritised and funded including: -

- Stranorlar P.S.C. (Estimated Cost €6.5M),
- Refurbishment of County House Phase Two (Estimated Cost €12m),
- New Civil Defence H.Q. (Estimated Cost €1.2m),
- New Welfare Depot including Facilities for Letterkenny Town Council and Gardiner (Estimated Cost €1.3m),
- Cultural Services H.Q. including facilities for Donegal Youth Service.

He also explained that there are also outstanding Capital Balances of c. €17,000,000 in respect of the Decentralisation Programme, the construction of An Grianan Theatre that requires to be funded.

Cllr Ciaran Brogan felt that this report should have been presented to the Members a year ago before any assets were put on the market and the Members would have an opportunity to consider the options. He agreed in principle with the Reconciliation of Inter Authority Transactions between D.C.C and Letterkenny T.C. however he had a difficulty with disposal of lands in Letterkenny to fund Council shortfalls.

There have been motions passed for the preparation of a Masterplan for the Big Isle and to examine the development of a Horse Racing Course. Facilities for the youth and the development of an Inter Denominational Graveyard are also required in Letterkenny. He requested a report to be brought to a future meeting on the Council finances including where exactly this money would be spent and what facilities are required. The Council needs to ensure that it's finances and assets are well managed.

Cllr Gerry Crawford was in favour of freeing up assets for future development of Lifford. He stated that development of Phase Two of the County House and Space for Archives was very important to Lifford and should be advanced. He queried the delay in finalising a site in Lifford for the storage of Archives. He also felt that the Council Chamber was too small and needed to be replaced/extended. He felt that the €300,000 annual rent paid by the Council in Lifford for storage could fund a loan of €3m. He also had a Motion passed to explore the provision of an Academy for Driving Skills in the Big Isle and requested an update on this.

He would support sale of assets in Lifford provide that Phase Two of County House and Archives Storage was provided.

Cllr Dessie Larkin stated that Letterkenny has developed to a great extent and is now one of the 10 Gateway Towns in the Country. He felt that the reason that this land was purchased needs to be looked at and that the Council is showing little foresight in how Letterkenny will develop if it sells this land and wondered why sell this land now. He queried the valuation of €5,000 on the Canal Road Site. He felt that the €14.1 M for the three sites in Letterkenny

would go a long way in eradication of a number of the problems in Letterkenny.

He stated that An Grianan Theatre, the Regional Cultural Centre, The New Leisure Centre and the County Museum are all countywide facilities and that the Council should fund these and the cost of the site for the new Leisure Centre. He felt that the site of the former Town Council Offices is not big enough to cater for the requirements of Cultural Services and the Donegal Youth Service.

He would support the development of Phase Two of the County House as facilities for staff and Members in Lifford is unsatisfactory, however the Members have not been advised what is proposed in Phase Two of the County House. The proposal to dispose of assets would be easier to support if he knew what is proposed, the views of the Letterkenny IEAC are being ignored and the matter was badly handled by the Council's Executive.

It was agreed to proceed with the placing of Ernact Site and lands at Lifford Common, Lifford on the market provided that Phase Two of County House and Archives Storage was provided.

Fitz Howard advised the Committee that this matter would be included on the Agenda for the Council Meeting on the 30th July 2007.

LEC 40/07 DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee on Monday 17th September, 2007, commencing at **9.30 am** in the Letterkenny Public Services Centre.

APPENDIX 1

Appendix 2

Letterkenny Electoral Area

Proposed List Of Local Improvement Schemes for 2007

<u>Scheme No.</u>	<u>Promoter</u> <u>Value</u>
0/3733	Mary McDaid, Foxhalls, Newmills €4,103.20
0/3824	Robert Kiilpatrick, Habitstown, Raphoe €9,778.45
0/3930	James McMenamin (Snr), Kirkstown, Letterkenny €7,619.33
0/4065	David White, Calhame, Letterkenny €1,821.25
0/4249	Mary Sweeney, Castlegrove, Ballymaleel €8,826.65
0/4250	Daniel Langan, Rahan, Letterkenny €3,185.50
0/4253	Patrick Kelly, Correnagh, Letterkenny €8,802.50
0/4320	Samuel Laird, Ardvarnock, Convoy €4,678.03
0/4834	Maureen Spratt, Letterleague, Letterkenny €3,965.54
0/4837	Mary McDermott, Glencar Scotch, Letterkenny €2,448.98
0/4839	Samuel Whyte, Tullygay, Letterkenny €3,443.10
0/4841	Cormac Curran, Drumnaskea, Letterkenny €1,628.80
0/4842	Margaret Doherty, Correnagh, Letterkenny €1,628.80
0/4843	Marie Patterson, 2 Glenmaquin Lower, Letterkenny €4,211.76
0/4844	Noel Arthur, Trentamucklagh, St. Johnston €9,171.24
0/4846	Eugene Dooher, Lehnabraid, Ballindrait €36,587.94
0/4847	Michael McMonagle, Burnside, Raphoe €8,812.06
0/4848	Alice Lynch, Carrickmore, St. Johnston €10,374.84
0/4849	John Russell, Ballylawn, Manorcunningham €8,894.10
0/4850	Enda McClafferty, Maymore, St. Johnston €10,028.00
0/4851	Lexie Gilfillian, Lettergull, St. Johnston €16,984.81

0/4852	Teresa Coyle, Cooladerry, Raphoe €6,693.00
0/4853	Rose Gallagher, Ballymonaster, Ballindrait €2,386.18
0/4856	Sharon Black, Castleshanaghan, Letterkenny €15,630.80

Clar Area Funding

0/4845	Thomas Hay, Galdonagh, Manorcunningham €9,580.00
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