

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE**

HELD ON 15th JANUARY 2019 IN DUNGLOE PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr. John Sheamais Ó Fearraigh
Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher
Cllr. Terence Slowey
Cllr. Enda Bonner
Cllr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill
Cllr. Michéal Choilm Mac Giolla Easbuig

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Michael McGarvey, A/Director Water & Environment
Brendan McFadden - S.E.E. Area Manager, Roads & Transportation
Eamonn Brown - A/Area Manager, Housing & Corporate
David Friel - Coastal Officer
Charles Sweeney - Administrative Officer, Community Development
Barney McLaughlin - Administrative Officer, Economic Development
Máire Ní Fhearraigh - Gaeltacht Tourism Officer
Mairéad Cranley - Asst.Social Inclusion Officer
Killian Smith - Planning Enforcement Officer
Michael Rowsome, S.S.O. Motor Tax/Corporate

GMD 01/19

VOTE OF SYMPATHY

The Committee passed a vote of sympathy in memory of Dawn Croke who died tragically on the 10th of January. Dawn had worked as a lifeguard for the Council at Port Arthur & Carrickfinn beaches.

A minute's silence was observed by all in attendance at the meeting.

GMD 02/19

**MINUTES OF GLENTIES MD MEETING HELD ON
NOVEMBER 13TH 2018**

On the proposal of Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Cllr. Bonner, the minutes of the meeting of the Glenties MD Committee held on the 13th November 2018 were confirmed.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GMD 03/19

TOURISM

Barney McLaughlin, Administrative Officer introduced Máire Ní Fhearraigh, the recently appointed Gaeltacht Tourism Officer to the Committee and informed Members of the upcoming Holiday Shows in Dublin and Belfast International Conference to showcase local businesses and their products. The Gaeltacht Tourism Officer informed Members that she will be attending both of the above events and is available to support any tourism initiatives in the area from Fanad Head to Glencolmcille. The Committee unanimously welcomed the appointment of the Gaeltacht Tourism Officer and also (1) welcomed the recently produced bilingual Island maps which were circulated at the meeting and (2) the Gaeltacht Tourism Officers commitment to attend and report quarterly at MD meetings.

The Committee raised the following issues for the consideration of the Tourism Officer:

- Walking Tourism on the Islands.
- Development of Crohy Head as an iconic tourist destination.
- Promotion of the Council's Beach Mapping Service.
- Joined up strategy to market the Headlands (Fanad Head, Horn Head and Malin Head).

- Further engagement with the Diaspora to take advantage of their goodwill towards development in Donegal.
- Provision of a small ferry service to the offshore Islands and increased marketing of the Islands as a tourist destination.
- Provision of Gaeltacht signage at all entrance points to the Gaeltacht.
- Development of Altan tower beside Altan lakes as a tourist attraction.
- Necessity to improve public transport to the Gaeltacht.
- Necessity to tackle obstacles to development particularly in the area of local bureaucracy.

Barney McLaughlin commended Members for their continued financing of Tourism Initiatives in the 2019 Budget.

GMD 04/19

WALKS AND TRAILS

The Committee discussed the report circulated at the Meeting and presented by the Community Development Administrative Officer who informed Members that:

- (i) an application was submitted to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport on 29th November 2018 for funding to progress the proposed Letterkenny to Burtonport Greenway,
- (ii) a dedicated Assistant Engineer has been appointed to the project,
- (iii) an outdoor recreation development strategy is to be progressed in 2019,
- (iv) funding in the sum of €221,325 has been announced for the Letterkenny to Burtonport walk and €38,000 for the Glenties Alter Trail.
- (v) funding of €9,600 for the Bealach na Gaeltachta map boards has been provided.

Cllr. Bonner expressed disappointment with the level of funding and the absence of communication with the Councillors in relation to the greenway project.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested the restoration of viaducts along the route.

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill stressed the importance of community consultation and the necessity to upgrade the existing route to an acceptable standard.

Cllr. Slowey commended the ongoing funding and prioritisation of the greenway project and informed the Committee that this transformative scheme will rival any similar project in the Country.

The Community and Development Administrative Officer undertook to arrange a workshop to update the Committee in relation to the greenway on January 29th in the Public Services Centre.

GMD 05/19

ASCENT Project

Members discussed the report circulated at the meeting detailing progress to date in relation to environmental challenges at Errigal Mountain.

The Community and Development Administrative Officer undertook to include this project on the agenda at the Workshop convened on January 29th.

GMD 06/19

"Right to Vote" Initiative

The Committee noted the report circulated at the meeting regarding the Council's support for the Donegal Intercultural Platform in their campaign to encourage non national and minority groups to register to vote in the upcoming local elections.

GMD 07/19

Donegal Youth Council

The Committee welcomed the report regarding the election of a new Youth Council for a 2 year term.

GMD 08/19

Age Friendly Project

Members welcomed the report from the Social Inclusion Officer who informed the Committee:

- (i) that the National Older Persons Convention will be held in the Abbey Hotel, Donegal Town on 9th and 10th May.
- (ii) a budget in the sum of €15,000 is available to fund intergenerational projects such as the continuation of 'Ceol le Chéile' and an intergenerational gardening programme.

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh commended the Social Inclusion Officer for her contribution to the ongoing success of the Intergenerational Choir and praised the benefits arising from this initiative for participants and local communities.

GMD 09/19

Donegal Happiness Survey

Cllr. Gallagher requested a presentation in relation to the results of this survey at the next MD meeting. The survey was undertaken by the Research and Policy Unit on behalf of the Donegal Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

GMD 10/19

Dungloe Bay Walk

Cllr. Gallagher requested an update regarding her previous recommendation that the Council design and cost an extension of the bay walk to the Pond.

GMD 11/19

Dungloe Art Project

Cllr. Gallagher informed the Committee that Dungloe Tidy Towns Committee in conjunction with the 'Sticky Fingers Group' have developed proposals for an art project in Dungloe. On the proposal of Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Cllr. Ó Fearraigh, the Committee recommended that the Council support this initiative.

GMD 12/19

Village Renewal Applications

Cllr. Gallagher outlined the excessive bureaucratic obstacles hindering village renewal initiatives throughout the Municipal District and expressed concern regarding the status of the Burtonport application.

GMD 13/19

RETURNING EMIGRANTS

Cllr. Gallagher highlighted ongoing difficulties experienced by returning members of the Diaspora in the following areas:

- Driving Licences
- Insurance
- Bank Accounts
- Taxation and Social Welfare
- Banking Facilities

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill and Cllr. Gallagher expressed frustration at the interpretation of planning guidelines in respect of submitted applications. The Committee expressed concern at the lack of incentives & assistance to returning emigrants, further exacerbating the negative impact on economic and social development in local areas.

Cllr. Slowey highlighted difficulties experienced by returning emigrants in accessing government services. Cllr. Bonner criticised the necessity to liaise with authorities in Mayo to access the Safe Home Programme.

Cllr. Gallagher requested that this matter:

- (i) be referred to the Corporate Policy group for inclusion on the next agenda
- (ii) stressed the importance of establishment of a Task Force to address these concerns

- (iii) importance of communication with local secondary schools to initiate policies to minimise emigration
- (iv) Recommended that Citizens Information produce a document to assist the Diaspora considering a return to the County. Cllr. Ó Domhnaill and Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig highlighted increases in emigration in their localities over the festive period.

GMD 14/19

ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

14.1

Recycling

The Committee discussed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Coastal Officer regarding the Council's promotion of waste prevention and waste recycling initiatives.

Cllr. Gallagher requested full time availability of glass and tin recycling facilities outside of the recycling centres as there is sufficient lighting and cameras in the area.

In response to a query from Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig regarding the absence of plastic and paper recycling facilities at bring banks, the Director of the Environment (i) undertook to revert to the Committee in this regard and (ii) outlined Local Authority obligations to comply with the Regional Waste Management Plan. Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig expressed disappointment that the Council appear to be providing minimal recycling facilities.

14.2

National Christmas Tree Recycling

Members noted the availability of natural Christmas tree recycling facilities in Dungloe, Glenties, Bunbeg and Falcarragh during the period ending Saturday, 19th January 2019.

14.3 Litter Statistics

The Committee noted the statistics in relation to (i) litter fines, (ii) Environment complaints, (iii) Warning letters and (iv) Tonnages of waste collected by Mobile Litter Units.

14.4 Coastal Management

Members welcomed the report circulated previously regarding the provision of both portaloos and permanent public convenience services at coastal locations. The Coastal Officer advised that there are proposals to provide an additional seasonal disabled portaloos at 8 no. extra Blue Flag Beach locations subject to landowner agreements and budgetary provision.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested the Council to expedite the upgrade of public toilets on Arranmore.

14.5 Coastal Protection

In response to a query from Cllr. Bonner, the Coastal Officer advised that tender documents in respect of coastal erosion studies at Gweebarra, Carrickfin, Maghera and Magheraarty will be ready at the month end as a single package, with the intention that Consultants will be on site during the summer.

14.6 Beach Mapping

Cllr. Gallagher recommended that a meeting with Daragh McDonough be organised to showcase work carried out in relation to beach mapping and to be attended by the Tourism Officer and the public.

14.7 Cloughglass Beach

Cllr. Gallagher commended work carried out at this location.

14.8 **Carrickfinn Warning Signage**

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig (i) commended the Environment Service and the Company who produced the warning signage at short notice to warn beach users of quicksand conditions at Carrickfinn and (ii) requested warning signage to be erected at further locations from Ranafast to Gaoth Dobhair.

14.9 **Dungloe Toilets**

Cllr. Gallagher emphasised the necessity for the toilets at Dungloe to be operational by Easter.

14.10 **Group Water Schemes**

Cllr. Gallagher highlighted the situation whereby the public have to purchase bottled water in certain locations and requested appropriate officials;

- (i) To update Members regarding Group Water Schemes and
- (ii) Request an update from Irish Water on Capital Schemes.

GMD 15/19 **PLANNING SERVICES**

15.1 **Development Applications**

The Committee discussed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Planner, regarding the status of applications submitted in the period ended November 2018.

Cllr. Gallagher requested additional information & analysis in respect of the statistics listing 599 deferrals out of a total of 1830 applications. Cllr. Gallagher submitted that the deferral category is utilised to reduce the number of refusals issued.

15.2

Planning Services

Members noted the reports presented by the Planner regarding:

- (i) Enforcement statistics
- (ii) Planning clinics scheduled on the 16th and 30th January
- (iii) Central Planning Unit Projects.

GMD 16/19

Glenties Community Development Deputation

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh welcomed Brian Carr (Chairman), Richard Quigley (Secretary) and Michael Bonner from the Clós Naomh Conaill Residents Committee to the Municipal District Meeting.

The Committee were circulated with a report and the deputation highlighted issues in relation to Roads, Bridges, Car Parking, Pedestrian Crossings, Footpaths, Public Lighting,,Housing Estates and the Courthouse.

The Committee commended the quality of the presentation and undertook to liaise with relevant Council services regarding issues raised by the Deputation.

GMD 17/19

Tidy Estates Presentation

The Committee welcomed representatives from the winners of the tidy estates competitions to the meeting and paid tribute to their hard work and dedication to the upkeep of their estates. Cllr. Ó Fearraigh presented cheques to the winners of the following 3 no. categories:

1. Large estate - Eastát Béal an Átha (Ballina)
2. Medium estate - Ard McGill (Glenties)
3. Small estate - An tArdán Rua, Loch an Iúir

GMD 18/19

Gweebarra Community Group - Deputation

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh welcomed Angela Apitius (Chairperson) and Carolyn Robinson (Secretary) representing the Gweebarra Community Group to the meeting.

The Deputation informed Members of the background to the formation of the group, social activity and their involvement in the 'Make Waste into Art' project. The Committee were requested to support the Group in their 2019 campaign to tackle plastic pollution and were informed of events to engage with toddlers and primary schools in this regard. The Committee commended the efforts, aims and environmental concerns of the group.

Cllr. Gallagher recommended that the group liaise with the Community Development officials in relation to their campaigns.

GMD 19/19

ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

19.1

Follow-Up Issues

Members welcomed the reports issued by the Roads Manager in advance of the meeting in relation to issues raised at the previous MD meeting.

19.2

Takeover of Non County Roads

The Roads Manager informed the Committee that the Roads Service will commence the process of takeover of non county roads as recommended at the Roads Workshop.

19.3

Roads Workshop

The Committee agreed to convene a Workshop on the 29th January at 12.30 p.m. to discuss surface dressing, CIS, drainage schemes and maintenance programmes.

19.4

T.I.I.

In response to queries from (1) Cllr. Bonner requesting clarification on allocations for local Road Schemes and (2) Cllr. Gallagher regarding Dungloe Tidy Towns Group and footpath to Supervalu, Dungloe, the Roads Manager stated (i) that the NRDO will issue an explanatory report to all Members and (ii) the TII have a commitment to meet the Tidy Towns Group.

19.5

Marine Service

Cllr. Gallagher requested (i) the attendance of the Marine Engineer at a number of Municipal District meetings, (ii) provision of defibrillators at all working piers commencing with Burtonport Pier and (iii) a meeting with all local and national public representatives regarding the status of the proposed redevelopment of Burtonport Pier.

19.6

Bunbeg Footbridge

In response to a query from Cllr. Ó Fearraigh regarding the status of this project, the Roads Manager advised Members that the presence of fresh water pearl mussels at both sides of the bridge has delayed progress and that he will update on the status of works at future Municipal District meetings.

19.7

Signage

In response to queries from Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig, the Roads Manager advised the Committee that there are a number of outstanding commitments to erect signage at a number of locations in the Municipal District. Cllr. Gallagher requested directional signage to Letterkenny at Dungloe Lake.

19.8 **Ranafast Village**

Cllr. Gallagher requested that the Road Design Team visit Ranafast to design a project lay out, in advance of potential village renewal funding coming on stream.

19.9 **Road Lining**

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh requested the Roads Service to line the road from Pobail Scoil Gaoth Dobhair to Glasserchoo crossroads in the interest of road safety.

19.10 **Maintenance**

The Committee requested the Roads Service to expedite works in relation to the following projects:

- Ranafast, Lunniagh, Dungloe Bay and Caravan Road footpaths.
- Curransport and Derryconnor dips and flooding.
- CIS Ranafast.
- Bunbeg Bridge - Croveigh/Meenamara Works.

19.11 **Roads Services Supervisor**

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh requested that the Committee's appreciation be conveyed to Sean Doohan for his service to the local area.

19.12 **Damaged fence**

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested the Council to repair a fence damaged by the Council during works in the Thorr - Meenamara area.

20.1

Progress Reports

The Committee welcomed the progress reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Housing Manager regarding the status of:

- (i) Grants
- (ii) Casual vacancies and
- (iii) Acquisitions

as at the 7th of January 2019.

The Housing Manager (i) commended the contribution of the Housing staff to the reduction in casual vacancies, (ii) informed Members that amendments to the grants system approved at SPC level will be brought to the Plenary Council for adoption.

20.2

An Choill- Burtonport

The Housing Manager, in response to a query from Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig stated that the Residents Committee and the Tenant Liaison Officer will meet to discuss the provision of a ramp.

20.3

Radharc an Iúir Estate

In response to a query from Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig, the Housing Manager informed Members that ongoing settlement issues are being monitored by the Housing Service.

20.4

Housing Capital

Cllr. Gallagher recommended the decentralisation of the Housing Capital Service to benefit housing provision in the Municipal District.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig stated that the Council should engage in a land acquisition programme and utilise our own labour resources to build housing units.

Cllr. Bonner queried the status of land banks in the Dungloe area for Housing provision. The Housing Manager informed the Committee that there hasn't been any update in respect of Housing provision by Clúid/Respond and Údarás (Fintown).

20.5 Housing Maintenance

The Housing Manager informed that monies have been budgeted for painting in 2019.

20.6 Deputations

On the proposal of Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Cllr. Bonner, the Committee agreed to receive deputations from:

- (i) Cumann Traenach Bhaile na Finne
- (ii) Dunfanaghy Area Community Network

at the next Municipal District Meetings.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.