

MINUTES OF MEETING OF ISLANDS COMMITTEE

HELD ON 9TH JULY, 2019 IN THE DUNGLOE P.S.C

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllr. John Sheamais Ó Fearraigh (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. Micheal Choilm Mac Giolla Easbuig
Cllr. Anthony Molloy
Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher
Cllr. Noreen McGarvey
Séamus Mac Ruairí
Eamonn S. Mac Aoidh
William Boyle
Marjorie Uí Chearbhall
Seán Ó Briain
Mairín Uí Fhearraigh
Máire Uí Dochartaigh
- OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Michael McGarvey - Director of Water & Environment Service
Brendan McFadden, SEE Area Manager, Roads
Jamie Gallagher - Roads Engineer
Cathal Mac Suibhne - Marine Engineer
David Friel - Coastal Officer
Charles Sweeney - Administrative Officer, Community Development
Michael Rowsome-S.S.O, Corporate & Motor Tax
- APOLOGIES:** Diarmuid Ó Mórdha - An Roinn
Michéal Mac Giolla Easbuig - Údarás na Gaeltachta
John McCafferty
Eamonn Brown-Area Manager, Housing & Corporate
Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh
Rosaleen McShane

IC 22/19 VOTES OF SYMPATHY

A minutes silence was observed and a vote of sympathy was passed in respect of the following recent bereavements:

- The late Councillor Manus Kelly
- The late former Councillor Fred Coll
- The late former Islands Committee Member, Tony Gallagher, Arranmore
- The late Madge Boyle, Arranmore

IC 23/19 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9TH APRIL 2019

On the proposal of Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Seamus Rodgers, the minutes of the meeting held on 9th April 2019 were confirmed subject to the following amendments:

IC 14.6 - Insertion of 'Bunbeg' instead of 'Owey'.

IC 14.3 - Insertion of 'Tory Pier' instead of 'Magheroarty'.

IC 24/19 Inishboffin Development Committee

A presentation was made to Coiste na nOileáin by the Inishboffin Development Group and the following issues were highlighted:

- Necessity for regular scheduled boat service to the Island
- Road Improvement
- Coastal Protection Walls
- Lights on Slipway
- Costs of power supply to the Community Hall
- Impact of designated special protection areas and special areas of conservation on development of the Island and the importance of a better balance between the needs of nature and the local community.

Members were informed of the current status of the old school and the necessity to initially preserve the building. The

Development Committee outlined ambitious plans for the future renovation and extension of the school, to incorporate an exhibition zone and 'artist in residence' unit in addition to provision of glamping pods and camping areas.

The Islands Committee commended the presentation and outlined the availability of assistance from the Environmental Service and Heritage Officer to aid the development proposals, and also advised of the positive progress in respect of the provision of a public convenience on Inishboffin.

IC 25/19

Islands Programme 2019

The Committee debated the lack of State commitment to the development of offshore Islands & expressed disappointment and frustration that the provision of funding for the 2019 Island Programme hasn't materialised to date.

John O'Brien advised of the importance of commencing the Islands Works during favourable weather conditions and that early announcement of the programme is urgently awaited.

William Boyle highlighted the implications of the Birds & Habitats directive which unfortunately results in delays to the initiation of works programmes on offshore Islands.

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh informed the meeting of the willingness of a deputation of the Islands Committee to meet with the Minister to expedite this matter and the Director undertook to liaise with An Roinn in this regard.

Cllr. Gallagher requested (i) the compilation of a multi-annual Islands Programme for submission to An Roinn in 2020 detailing each Islands priorities and (ii) the completion of a report by each Council Service outlining the works carried out during the year on each Island.

ROADS SERVICES

26.1

The Roads Manager introduced Jamie Gallagher, Islands Roads Engineer to the Committee & informed Members that:

- That the Agreed 3 year, Island Roads Programme has been submitted to An Roinn.
- The Roadworks application to An Roinn consists of both roads on the larger and smaller Islands and outlined the importance of traffic volumes in the prioritisation process.
- Tender submissions have been invited in respect of prioritised projects to expedite delivery of the roadworks programme on approval of funding.
- The Inishboffin Road is a non-County Road funded on a 100% basis by An Roinn and that the road is listed on the 2020 programme.

Seamus Rodgers commended the contribution of John Hegarty to the Islands Committee and also his co-operation with Islanders.

Máire Ui Dochartaigh & William Boyle outlined works required on Island Roy & Owey respectively.

26.2

Doctors Road - Arranmore

A lengthy debate ensued regarding the proposal from Seamus Rodgers to take-over the Doctors Road on Arranmore to preserve the investment made on the road and a letter from the local Doctor in support of the proposal was read at the meeting.

The Roads Manager informed the Committee that this road is unlikely to be suitable for takeover in accordance with the current takeover policy criteria adopted at Plenary Council. The Roads Manager also added that in conjunction with Elected Members, 6 roads on the mainland are being considered for

Takeover and are currently being worked through the various stages of the Policy.

Seamus Rodgers requested Councillors to amend the takeover criteria to facilitate take-over of the Doctors Road.

26.3 Lay Bys - Arranmore

In response to a recommendation from Seamus Rodgers to provide additional lay byes on the Island, the Roads Manager concurred with the proposal on the basis that when Roadworks are being conducted then the Roads Service generally surfaces existing laybyes and also creates new laybyes, subject to the land being available gratis.

26.4 Tory - Lighthouse Road

In response to concerns expressed by Marjorie Uí Chearbhaill regarding the poor state of the lighthouse Road, the Roads Manager informed Members that the road is included on the 2019 application to An Roinn for 100% funding due to its non county status.

26.5 Junction at Ferry Pier - Leabgarrow

Seamus Rodgers informed the Committee that landowners are prepared to negotiate with the Council in relation to land requirements to facilitate a solution at this dangerous junction and the Roads Manager outlined ongoing road design work to address problems at this location. Seamus Rodgers requested the erection of appropriate warning signage in advance of a permanent solution.

26.6 Ballard Road - Arranmore

The Roads Manager informed the Committee that the Council are monitoring a number of 2018 overlaid sections and that the contractor is within the maintenance period and will conduct remedial works if necessary.

26.7

Gola

Eamonn Mac Aoidh and Mairín Uí Fhearraigh highlighted the unacceptable road surface on Gola and the problems that will potentially arise during the upcoming festival. Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig informed the meeting of health and safety issues arising from exposed ESB marker tape. The Roads Manager undertook to relay concerns to ESB personnel and advised that the road is a non county road & is listed on the prioritised 3 year programme.

26.8

Bunbeg Pier Road

Cllr. MacGiolla Easbuig asked the Council to take action in relation to the yellow line markings & the slippery condition of the approach road at this location.

IC 27/19

ENVIRONMENT

The Coastal Officer discussed the report circulated with the agenda in relation to:

- Provision of portaloos at Gola Island Pier.
- Initiation of a tender process to appoint a Contractor to construct a public convenience on Inishboffin.
- Commencement of a tender process to appoint a contractor to carry out the renovation works on the public convenience on Arranmore.
- Clean Coast Programme.

27.1

Gola Island

Máirín Uí Fhearraigh and Eamonn Mac Aoidh highlighted ongoing issues in relation to the necessity for an additional portaloos on the Island in light of an increase in tourists and the upcoming festival.

The Coastal Officer informed the meeting of the necessity of acquiring a suitable site for a permanent solution.

27.2

Abandoned Boats

In response to a query from Seamus Rodgers regarding historical issues surrounding abandoned boats on Arranmore, the Marine Engineer stressed the importance of local support to address concerns in this regard.

IC 28/19

COMHAR NA n-OILEÁIN

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested the name of the Council nominee to this body for the last 5 years & also requested a report on activities undertaken by the nominee at these meetings.

The Director confirmed that Cllr. Molloy is the current Council representative on Comhar na n-Oileáin.

IC 29/19

ISLAND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Cllr. Gallagher requested an update on the nomination process for Island representation as a number of Islands are not being represented on Coiste na n-Oileáin.

IC 30/19

COASTGUARD SERVICE

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig asked that a letter issue to the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport to request restoration of the Bunbeg Cliff Rescue Unit in light of the recent increase in adventure Tourism.

IC 31/19

MARINE SERVICE

Magheraroarty & Inishboffin Piers

31.1

John O'Brien outlined concerns regarding the following issues:

- Dredging and the necessity to dredge from the pier head

- Inadequate berthage
- Provision of bins at Magheraroarty
- Damage to boats
- Requirement for additional power points
- Inishboffin Pier Extension

The Marine Engineer discussed the following difficulties dredging from the pier deck;

- The pier would be blocked for a period
- Necessity to remove safety railings to enable access for machinery
- Minimal benefits due to sand filling in quickly

The Committee were advised by the Marine Engineer that;

- Government funding announced last year would be used to carry out a survey to establish water depths in the access channel outside the pier to improve accessibility
- A bin will be provided on Magheraroarty Pier to collect waste from vessels
- Funding for an extension to Inishboffin Pier will be problematic as will carrying out design works.
- He would review site after the meeting & undertook to liaise with the OPW in relation to funding coastal protection works.

31.2 Small Ferry Service

The Committee requested the provision of a small ferry service to all smaller Islands to boost Island tourism & to facilitate locals with transportation of goods & equipment.

31.3 Piers

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig, requested the Marine service to;

- Carry out additional works at Gortnasade

- Provide lights & power points at Bunbeg
- Provide lights at Magheragallen
- Address structural deficiencies at 'kitty Archies' Pier

The Marine Engineer undertook to visit both Gortnasade & Bunbeg Piers to determine necessary works and also agreed to examine the feasibility of providing a light at Magheragallen.

In response to a recommendation from Máirín Uí Fhearraigh & Eamonn Mac Aoidh to carry out Coastal Protection works & extension of Gola Pier, the Marine Engineer advised the Committee of the difficulties that would be encountered in securing project funding for a breakwater and that planning and foreshore licence applications would also prove problematic.

In response to a query from Seamus Rodgers regarding Rannagh pier, the Marine Engineer clarified that an application for funding in the sum of €80,000 has been submitted to An Roinn.

IC 32/19 HSE Primary Care Island Services

Mairín Uí Fhearraigh informed the Committee of her attendance at the inaugural meeting of the Community Healthcare Organisation Island Project group on Arranmore. Members were informed that all the smaller Islands in Donegal were omitted from the map accompanying the report in relation to Island healthcare & that the provision of healthcare on the smaller Islands doesn't appear to be a concern for the HSE.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.