

Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Lifford-Stranorlar held on 22nd July 2020 at 11.00 am in the Regional Training Centre, Lifford.

Members Present	Cllr. Gary Doherty, Cllr. Gerry Crawford, Cllr. Frank McBrearty, Cllr. Liam Doherty, Cllr. Martin Harley, Cllr. Patrick McGowan.
Officials Present	Joe Peoples, Olive Gillespie, Tony Browne, Ciara Condon, Kathleen McGowan, Claire McGeever, Daragh McDonough.
Apologies	Paul Gallagher

Cllr. Gary Doherty opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. As a mark of respect and to remember all those who have died from Covid-19 during the public health emergency, a minute's silence was observed. Items from the agenda were discussed as follows:

247 Corporate Services

247.01 Votes of Sympathy

Members passed a vote of sympathy on the passing of:

- Sydney Carlin, mother of Geraldine Havlin, Planning Services.
- Rita Duddy, mother of our colleagues Paul Duddy, Letterkenny PSC & Peter and Martin Duddy, Water Services, Milford.
- Rose Crawford, mother of Martina McCollum, Letterkenny PSC.
- Steven Doherty, brother of our colleague Jeanette Longwill, Central Library.
- Sister Bridget Doherty, aunt of Donal Walker, Housing Construction.
- Roland McClay, father-in-law of our colleague Jennifer McClay, Housing and Corporate Services, Donegal PSC.
- Hugh Conaghan, father of our colleague Francis Conaghan, Community Development, Letterkenny PSC.
- Nuala Allan, sister of our colleague Mary McGill, Stranorlar Roads Office.
- Kathleen Kelly, mother of our colleague Adrienne Kelly, Community Development.
- Eileen Friel, mother of our colleague Liam Anthony Friel, Water Services, Letterkenny, sister of our colleague Patrick Dorrian, Roads Services, Letterkenny, aunt of our colleague Pauric Dorrian, Roads Services, Letterkenny and aunt of our colleague Gavin Fahy, Water Services, Letterkenny.
- Our retired colleague Thomas Doherty, father of Eddie Doherty, Carndonagh Fire Station.
- Mary Catherine Hoey, mother of our colleague Eileen Hoey, Roads Office, Donegal PSC.
- Patsy McGinty, father of our colleague, Bridin McGinty, Customer Service Centre, Milford.
- Meta Stewart, mother of our colleague Winston Stewart, Water Services, Stranorlar.
- Gary Cutcliffe, husband of our colleague Caroline Cutcliffe, Library Services, Inishowen.
- Marsha McConnell, sister of our colleague Shaun Paul Murphy, Community Development.

247.02 Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Lifford-Stranorlar held 03rd March 2020.

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Cllr. L Doherty and seconded by Cllr. P McGowan.

247.03 Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Lifford-Stranorlar held 10th June 2020.

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Cllr. P McGowan and seconded by Cllr. F McBrearty.

247.04 Confirmation of Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Municipal District of Lifford-Stranorlar held 24th June 2020.

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Cllr. M Harley and seconded by Cllr. P McGowan.

248 Confirmation of Date and Venue for Next Meeting and Business Prescribed by Statute

248.01 It was agreed that the next meetings of the Lifford-Stranorlar Municipal District would be held on Wednesday, **23rd September 2020 in the County House, Lifford** as follows:

- **Workshop** **10.00 am.**
- **Meeting** **11.00 am.**

249 Consideration of Reports & Recommendations from Services

249.01 Community Development

The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- Cllr. P McGowan requested an update in relation to the Percent for Arts Scheme. In response Joe Peoples explained this will be considered under the Community, Social and Cultural Strategic Policy Committee.
- Members discussed a number of possibilities with regard to twinning with another European district, given the heritage of the area and the potential for tourism opportunities that this could bring to the municipal district. Joe Peoples agreed to follow up and revert to Members.

- Cllr. P McGowan queried if playgrounds are insured by the Council. Kathleen McGowan agreed to follow up and revert to Members.
- Cllr. L Doherty referred to the Foyle/Finn Development and queried which areas of the river are included in the primary elements of the project proposal. Kathleen McGowan agreed to follow up and revert to Members.
- Cllr. M Harley stated that the Council should explore the potential of working with Coillte to develop walkways and cycleways.
- Cllr. G Doherty referred to the Covid-19 Community Response Forum and commended Council staff involved in assisting at-risk members of the public to access supports and advice during the public health emergency.
- Cllr. G Doherty stated that he wanted to have discussions on playgrounds throughout the Municipal District. He specifically referred to the need to develop the playground in Castlefinn and mentioned the potential to have discussion with the Castlefin Partnership Initiative (CPI) to extend the playground.
- Kathleen McGowan referred to the Community Enhancement Programme which is now open for applications and highlighted that priority will be given to groups trying to recover from the impact of Covid-19. The closing date of the scheme is the 14th August 2020.

249.02 Planning Services

The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- Members acknowledged the work of the Regeneration Team but expressed their disappointment that funding was not approved for Ballybofey & Stranorlar as part of the call for Category 2 applications under the Rural Regeneration and Development fund. Members however looked forward to the possibility of submitting a new application in December 2020.
- Cllr F.Mc Brearty requested that Planning Enforcement give an update in relation to the Islandmore Quarry issue and Sheldon's Quarry, Raphoe. Ciara Condon agreed to request Planning Enforcement to contact Cllr. McBrearty on Islandmore and as the Quarry in Raphoe was still at Decision Stage, she could not comment on a live application.
- Cllr. M Harley highlighted that six weeks is too slow for planning enforcement personnel to be on site when a complaint is received and that this should be examined in relation to staffing and resources. Ciara Condon agreed to relay comments back to Planning Enforcement.

249.03 Housing & Corporate Services

The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- Cllr. F McBrearty stated that the delays in progressing the housing scheme at

Meadowhill, Raphoe was unacceptable and requested the Housing Office write out to a named household to update them on their specially adapted house in the proposed new scheme.

- Cllr. G Crawford requested the detail/location on the 55 properties acquired to date under the Social Housing Acquisition Programme. Olive Gillespie agreed to circulate a list of the properties to the Members.
- Members queried if any agreement has been reached in relation to the maintenance of backlanes, roads and footpaths in Council housing estates. Olive Gillespie explained that it was her understanding that this issue has to be discussed at Plenary Council level, to agree a work programme and associated budgets.
- Cllr. P McGowan referred to the need to have an affordable housing scheme for those who don't qualify for social housing. Joe Peoples stated that it is envisaged that the new government will be introducing a scheme that will address this issue.
- Members requested an update in relation to the Windows & Doors Replacement Programme. Olive Gillespie confirmed that a county wide submission has been made and the Housing Office is currently waiting on a decision to proceed.

249.04 Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services

The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- Cllr. P McGowan referred to Donegal East Tourism and the need for additional supports for the hospitality sector that is currently operating in challenging circumstances. He also requested that the role of ICBAN be further enhanced and referred to a submission he had previously made to Seamus Neely, Chief Executive Officer, regarding the development of ICBANs activities. Cllr. P McGowan suggested ICBAN should be under the remit of the Director of Services for Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services. Barney Mc Laughlin agreed to follow up on this.
- Cllr. G Crawford commented on the important role of the Civil Defence during the Covid-19 pandemic and requested that the Council write to the Civil Defence to thank them for their work during the public health emergency. This was supported by Members.
- Cllr. M Harley suggested that the car parking app, be better advertised. Barney McLaughlin agreed to relay this request to Daragh McDonough, IS Project Leader.
- Cllr. M Harley referred to the importance of the National Broadband Plan and requested that the Council write to the Minister of Communications, Climate Action and Environment to ensure broadband is rolled out as soon as possible, as this is more important than ever, given the impacts from Covid-19.

249.05 Environmental Services

The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. As there was no representative from the service in attendance it was agreed that any queries would be emailed to Paul Gallagher.

249.06 Roads Services

The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- Cllr. P McGowan requested an update in relation to the N15 Corcam Bends between Stranorlar and Killygordon. Claire McGeever agreed to request an update from the National Roads Office, Donegal Town.
- Cllr. P McGowan requested additional signage at Liscooley to slow down traffic when entering the village. Claire McGeever agreed to check and revert to Members.
- Cllr. P McGowan queried why the hedge at Logue's Bridge, Ballybofey has not yet been cut. Claire McGeever agreed to follow up on this issue.
- Cllr. P McGowan referred to the role of overseers who previously used to call to farmers and landowners, and remind them about cutting hedges and dealing with excess water running onto roads. Claire McGeever stated that hedge cutting is the responsibility of the relevant land owner and that Donegal County Council runs a public awareness campaign in that regard, but if there is a specific problem which has been notified to the Council, the Roads Office can follow this up with the land owner.
- Cllr. G Doherty requested an update in relation to the review of parking charges. Claire McGeever stated that this had been put on hold because of Covid-19 but would request an update for Members.
- Cllr. G Crawford requested an update in relation to the completion of works at 60 Acres, Ballindrait. Claire McGeever agreed to review and revert to Members.
- Cllr. G Crawford referred to a road safety issue at St. Johnston and requested action to be taken to highlight the dangers at this location. Claire McGeever agreed to request the Roads Design Office to examine this issue.
- Claire McGeever advised that following a letter being received in relation to overhanging trees on the Back Road to the Cross, the landowner had been contacted by the Council in relation to maintaining their trees. Claire McGeever agreed to follow up on this matter again.

250 Members Written Questions

250.01 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. G Crawford:

Question: “When will the housing scheme in Cois Abhainn, St. Johnston be ready to allocate.”

Reply: The Housing Scheme in Cois Abhainn, St Johnston will be completed in August and the houses will be allocated shortly after completion.

250.02 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. G Crawford:

Question: “When will the much needed new builds and associated works in Meadow Hill, Raphoe begin.”

Reply: The Raphoe Housing Scheme consisting of 11 housing units will commence on site on 10th August.

250.03 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. G Crawford:

Question: “What does housing intend to do to resolve the very real difficulties associated with the treatment plant in the council scheme at Holly Bush Park, Porthall.”

Reply: To establish the extent of the remedial works required at Holybush Park Porthall, the Council is currently examining the options available for the upgrading of the treatment process at this location. In this regard, the Housing Technical Team are engaging with an Environmental Specialist Company to determine the optimum solution.

In the meantime, the Council is continuing to maintain the existing treatment process through bi-annual de-sludging and regular inspections of the pumps.

This concluded the business of the Meeting

Cathaoirleach
Municipal District of Lifford-Stranorlar

As agreed at the Lifford-Stranorlar Municipal District Meeting held 23rd September 2020