

**Minutes of Municipal District of Stranorlar Meeting held on Tuesday 7th April 2015 in the Regional Training Centre, Stranorlar, commencing at 11.00am.**

**Members Present:**

Cllr Gary Doherty (Cathaoirleach)  
Cllr Patrick McGowan  
Cllr Gerry Crawford  
Cllr Liam Doherty  
Cllr Frank McBrearty.  
Cllr Martin Harley.

**Officials Present:**

Joe Peoples, Director of Service, Senior Management Team  
Gerry Gilroy, Area Manager, Corporate & Housing Services  
Garrett Doherty, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation.  
Paul Christy, Senior Executive Planner, Planning Services.  
Paddy Doherty, Divisional Manager, Community & Enterprise,  
Martina Morris, Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services.

**40.00 Corporate Services.**

**40.01. Votes of Sympathy.**

Members passed a vote of sympathy on the passing of:

**Mr. John Boyle**, Drumcavney, Trentagh, father- in- law of Cllr Mick Quinn.

**Mr. Kieran Doherty**, Stranorlar, who died as a result of a recent road traffic accident.

**Mr. Denis Coyle**, Dunwiley, Stranorlar, father- in- law of Cllr Martin Harley.

**40.02. Confirmation of Minutes of Municipal District of Stranorlar Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015.**

On the proposal of Cllr Gerry Crawford and seconded by Cllr. Patrick McGowan the minutes of the Meeting held of the 25th February 2015 were confirmed.

Minutes of Municipal District of Stranorlar Meeting held on Tuesday 7th April 2015.

**40.03. Confirmation of Minutes of Municipal District of Stranorlar Workshop held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015.**

On the proposal of Cllr Liam Doherty and seconded by Cllr. Martin Harley the minutes of the Workshop Meeting held of the 25th February 2015 were confirmed.

**40.04. Confirmation of Minutes of Municipal District of Stranorlar Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015.**

On the proposal of Cllr Martin Harley and seconded by Cllr. Gerry Crawford the minutes of the Workshop Meeting held of the 30th March 2015 were confirmed.

**40.05. Confirmation of date & Venue for next Meeting.**

Members confirmed that the next meeting of Stranorlar Municipal District would be held on 19th May 2015 at 11.00 am in the Council Chamber, in Lifford.

This would be the A.G.M. for the Municipal District. It was also agreed that a Workshop would take place on that day at 9.30 am.

It was further agreed to hold a Special Meeting of the Stranorlar Municipal District on Tuesday 14th April at 3.30 pm in Lifford to discuss and agree the allocation of the Strategic Development Fund monies for the Area.

<b>41.00 Housing Services.</b>
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**41.01- Social Housing Reports.**

Members noted the reports circulated with the Agenda and presented by the Area Manager.

**41.02 Vacant Houses**

Members noted that from the beginning of the year **8** houses had been returned to the housing authority and offers of tenancy of **18** houses had been issued.

There were **50** units currently listed as vacant and these were categorised as follows;

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>
Works complete - Allocation process	11
At Tender or to be priced shortly	19
For Assessment	0
Major repairs - review demand	6
Cost Excessive - Review options including Disposal	14

#### **41.03 SHIP Programme 2015-2020.**

In response to a number of questions the Area Manager confirmed that the SHIP Programme for 2015-2020 provided for the provision of approx 600 houses county-wide and approximately 100 in the Stranorlar area. These houses will be provided by the construction of social housing, including on Council owned land and also by way of the purchase of suitable houses. The voluntary sector will also be encouraged to provide additional social housing.

Members highlighted their concerns regarding previous proposals for the development of apartments on the site at Trusk Road. This proposal had previously been opposed by the Members and their views had not changed.

It was confirmed that it was the intention of the Council's design team that Members would be consulted at an early stage in relation to how this, and indeed other sites, would be developed.

#### **42.00 Community, Enterprise & Cultural Services.**

##### **42.01- Progress Report.**

Members noted the contents of the report circulated and presented by Mr. Paddy Doherty.

Members expressed their continued support for the Riverine, & River-Links projects and requested that they be given regular reports / updates of progress, including copies of minutes of meetings which have taken place.

Members also highlighted their support for the improvement of access to Beltany Stone Circle and the promotion of this site as a tourist venue.

#### **42.02 - Cultural & Joint Policing Committees.**

Members sought an update on when the *Cultural Committee and the Joint Policing Committee meetings would commence.*

<b>43.00 Environmental Services.</b>
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#### **43.01 - Litter.**

Joe Peoples indicated that there are a number of prosecutions for litter offences pending at the moment, and that the Council continues to take the matter of littering and illegal dumping very seriously. He also briefed Members on the steps being taken to address littering including the ongoing promotion of 'clean up' projects carried out by various voluntary groups / local communities. He acknowledged their significant contribution and praised the work being done by these groups.

Members in turn acknowledged the contribution of these groups and called for the maximum level of assistance being provided them. Members highlighted the need to address the level of littering visible along major routes into towns and villages, particularly from coaches and highlighted the priority to safeguard those taking part in clean ups in such circumstances. Members requested that the Council's Environment Section consider promoting a clean up along the main roads providing 'Stop & Go' and the signage necessary to ensure the safety of those involved.

Members also highlighted the importance that the message to go out to those littering that the Council has ways of identifying people involved through CCTV and by searching materials to identify those responsible.

### **43.02. Flood Issues.**

Members referred to their previous invitation to the OPW & the Loughs Agency to attend a meeting of the Municipal District Committee and discuss flooding issues in the area, expressing their frustration that the OPW had declined.

Joe Peoples suggested that, as the Loughs Agency had indicated their willingness to meet with the members in relation to this issue, arrangements for their attendance at the next Municipal District Meeting. He also undertook to go back to the O.P.W. and pursue the matter.

### **43.03 Raphoe Landfill**

It was agreed that a report regarding the condition of the disused landfill in Raphoe be made available for the next meeting.

<b>44.00 Roads &amp; Transportation.</b>
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### **44.01. Road Works Programme.**

Members noted the contents of the report circulated and presented by Garrett Doherty.

During a discussion on 'pot-hole' repair Members were advised that it was proposed to hire in 'patching units' which would provide more durable repairs in heavily trafficked areas. Mr Doherty also confirmed that there would be sufficient men available to continue pot-hole repairs throughout the term of the road works programme.

Members were also advised that it was intended to fill the current vacancies in the Castlefin R.S.S. area to coincide with the surface dressing programme.

Members also highlighted public concerns regarding the current situation at Castlefin Bridge and urged that the remaining works be progressed as soon as possible. It was confirmed that funding of € 100,000 had been allocated this year

to continue works on the approach to the bridge and this work was scheduled to commence before the end of the summer.

At this stage the Cathaoirleach referred to the discussion at the Workshop earlier where Members were unanimous in their view that significant additional resources must urgently be secured to halt the deterioration in the condition of many roads in the Stranorlar area. It had been suggested to seek a meeting with Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs, Joe McHugh T.D., with a view to securing his assistance for a meeting to be arranged with Alan Kelly T.D Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government and Paschal Donohoe TD, The Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport. This proposal was formally made and unanimously agreed. It was also agreed that a submission document be prepared.

#### **44.02 Street Cleaning & Car Parking.**

Members requested a report in relation to funding sources for Street Cleaning and the Traffic Warden / Parking Charges costs in the Stranorlar Municipal District and in particular if this was uniform throughout all Municipal Districts. Members felt these costs should be should be 'top-sliced' from the Councils overall budget and that the Municipal Area should not have to bear the costs out of its limited resources.

#### **44.03 Roads Workshop,**

Members welcomed the extra €80,000 now available from Development Charges and it was agreed to hold a Workshop meeting on Tuesday 14th April @2.00pm in Lifford to agree the allocation of this funding.

<b>45.00 Planning &amp; Economic Development.</b>
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#### **45.01 Planning & Economic Development.**

Members considered report circulated with the agenda and presented by Paul Christy. He highlighted that a 'significant case/ development' had been omitted in error from the report. The development in question was at the Cloghan Lodge, Ballybofey and included for the construction of a 34 bed hotel and a number of lodges on the site.

**45.02 - Infrastructural requirements in Ballybofey / Stranorlar.**

Members question if the lack of capacity of the existing treatment plant in Stranorlar could lead to the refusal of Planning applications for future development in the area. Members felt the existing plant needs to be upgraded to cater for possible development in the future, particularly industrial type development.

Joe Peoples confirmed that the Council would be looking at this issue as part of its Strategic Development Plan. In this plan the Council will highlight the infrastructure available and where this may need to be upgraded to encourage development. He confirmed that a formal letter would be issued to Irish Water to find out what their plans are for this area.

**45.02 - Letterkenny General Hospital.**

Members requested that they be provided a copy of the report in relation to flooding at Letterkenny General Hospital. Mr Christy confirmed that this would be provided.

<b>46.00 Notice of Motions.</b>
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**46.01 - Signage - Drumboe Woods.**

*The following motion was submitted and proposed by Cllr. Liam Doherty, seconded by Cllr Martin Harley and unanimously agreed;*

"I am asking that this Municipal District would consider the erection of signage directing tourists and people from outside the locality to Drumboe Woods to help promote this wonderful site."

The members were informed that, the Council will be examining the tourism potential of Drumboe Woods in the context of the work currently being undertaken in relation to the Development Centre/Hub for Ballybofey and Stranorlar. An action plan will be agreed with partner agencies and the local

community and be implemented. The issue of signage will be addressed as part of this work.

<b>47.00 Members Written Questions.</b>
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**47.01 The following question was submitted by Cllr. Patrick McGowan.**

*Can the Council outline the history and progress to date on the Riverlinks greenway Magheramason Strabane via Clady , Castlefinn, Killygordon , Ballybofey-Stranorlar and on to Barnes Gap project to date .*

Cllr Mc Gowan was informed that the Council carried out a mapping exercise to identify the landowners along the selected route. The completed mapped route was presented to the Foyle Finn Rural Network and was agreed that they consult with additional local landowners and local communities to seek overall agreement on route. The Project rests with the Foyle Finn Rural Network on next stage of development.

**47.02 The following question was submitted by Cllr. Patrick McGowan**

*Following design works and land negotiations with owners some years ago is there any push by Donegal Co Council to develop the 'Mulrines Link Road' from Donegal Road to Glenfin Road, Ballybofey.*

Cllr McGowan was informed that Projects such as this were previously progressed and funded through the EU co-financed Specific Improvement Grant Scheme and/ or the Department of Transport Tourism & Sport (Dttas) Specific Improvement Scheme. The EU co-financed element of this specific funding was discontinued some years ago and the Dttas are currently only inviting applications for funding under their Specific Improvement Scheme in very specific circumstances. On this basis and on the basis that this particular project has not been included in Donegal County Council's Capital Budget Plan 2014 to 2016, there are currently no plans to develop this project any further at this time. The Stranorlar Municipal District Road Office does however agree that this is a desirable project and on this basis we will continue to seek out any available opportunity to develop the project through government funding or developer lead contributions.



**47.03 The following question was submitted by Cllr. Patrick McGowan**

*Logue's Bridge, Castlefinn Bridge and Stranorlar Bridge are in urgent need of funding, can an outline of all applications be given and where they stand county wide. Can a response be sought from the roads Director as I have raised this issue in a full Council meetings as well.*

Cllr McGowan was informed that in 2013 the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport discontinued their Specific Grants funding to Local Authorities. These grants had been used to fund larger projects, including bridges, that were beyond the scope of normal maintenance / refurbishment funding. DTTaS have instead funded a smaller scale Bridge Rehabilitation Programme (€225k to cover works on 8 named bridges in Donegal in 2015). Logue's Bridge, Castlefinn Bridge and Stranorlar Bridge all require significant funding and are beyond the scope of the Bridge Rehabilitation Programme.

In response to ongoing representations in relation to the Mullantiboyle Bridge outside Glenties, which had completely collapsed, DTTaS invited the Council to submit a funding application for the reconstruction of this bridge. It was understand that this application has been successful and that funding is being made available for this bridge. No funding applications for any other bridges have been made to date as the Council's understanding was that there was no funding source available for large scale bridge works. The Council will now liaise with DTTaS to determine if further applications can be submitted for other bridges.

**This concluded the business of the meeting.**

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**Area Manager  
Municipal District of Stranorlar**

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**Cathaoirleach  
Municipal District of Stranorlar.**