

MINUTES OF THE INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD IN THE PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE, CARNDONAGH ON TUESDAY 24th JUNE 2020 AT 1.00pm

Councillors Present:

Cllrs Paul Canning, Nicholas Crossan, Terry Crossan, Albert Doherty, Rena Donaghey, Martin Farren, Martin Mc Dermott, Bernard Mc Guinness and Jack Murray.

Padraig MacLochlainn TD was also present.

Officials Present:

John McLaughlin, Director of Roads and Transportation, Aideen Doherty, Area Manager, Housing & Corporate, Mairead Gibbons, Housing & Corporate Services Seamus Hopkins, Area Manager, Roads and Transportation, Killian Smith , Executive Planner , Mathew Byrne, Waste Protection Officer, Fiona Doherty, Development Officer, Community and Enterprise and Brenda Hegarty, Assistant Head of Enterprise, LEO Office Letterkenny

20.29 Consideration of the minutes of the Inishowen Municipal District meeting held on 10th March 2020

On the proposal of Cllr Martin Farren and seconded by Cllr Nicholas Crossan, the minutes of the Inishowen Municipal District meeting held on 10th March 2020 were agreed.

20.30 Correction to minute 20.22.02

It was noted that regarding minute 20.22.02, that significant works were required at Carndonagh courthouse.

20.31 Consideration of the minutes of the Inishowen Municipal District Special meeting held on 2nd June 2020

On the proposal of Cllr Martin McDermott and seconded by Cllr Paul Canning, the minutes of the Inishowen Municipal District Special meeting held on 2nd June 2020 were agreed.

20.32 COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE

Fiona Doherty Development Officer, Community and Enterprise presented the report to the Members.

20.32.01 Town and Village Renewal & CLAR Funding 2020

Fiona Doherty referred to the email circulated to the Members informing of the recent funding opportunities and she advised that she was working with some groups in relation to submitting and expression of interest applications. She acknowledged and welcomed her discussions with some members and invited other members to contact her directly with their ideas.

20.32.02 Malin Head Visitor Management Plan

In response to a query from Cllr Martin McDermott regarding the completion of the Malin Head Visitor Centre, Fiona Doherty confirmed that there was a firm commitment to progressing the Malin Head Visitor Management Plan.

20.32.03 Development Fund Initiative

Cllr Martin McDermott asked if there was any flexibility with the DFI funding allocated to groups for events and festivals because of the government guidelines in respect of Covid-19 restrictions. Fiona Doherty advised that the Council are working with each recipient on a case by case basis in a flexible manner allowing the recipients to re-purpose the allocated funding.

20.32.04 Lough Swilly and Lough Swilly Foyle Ferry Services

Cllr Rena Donaghey requested commencement dates for the two ferry services in Inishowen. Fiona Doherty advised that the Swilly ferry was contracted to commence on 20th July but could commence earlier if required. Cllr Martin Farren welcomed the news that the ferries would be up and running shortly which was very important for the local community and tourism sector. Cllr Nicholas Crossan also welcomed the commencement of the ferries. He suggested that Ned's Point Fort should be developed as it would be an excellent tourist attraction. He further suggested that all forts along the Swilly side should be opened.

20.32.05 Playgrounds Maintenance

Cllr Martin Farren referred to the playground maintenance report circulated and requested that playground maintenance needs to be reviewed, he indicated that there is a broken slide requiring repairs at the Moville playpark. Cllr Albert Doherty stated that the Barrack Hill Town Park, playground also required remedial works.

20.32.06 Grianan of Aileach

Cllr Jack Murray proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Terry Crossan that a meeting should be arranged with the Office of Public Works to discuss the development of An Grianan of Aileach site.

20.32.07 Walks and Trails- Carndonagh

Cllr Albert Doherty outlined in detail the issues associated with the damage to the Carndonagh Riverside walk and closure of the bridge as a result of the flooding that took place in August 2017. He acknowledged ongoing and recent talks that took place regarding the footbridge; however he expressed his dissatisfaction in respect of the lack of advancement of a solution to the issues.

Fiona Doherty suggested and it was agreed, that a workshop meeting would be arranged in line with Covid-19 guidelines with the Members and the relevant Council staff in all directorates regarding the matter. Cllr Martin McDermott requested that the footbridge at Culdaff should also be included on the agenda for this meeting.

20.33 PLANNING

The Planning Report was taken as read by Killian Smith, Executive Planner.

20.33.01 Buncrana

Cllrs Canning, Nicholas Crossan and Cllr Murray enquired about possible development opportunities and potential at the shore front in Buncrana.

20.33.02 Mast in Moville

Cllr Farren expressed his concerns about a possible mast being erected in Moville and asked that the planning service consider any planning application in relation to the erection of phone masts very carefully, bearing in mind the proximity of schools and the potential health risks in general. Some discussion took place on masts in general and it was agreed that further discussion should take place as local communities were very concerned about masts appearing throughout the county. Members gave examples of masts in various areas.

John McLaughlin, Director of Service, Roads and Transportation suggested the members speak to Killian Smith after the meeting to discuss individual cases.

20.33.03 Rural Regeneration & Development Fund

Cllr Murray said he believed Inishowen was missing out as a number of two tier towns were included but none in Inishowen. Cllr Doherty referred to the Carndonagh Master Plan and requested an update on progress to date. He added that other two tier town regeneration projects were already underway.

Killian Smith advised that he would take all matters back to the planning team. He added that a remote workshop planned for 7th July will assist in discussing shorefront proposals and the general strategic plan in Buncrana.

20.34 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INFORMATION SYSTEMS & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Brenda Hegarty, Assistant Head of Enterprise, presented a comprehensive report to the members.

20.34.01 Local Enterprise Office

Brenda Hegarty, Assistant Head of Enterprise, advised the members that the Local Enterprise Office were assisting businesses to open and protect jobs on the Restart Programme and there were twelve hundred applications to date. Cllr Farren commented that when Minister Joe McHugh attended the last Inishowen Municipal District meeting, no one had any idea how the economy would be affected by Covid 19. Cllr Farren said that he believes that commercial rates should be totally abolished this year but with no financial loss to the council. Cllr Farren requested an update on any progress on finding a solution for businesses.

Brenda Hegarty advised that the Restart Grant is connected to the rates bill paid in 2019 and there is an opportunity to get up and running again in business. She added that she will discuss the matter with income collection section.

20.34.02 Alpha Innovation Centre in Letterkenny

Brenda advised that €3.7m funding has been secured for a new Alpha Innovation Centre in Letterkenny which is a new business co-working space

20.34.03 Donegal Tourism

It was noted that Donegal Tourism are promoting the Staycation option and encouraging people to holiday in Donegal. Cllr Doherty stated that the whole North West City region should be promoted as a tourism destination in cooperation with Derry/Strabane councils with a view to a long term tourism marketing plan for the region. He requested an update on the A5 route.

Cllr Martin McDermott stated that he hoped that Donegal tourism and Explore Inishowen were working together to promote all of Donegal as a whole.

The members were advised that all their comments raised regarding tourism will be fed back to Barney McLaughlin, Administrative Officer, who deals with Tourism & economic Development initiatives

20.34.04 Fire Service

It was notes that the Fire Service were very busy with wild fire call outs.

20.34.05 Water Tankers

A query was raised on the availability of water tankers by Cllr McDermott and their location.

20.35 ENVIRONMENT

Mathew Byrne, Waste Protection Officer presented the Environment report to the members

20. 35.01 Life guards and Public Conveniences

Mathew Byrne, Waste Protection Officer advised that Lifeguards were back on duty from this weekend and public conveniences would be reopened. Rena Donaghey welcomed the reopening of the Public conveniences

20.35.02 Illegal Dumping

Mathew Byrne advised that Illegal dumping continues to cause problems and any information from public would be useful in trying to address the matter

Cllr Terry Crossan spoke of the ongoing littering on the Ballyarnett Road between Muff and Derry. He spoke of witnessing a car parked on road throwing green bags into a stream. He said he agreed that these incidents should be reported and measures enforced to address the serious ongoing problem.

20.35.03 Lisfannon Beach

Cllr Rena Donaghey stated that she was really disappointed that Lisfannon Beach remains closed and requested that the beach reopens as soon as possible. She acknowledged that the car park is an issue

but said that it was of paramount importance to get the blue flag status back. She requested that the Council progress this matter and keep the restoration of the blue flag status on the agenda.

20.35.04 Fullerton Dam – Irish Water Issues

Cllr Paul Canning proposed and Cllr McDermott seconded, that a visit to Fullerton Dam by the members was necessary to understand what is going to happen if water is taken to Letterkenny from the Fullerton Dam, with an increase to possibly twenty thousand additional homes. He argued that Inishowen's water supply would suffer as a result of this.

Cllr Mc Dermott spoke of ongoing issues with Irish Water and said that he had requested a meeting with them but was turned down due to Covid. He said he will continue to seek a meeting and said he thought it was ridiculous that Irish Water will not meet with DCC members. He asked the Cathaoirleach to seek a meeting with them. Cllr Albert Doherty said he would do so and supports this request. Cllr Farren agreed with Cllr Mc Dermott regarding ongoing issues with Irish Water. He praised the Donegal County Council staff in Water & Environment Section responses to repair bursts etc but added that Irish Water needs to provide funding immediately regarding repair and upgrading of existing pipe work.

Cllr Rena Donaghey stated that another water burst occurred yesterday in Buncrana and that water bursts are now a regular occurrence happening far too often. She added that the Fullerton dam was built for Fruit of the Loom and two thousand homes in Buncrana with the idea it would be reviewed in twenty years. The supply was inadequate to support some of the homes in the local area and it seems ridiculous that now it is going to Letterkenny, she added as there is a need to look at the wider Inishowen Area before water goes to areas outside of Inishowen peninsula.

20.35.05 Report on Lagg Beach

Cllr Mc Dermott asked that the report prepared on Lagg beach be circulated as soon as possible.

20.35.06 Clonmany River

A discussion took place on the condition of Clonmany River which was always known for salmon and sea trout fishing. A green discharge into the stream was noticed and the inland fisheries were advised as was the Environment section. It was agreed that this should be investigated thoroughly and is a very serious matter resulting in no angling being carried out and the stream being closed

20.35.07 Westbrook Sewerage Treatment Plant

Cllr Rena Donaghey stated that Westbrook Sewerage Treatment Plant is also an ongoing issue and an Irish Water Issue. She advised that upgrade works are ready to go as ground surveys are complete and the Compulsory Purchase Order has been finalised thus enabling works to start immediately. She proposed that a letter be sent to Irish Water regarding the Westbrook upgrade and that a meeting with Irish Water be requested by Cllr Albert Doherty. Nicholas Crossan asked if it was possible for Irish Water to put in bigger water tanks. Cllr Rena Donaghey supported Cllr Nicholas Crossan regarding the possibility of underground tanks at Westbrook.

20.35.08 Sewerage Problems Greencastle

Cllr Albert Doherty referred to resident's complaints in the Binevenagh estate in Greencastle regarding raw sewage spilling out onto coastal road.

20. 36 ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

The Roads and Transportation report circulated by Seamus Hopkins Seamus Hopkins, Area Manager, Roads and Transportation was taken as read.

Seamus referred to his updates and stated that everything was progressing despite delays and surface dressing in Buncrana and Newtowncunningham being done currently. Under the current circumstances he added, the Roads service are playing catch up on other projects.

20.36.01 Traffic Calming Measures

Paul Canning requested an update on traffic calming measures and roads crossings in Carrigans, Killea and Newtowncunningham.

20.36 .02 Croc an Noinín area

Cllr Bernard McGuinness congratulated the Roads service on works to date and added that it was good to see the work progressing well and that he is proud of the workforce. With regards to the Croc an Noinín area where works were completed he requested that where the view area road narrows needs to be reviewed.

20.36.03 Footbridge, Culdaff

Cllr Mc Guinness requested an update on the proposed footpath for Culdaff.

20.36.04 Battery Brae in Greencastle and Lights at Fort White Wall

Cllr Martin Farren requested an update on Battery Brae and lights at Fort White Wall, Greencastle Seamus Hopkins advised that the White Wall was an ongoing issue.

20.36.05 Mullins Corner Malin Head

Cllr Martin McDermott commented that while at Mullins Corner, Malin Head the resurfacing had taken place there was still no road markings and asked that they be restored as soon as possible. Seamus Hopkins stated that he would have a look at this issue

20.36.05 Traffic Calming Measures – School Crossing Point at Buncrana Tourist Office

Cllr Jack Murray agreed with Cllr Paul Canning regarding the need for traffic calming measures at school crossing point at Buncrana tourist office. They sought an update on whether plans had been submitted and if this could be prioritised.

20.36.06 Quigley's Point Junction

Cllr Terry Crossan looked for an update on Quigley's Point junction.

20.36.07 Updates on Other Matters

Updates were requested on the following matters. sought on:

- Unfinished footpath Red Cross and Grove Park
- Aught Road Scheme
- Ramps for Cherry Avenue, Donagh Park, Cedar Grove
- Craignahorna Bridge
- Glentogher Road Part 8 Process

20.36.08 Swan Park

Cllr Rena Donaghey commended the excellent works started at Swan Park and stated that she hoped that Donegal County Council will be able to meet deadlines and progress into the next phase. Seamus Hopkins, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads and Transportation advised that there are a number of constraints regarding Swan Park for example in relation to the river and spawning fish etc. He added that things were moving forward with river defence structures and that consultants were in place for the restoration of bridge. He also added that structural elements are progressing and potential reopening could happen in the summer of 2021.

20.36 .09 Greenway Project, Culmore to Muff

Cllr Terry Crossan enquired about the progress of the Greenway project from Culmore to Muff. Seamus Hopkins advised that this was progressing.

20.37 HOUSING & CORPORATE SERVICES

Aideen Doherty, Area Manager, Housing and Corporate Services presented the Housing report to the members and updated them on matters.

20.37.01Masks

Cllr Doherty said he would like to acknowledge the mask makers and their volunteers who have made over 50,000 masks.

Certified: _____
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____

Area Manager

Date: _____