

## **Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Stranorlar held 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 in the Regional Training Centre, Stranorlar at 11 am**

<b>Members Present</b>	Cllr. Martin Harley, Cllr. Gerry Crawford, Cllr. Patrick McGowan, Cllr. Gary Doherty, Cllr Liam Doherty, Cllr. Frank McBrearty.
<b>Officials Present</b>	Joe Peoples, Olive Gillespie, Donna McGroarty, Kathleen McGowan, Simon Harron, Claire McGeever, Paul Gallagher.

Cllr. Harley thanked everyone for their attendance. Items from the agenda were discussed as follows:

### **185 Corporate Services**

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#### **185.01 Votes of Sympathy**

Members passed a vote of sympathy on the passing of:

- **John Kelly**, father of Anne Marie Bonner Corporate & Housing Dungloe.
- **Josephine Mc Gowan**, mother of Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan.
- **Gerry McLaughlin** father of Roisin Dorrian, Housing & Corporate, Letterkenny PSC.
- **Patsy Mc Geady** father of Denis McGeady, Leabharlann Ghaoth Dobhair.
- **Eileen O'Reilly**, mother of Trudi O'Reilly, Housing Capital, Lifford.

#### **185.02 Confirmation of Minutes of Municipal District of Stranorlar Meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018.**

The minutes were approved on the proposal of Cllr. Gerry Crawford and seconded by Cllr. Patrick McGowan.

### **186 Confirmation of Date and Venue for Next Meeting and Business Prescribed by Statute**

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**186.01** It was agreed that the next meetings of Stranorlar Municipal District would be held on **Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in the County House, Lifford** as follows:

- **Workshop** 9.30 am.
- **AGM** 11 am.
- **Meeting** 11.15 am.

**186.02** It was agreed that a decision on the request for a deputation from the residents of Kinnycally to Kilgort Road be deferred.

### **187 Consideration of Reports & Recommendations from Services**

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#### **187.01 Environment**

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

- Paul Gallagher to provide Members with an update on the Bring Banks and CFRAMS, by email.
- Members commended everyone involved in the Big Donegal Clean UP 2018 and congratulated Tidy Towns Competition winners, which were announced recently.
- Members agreed that dog fouling has become a significant issue and requested that action be taken.
- Cllr. Patrick McGowan requested an update on the progression of the provision of public amenities in Ballybofey / Stranorlar.
- Concern was raised with regard the levels of rubbish on the National Primary Roads.
- Members requested that a presentation on the EU funded Catchment Care Project be made following the official launch of the project which is taking place on June 14<sup>th</sup> 2018 in An Grianan Hotel, Burt.

### **187.02 Roads & Transportation**

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

- On the proposal of Cllr. L Doherty, seconded by Cllr. P McGowan, Year 1 of the 3-Year Footpath & Public Lighting Programme for Stranorlar Municipal District was approved, subject to one change with an allocation of €228,200.
- Claire McGeever gave updates in respect of works carried out to date in 2018 including the Severe Weather Funding, the Restoration Maintenance 2018 and Safety Improvement Works.
- 90% of works under the LIS Programme are now complete.
- Members will be kept informed of projects funded under the Clár Programme i.e. Footpath at Comeen NS & Footpath to Red Hughes.
- In responses to Members questions, Claire McGeever made the following points:
  - A funding application has been submitted by the TII for works on the main Ballybofey / Stranorlar road. Further information in relation to costings will be provided following the tender process.
  - The Contractor will be requested to remedy the pooling of water on Main St., Killygordon.
  - Members can be provided with a copy of Coillte's Tree Felling Programme for 2018, if required.
  - An update on salt storage for Stranorlar Municipal District will be brought to the next Meeting.
- Cllr. M Harley advised that requests for a meeting with Minister Shane Ross TD in relation to priority projects for Stranorlar Municipal District have been submitted by John McLaughlin's office, Minister Joe McHugh TD and by Pat the Cope Gallagher TD. A response is awaited.

### **187.03 Community & Enterprise**

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

- It was confirmed that the date of the next meeting of the Riverine Project is 12noon on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in County House, Lifford.

- Members requested that updates be provided on EU funded projects in the Stranorlar MD at each meeting.
- Members requested a presentation on the services coming under the remit of the new Council Directorate – Economic Development, Emergency and Information Systems at the next meeting.
- Cllr. F McBrearty provided information on the heritage town of Raphoe and commended works carried out to date. Members agreed that the heritage town of Raphoe offers significant tourism potential and welcomed the carrying out of a survey on the Castle at Raphoe.
- Cllr. G Doherty commended the support of Donegal County Council and volunteers to Donegal East Tourism at the groups official launch recently.
- Cllr. M Harley confirmed that the CPMR Conference will be hosted in Donegal in 2019.

#### **187.04 Housing**

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

- Members thanked An Gardai for their attendance at a workshop of Stranorlar MD held on April 9<sup>th</sup> 2018 in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Cllr. F McBrearty suggested the introduction of tiered caps under HAP as rent costs in the more urban centres are significantly higher than those in smaller towns. The point was made that there is an increased financial burden on HAP tenants in the larger towns.
- Olive Gillespie clarified the process for the letting of properties. She reviewed the housing need report per location by net and gross need figures to provide Members with the overall need in Stranorlar MD.
- Cllr. G Doherty commended the reduction in vacant properties in Stranorlar MD over the past no. of years.
- Cllr. P McGowan stated that tenants are keen to retain solid fuel heating.

#### **187.05 Planning**

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

- A Special Council Meeting will take place on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2018 in relation to the County Develop Plan 2018-2024.
- The Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan will be presented to Council in July / August 2018 for final approval / adoption.
- Cllr. P McGowan requested that the relevant staff member(s) attend the next meeting of Stranorlar Municipal District in relation to derelict buildings.
- In response to Cllr. M Harley's query in relation to changing a street name, Joe Peoples advised that a proposal should be brought to Stranorlar Municipal District in the first instance.

### **188 Motions**

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**188.01 The following Motion was submitted by Cllr. Gerry Crawford:**

**Motion:** That a plan be presented to put to use the former Army Base in Lifford.

**Reply:** The Army Barracks is comprised of a number of separate buildings that would be suitable for different uses currently, based on their existing layout and condition. Council staff in Lifford are accommodated in a number of buildings and options are being examined in relation to the consolidation of office accommodation in the Barracks complex. This will require work to be carried out to leave the new accommodation fit for use. This will be advanced in the coming months.

The Motion was seconded by Cllr. F McBrearty and Cllr. P McGowan.

**188.02** The following Motion was submitted by Cllr. Gary Doherty:

**Motion:** That Donegal County Council take the necessary steps to secure a site, funding and construction of a bus-stop in Castlefinn.

**Reply:** The Council will examine the current arrangements for Bus Stops in Castlefinn along the N15 and liaise with Bus Eireann.

The Motion was seconded by Cllr. M Harley and supported by all Members.

## 189 Members Written Questions

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**189.01** The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Gerry Crawford:

**Question:** At what cost has the council rented facilities -properties in the Stranorlar Municipal District over the past five years.

**Reply:** Rental payments made over the five year period 2013 - 2017 for properties leased by Donegal County Council in the Stranorlar Municipal District:

Location	Description	EURO
Ballybofey	Library & Offices	€174,550
Ballybofey	Salt Barn	€61,642
Convoy	Land (Sampling Kiosk)	€400
Lifford	Library	€65,000
Station Island, Lifford	Offices	€84,376
Three Rivers Centre, Lifford	Offices	€555,510
Raphoe	Library	€53,214
Stranorlar	Land (RTC)	€2,600
The BASE, Stranorlar	Library & Offices	€76,711
		<b>€1,074,003</b>



189.02 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Gerry Crawford:

**Question:** In the Stranorlar Municipal District in the last 3 years how many tenants have applied either for a transfer to another local authority house or to be approved a transfer to private accommodation. Figures to include those in HAP, how many of these requests have been approved / and taken up / approved but still on file / refused.

**Reply:**

<b>Transfer Details for 3 year period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Number of applications received from existing Council social housing tenants to transfer to alternative social housing/Council accommodation	<b>70</b>
<b>Transfers Approved by the Council</b>	<b>38</b>
Approved and Transferred	16
Approved but refused Transfer Offer	1
Approved and on Waiting List	21
<b>Transfers Refused by the Council</b>	<b>32</b>

In relation to Transfer requests received from approved social housing tenants whose accommodation needs are being addressed under the HAP Scheme, Section 46 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 applies. Where a household applies for a change of dwelling for a reason **not validated** by the housing authority, but proceeds to transfer from a HAP property within 2 years of HAP commencing and seeks HAP on another property, the household will be ineligible for social housing support for 12 months.

Currently data is not being recorded on the number of queries received, seeking a transfer from one HAP property to another HAP property. However whilst details are not available on a Municipal District basis, since May 2015, approximately 650 households have exited the HAP Scheme in Donegal for various **valid** reasons as outlined below:

Transferred to another form of social housing support , i.e. local authority dwelling, RAS, AHB
Voluntarily exited the HAP Scheme
Landlord issued termination notice to tenant
Landlord selling property
Property failed private rented standards
Transferring to work in a different area
Exceptional Medical reasons
Change in family composition- overcrowding
Tenant deceased
Exceptional Compassionate /Rent changes/ Others
Education

**189.03 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Gary Doherty:**

**Question: What is the schedule for upgrading of windows/insulation in our Local Authority estates?**

**Reply:** The Energy Efficiency Scheme (Fabric Upgrade Phase 1) which commenced in 2013 targeted the improvement of insulation standards and overall energy performance of the Council's social housing stock.

To date in Stranorlar MD, 493 no. properties have benefitted from the Programme with draught proofing, attic and cavity wall insulations. In addition and based on the pre 2006 housing stock, including data being collated by the Housing Technical team, it is estimated a further 215 no. properties will be targeted under Phase 1 in Stranorlar MD.

This Programme is funded by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government and the Council intends to make significant progress on the completion of the remaining Phase 1 works by the end of 2018.

Phase 2 of the Programme targets dwellings with poor performing single glazed windows and/or defective doors. In this regard, the Council has submitted a funding application to the Department and a decision is expected shortly. Subject to funding, the works schedule will prioritise older estates and older dwellings showing levels of deterioration. In addition regard will also be given to outstanding window/door repair requests logged under Maintenance Repairs.

**189.04 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Gary Doherty:**

**Question: How many of our Local Authority tenants are currently in arrears on their rent?**

**Reply:** The detailed figures in relation to the overall performance of the rent accounts will be included in the Annual Financial Statement for 2017 and will be presented to the Plenary Council in due course.

As outlined in the Annual Financial Statement 2016 (Audited), the rent arrears for the County was €1,368,898 which represented 11% of the total for collection. The collection performance for 2016 was 89%.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

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**Cathaoirleach  
Municipal District of Stranorlar**

**As agreed at the Stranorlar MD Meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018.**