

Minutes of Athy Municipal District Meeting held at 10.00 am on 14 March 2016 in Aras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas

Members Present: Councillor M Wall (Cathaoirleach), Councillors A Breslin, M Miley, T Redmond, I Keatley and M Dalton

Officials Present: Mr L Dunne (A/District Manager), Mr D O'Flaherty (District Engineer), Mr J Coppinger (Senior Engineer), Mr N Morrissey (Director of Services), Ms E Wright and Ms Annette Aspell (Senior Executive Officers), Mr G Duff and Mr J Doyle (Administrative Officers), Mr S Wallace (Senior Executive Parks Superintendent), Ms M Dalton (Meetings Administrator) and Ms O Mooney (Secretary)

AY01/1603

Confirmation of Minutes and Progress Report

The members considered the minutes of the Athy Municipal District meeting held on 18 January and 22 February 2016.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Redmond, seconded by Councillor Dalton, that the minutes be confirmed and taken as read. The progress report was noted.

Matters Arising

Concerns of school buses using the Cush Inn Area as collection point (AY12/1512)

Councillor Redmond asked whether a meeting had taken place yet with Bus Éireann. Ms Wright stated that an on-site meeting would be arranged in the next few weeks between Transportation and Bus Éireann to review the safety of this location as a pick-up point for school transport services. The members will be updated after this meeting.

Resolved that an on-site meeting be arranged between Transportation and Bus Éireann in the next few weeks to review safety at this location.

Community CCTV in the Woodstock Area of Athy (AY17/1509)

Councillor Redmond asked for an update on what upgrade works would have to be carried out on cameras as indicated in progress report. The meetings administrator stated that an update report would be prepared for the next meeting.

Resolved that an update report be sought for the next meeting on upgrade works to replace and repair cameras in this area.

Vacant Housing Report

Councillor Redmond stated that there were only three houses on this report. He indicated that he knew of other houses not listed. He mentioned another house in St Evin's Park, Monasterevin and two houses in Greenhills, Athy. Ms Aspell stated that she would have a look at the other houses mentioned and would report back to the members.

Resolved that the members would be updated for the next meeting.

Installation of Speed Ramps - Ard Evan Estate, Monasterevin (AY11/215)

Councillor Redmond asked whether the council were putting ramps in estates. The District Engineer stated that currently, no ramps were being put in housing estates. It would be a countywide policy and they were currently looking at various options.

Resolved that the members be kept updated in this regard.

Accommodation – Dragon Boat and Associated Equipment (AY14/1601)

Councillor Miley asked for an update, noting that at the January meeting, it was resolved that the council would research secure permanent accommodation for the Dragon Boat and associated equipment by March 2016 and the members agreed.

The Dragon Boat Team had their own accommodation but it had to be removed due to planning issues and it had been moved many times during the last three years. Councillor Miley noted that the council now had the Dominican site in their ownership, and asked for this accommodation to be sorted immediately as it was coming around to the time of the year when Dragon Boat racing would be prominent. The Cathaoirleach stated that he understood that the Chief Executive Officer was to speak with the District Engineer in this regard. The District Engineer agreed that in the longterm, the council need to secure accommodation for the Dragon Boat. It was suggested that the boat could be put in one of our depots but this would not be suitable. He stated that it would need to be located in the vicinity of the river. Councillor Miley asked for an agreement from the Chief Executive Officer and the District Engineer that permanent accommodation be secured.

Resolved that the District Engineer would liaise with the District Manager and revert to members at the next meeting.

Housing Issue - house in Narraghmore

Councillor Miley raised the issue of a house in Narraghmore and caravans parked there. Councillor Miley stated that he would speak with Ms Aspell about the location of the property after the meeting.

St. Michael's Cemetery, Athy (AY23/1509)

Councillor Wall asked for an update on this cemetery. The Acting District Manager stated that improvement works to internal roadways, to include resurfacing, within the cemetery were being progressed shortly. Quotations in relation to the landscaping of area to the rear were being assessed and contractor would be appointed. A roadsweeper had been arranged to address issues regarding leaves at entrance to cemetery. The completion of footpaths, in conjunction with the development of new section, would be progressed over the coming months. Councillor Wall asked for a timescale for this work. The Acting District Manager stated that he would circulate a report to the members. Councillor Redmond stated that the District Manager was to come back to the members regarding a second water source in the cemetery and he asked that this be put in report for next meeting.

Resolved that the members be circulated with a report indicating the timescale for works to cemetery and also, provision of a second water source in cemetery.

New Cemetery in Churchtown (AY23/1509)

Councillor Wall asked for an update on this matter. The Acting District Manager stated that the Part 8 documentation was being finalised at present and it was proposed to seek the approval of the members to commence the statutory process at their April meeting.

Resolved that report be noted.

Footpaths in Upper Abbeylands, Castledermot (AY17/1602)

Councillor Wall asked for an update on this matter. The District Engineer stated that there were drainage issues at this location last year. Works would be done in the coming weeks and this project would be the last item on the local property tax(LPT) list of roadworks for 2015.

Resolved that report be noted.

Traffic Feasibility Study - Cardington Bridge Junction (AY12/1602)

Councillor Wall asked for an update on this matter. The District Engineer stated that he would issue an update to the members at their next meeting.

Resolved that the members be updated at their next meeting.

Works at Tomard Road (AY08/1602)

Councillor Wall asked for an update on these works. The District Engineer stated that this work would be completed as part of the road maintenance schedule in the next few weeks once the weather improves.

Resolved that report be noted.

Coill Diarmada - Ard na Laoí (end site) and Ardan na Coille (bonfire site) (AY09/1409)

Councillor Wall asked for an update. The Acting District Manager stated that both cases were adjourned until July 2016.

Resolved that report be noted, and both cases were adjourned until July 2016..

Plan for rear alleyways of Council Houses (AY22/1602)

Councillor Wall asked that the members send in their list to the officials within the full municipal district area for costing and consideration. He requested the timeframe for the work to be done and also a contact point where they could send a list of their priority areas for attention.

Resolved that a report be prepared for the next meeting advising of the timeframe for the work to be done and also a contact point where they members can send a list of their priority areas for attention.

Provision of BMX Track in Athy (AY26/1509)

Councillor Breslin asked for an update on this matter. At November 2015 meeting, the members were informed that discussions would take place with Kildare Youth Services regarding the provision of a BMX Track in Athy. However, any progression beyond this was subject to identifying the type and size of such a facility, a suitable site, potential users, the staff and financial resources to progress this project. This request would also have to be considered in the demand for numerous recreational and amenity projects in the municipal area. The immediate priority was the delivery of a playground in Castledermot.

Resolved that a further update be prepared for the next meeting.

Signage - Skate Board Track (AY16/1411)

Councillor Breslin asked for an update on this matter. The District Engineer stated that the design had to be completed and infrastructural improvements carried out. He stated that he would speak with Senior Executive Parks Superintendent with regard to setting up a meeting to discuss signage, lighting, footpaths and other issues.

Resolved that a meeting be set up between the District Engineer and Simon Wallace to discuss signage, lighting, footpaths and other issues.

Entrance to Woodstock Close at the traffic lights on the junction of the Fortbarrington Road and the N78 (AY07/1511)

Councillor Breslin asked for an update on this matter. Mr Duff stated that he would have an update for the next meeting.

Resolved that a update be prepared for the next meeting.

AY02/1603

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2016

The District Engineer circulated a report to the members of the proposed schedule of municipal district works for the area for 2016.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Miley, seconded by Councillor Breslin and agreed by all members that the schedule of municipal district works for the Athy Municipal District for 2016 be noted. The members agreed to prepare a more detailed list directly after the meeting which would be submitted to the District Manager.

AY03/1603

Briefing on Draft County Parking Policy

Mr Morrissey gave an overview of the Draft County Parking Policy. The members stated that it would be difficult to get a consistent countywide policy. The members were anxious that there be no increase in pay parking charges in Athy as the business community had already taken a rates increase and it was essential to encourage people to come into Athy to do their business and shop in the town. Mr Morrissey welcomed the views of the members and said that they would be collated and a meeting of the chairs of all the municipal districts would take place with the Strategic Policy Committee.

AY04/1603

Athy Distributor Road

Mr Coppinger updated the members indicating that the second round of public consultation had taken place and that preparation of drafting the preferred route was underway. He added that works had slowed up to allow other work such as site investigation works, surveying contracts, and identification of lands be undertaken. He stated that he was very happy with progress to date and he stated that he would keep the pressure on the contractors.

Councillor Breslin asked for a report on the submissions received during the second round of public consultation. Mr Coppinger stated that he would arrange a report for the next meeting.

Mr Morrissey stated that the closing date for submissions was 4 March 2016 and the decision on the route would be made after an oral hearing by An Bord Pleanála. Mr Morrissey referred to an article in the Nationalist last week indicating that the Council refused to give traffic study information to a person. He stated that this was incorrect information in this article as traffic survey figures were given at the public meeting.

Councillor Redmond asked for a copy of the traffic survey figures as he was unable to attend the public meeting. Mr Coppinger said that the figures would be made available.

The cathaoirleach and members agreed that this project was very positive and good for the town of Athy.

Resolved that a report on submissions received be circulated to the members and that Councillor Redmond be given the traffic survey figures as he requested at the meeting.

AY05/1603

Yearly Walk-through of Housing Estates

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Redmond:

That the Council perform a yearly walk-through of housing estates taken in charge, with public representatives, council administration and residents in the Athy Municipal District.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Redmond and seconded by Councillor Miley.

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety informing the members that the Athy Municipal District Office Liaison Officer, Patricia Berry meets with residents associations and Tidy Towns on an ongoing basis and assists them in their efforts.

Councillor Redmond stated that he was happy with the report from the Transportation Section but that a report should have been provided by the Housing Section not the Transportation Section. The meetings administrator stated that it was not clear in the motion that it referred to local authority estates only. Councillor Redmond accepted this.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Redmond, seconded by Councillor Miley that report be noted.

AY06/1603

Restoration of Wall from Thoran Road, Ballitore to the village and housing plan for the elderly on lands behind the wall

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Miley:

That the Council move immediately to restore the wall from Thoran Road, Ballitore to the village that is crumbling and do an extensive housing plan for the elderly on lands behind this wall.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Miley and seconded by Councillor Redmond.

A report was received from the Housing Section informing the members that while the development at Abbeyfield, Ballitore was taken in charge in December 2015, the land referred to in Councillor Miley's motion had not, as yet, been transferred to the Council. Any plans for the provision of accommodation for the elderly would be considered in the context of the Housing Strategy 2020.

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that there were parts of this wall that would require basic maintenance to restore it, but there are other sections that would require extensive work to bring it back to its original condition. There was some funding to undertake work on this stone wall. However, a survey would have to be undertaken to determine the extent and cost of this work.

Councillor Miley stated that this wall had crumbled with heavy rain and frost and parts of the wall had fallen out onto the footpath and road. The wall was a focal point of the village. He

added that the council should look at developing old persons accommodation at this location instead of social housing. He noted that there was €10,000 available from planning but other monies would be required to complete the full works on this wall.

Councillor Redmond agreed with Councillor Miley that old persons accommodation would be more suitable at this location and that the wall had deteriorated badly.

The cathaoirleach, with the support of other members, added that the wall needed to be repaired urgently as it was now a health and safety issue. He asked for an update regarding extra funding for the next meeting.

The District Engineer stated that he had spoken with Mr W Hannigan, Building and Development Control about this wall. He stated that the €10,000 from Planning would not be enough to repair this long stone wall but that it would be in the area of €50,000 to €60,000. He stated that a survey and plan would need to be first carried out. He added that this project was on the list to be done as soon as extra funding had been identified.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Miley, seconded by Councillor Redmond that a survey and plan be drawn up and that the District Manager revert to the members at the April meeting and see how this work should be progressed.

AY07/1603

Installation of Yellow Box at the Doctor's Surgery, Castledermot and outside JM Computers, Athy

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Redmond:
Can the Council install a yellow box at the Doctor's Surgery in Castledermot and secondly outside JM Computers, Athy to help traffic and ambulances?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that there are no bye-laws in Castledermot for the installation of lining for traffic or ambulances. The bye-laws in Athy had no provision for a yellow box at JM Computers.

Councillor Redmond asked that these requests be looked at when the parking bye-law are reviewed at the April meeting.

The District Engineer stated that there were no bye-laws in Castledermot, adding that the Traffic Warden does visit the town occasionally to monitor parking practices.

In regard to provision of a yellow box outside JM Computers, bye-laws are mapped out when they are agreed but they can be changed. He added that there are no provisions in bye-laws for ambulances.

Resolved that the provision of a yellow box outside JM Computers could be reviewed with regard to need and feasibility and would be looked at when reviewing parking bye-laws for Athy at the April meeting.

AY07/1603

Repair of Footpaths on Togher Road, Monasterevin

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Redmond:
Can the Council fix the footpaths on Togher Road, Monasterevin as a matter of urgency?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that this work could be considered in light of the 2016 local property tax.

Resolved that report be noted.

AY08/1603

Update on the Improvements on the sewage network planned for Narraghmore Village

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Keatley, seconded by Councillor Redmond, it was agreed to discuss the update on the sewage network planned for Narraghmore Village, in committee, as requested by the Acting District Manager.

AY09/1603

Accommodation, Washing and Training facilities for Woodstock Football Club

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Redmond:
That the Council help the Woodstock Football Club in finding a suitable area for a premises and washing and training facilities.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Redmond and seconded by Councillor Dalton.

A report was received from the Senior Executive Parks Superintendent informing the members that facilities had been provided for the club within Castle Park for Woodstock

Football Club. Works were also ongoing in relation to examining Woodstock Castle and preparing a conservation report on it. This may be a potential location for changing facilities. However, any upgrade to existing facilities would also have to be considered in the context of the available staff and financial resources and the various amenity and capital works that are being sought within the Athy Municipal District Area and particularly in the Castle Park, Townspark area. Additionally, since 2015, over €30,000 had been spent cleaning illegal dumping in the area. Before, anymore consideration can be given to requests for various community improvement works in the area, greater evidence of community activism needs to be demonstrated by the various community and sporting groups to ascertain how they are going to contribute to improving the area and not continually depend on the Council to provide the solutions.

Councillor Redmond stated that he was not happy with this response. Those using the Club are currently getting changed in a grey container beside a person's home. He added that the Woodstock Forum meet once a month to try and work together to improve the area. He stated that the young people using the club are there to better themselves.

Councillor Dalton supported the motion. He stated that football club was doing great work but there were social issues there. He added that the Sport Capital Fund could be used in this case.

The cathaoirleach and members thanked Mr Wallace and stated that this should be addressed through the Woodstock Forum adding that he had been pro-active with regard to dumping and that those responsible should be accountable for their actions. He stated that he would rather the €30,000 go towards the club and not to cleaning up illegal dumping. He agreed that a suitable location would need to be identified for accommodation of this club.

Mr Wallace confirmed that as long as the illegal dumping continues in Woodstock, the council cannot put monies into facilities. He re-iterated that Woodstock Castle was being looked at as a location for changing rooms. The council had applied for a licence from the Department for conservation works.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Redmond, seconded by Councillor Dalton that the report be noted.

AY10/1603

Improvement of all Approach Roads to Athy

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Miley:

That the Council work with Athy Tidy Towns to improve all approach roads to Athy and also in the vicinity of the mini-roundabout on Dublin Road, Athy.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Miley and seconded by Councillor Redmond.

A report was received from the Environment Section informing the members that this would require a collaborative approach from a number of sections to support the local tidy towns. The Environment Section would endeavour to assist.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Miley, seconded by Councillor Redmond that report be noted.

AY11/1603

Earl of Kildare Stone Table

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Miley:

Can the Council do all in their power to return, restore and put on display, the Earl of Kildare Stone Table in the county/municipal district?

A report was received from the Heritage Officer informing the members that the Table was held by the Museum subject to a court order made that it shall be held there pending further order of the court. The Chief State Solicitors office required the council to notify them of their intentions with regard to conservation and final location of the table. The Heritage Officer confirmed the council's commitment to restoring the table and to the selection of a suitable location for the final display of the artefact, which shall be done with the guidance of the National Museum. It was believed that there were some funds available for the restoration of the table. Osborne Solicitors received communication from the Chief State Solicitors office in June 2014, requiring the council to make an application to the High Court to have the table released by the National Museum into the Council's custody. To date this has not happened. The Heritage Officer will review the council's position with a view to progressing this matter now. The meetings administrator stated that she would revert to the members with a timescale on this matter.

Councillor Miley stated that it would be great to have this stone table back in Athy.

Resolved that a further report indicating the timescale on this matter be prepared for the next meeting.

AY12/1603

Energy Efficiency and Accessibility Grant

The members considered the following adjourned question in the name of Councillor Keatley:

Can the Council assist K-Leisure, Athy with the drawing down of the Energy Efficiency and Accessibility grant awarded for 2016?

A report was received from the Acting Director of Services, Economic Development, Enterprise and Corporate Services informing the members that if a representative of K-Leisure wished to meet with the council's Energy Management Committee, a meeting could be arranged.

Resolved that a meeting be arranged between K Leisure and the Council's Energy Management Committee.

AY13/1603

Vote of Sympathy

The members extended their condolences to the Sisters of Mercy in Athy, on the death of Sister Carmel Fallon, founder of the Wheelchair Association.

The meeting then concluded.