

**Minutes of Athy Municipal District Meeting held at 10.00 am on Monday 21 May 2018  
in the Athy Municipal District Building, Rathstewart, Athy**

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

**Apologies:** Councillor A Breslin

**Officials Present:** Mr L Dunne (A/District Manager), Mr J Coppinger (Senior Engineer), Mr D O'Flaherty (District Engineer), Ms A Keaveney (Acting Senior Executive Engineer), Ms E Wright and Ms A Aspell (Senior Executive Officers), Ms P Berry (Marketing Officer), Ms F Byrne (Meetings Administrator) and Ms O Mooney (Meetings Secretary)

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**AY01/0518**

**Minutes and Progress Report**

The members considered the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Athy Municipal District held on 23 April 2018 together with the progress report.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Wall, seconded by Councillor Redmond that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Athy Municipal District held on 23 April 2018 be confirmed and taken as read. The progress report was noted.

**AY02/0518**

**Matters Arising**

**Bridge at Distillery Court, Monasterevin (AY13/1505, AY03/1704)**

Councillor Redmond noted report that Development Control were working on site resolution plan to take the estate in charge and they are liaising with Irish Water. However, he stated that recently there had been an incident where a child ran out at the spot where the gates

on the bridge should be located and this was unacceptable. He asked for a timeframe as to what was happening and when the gates would be installed.

Ms Keaveney replied that the Engineers were currently getting quotes for these gates. She informed the members that the bond money was available and the gates should be installed by the end of the Summer. The members noted the report.

### **Purchase of Unoccupied Houses in Corran Ard Estate, Athy (AY10/1703, AY03/0617, AY04/0118)**

Councillor Redmond asked for an update on this matter. Ms Keaveney stated that there had been no objections or representations made regarding the public display of the taking in charge of Corran Ard Estate. She was unable to give an update on the housing element of this project. He asked for an update from the Housing Section for the next meeting. The members noted the report.

### **Pedestrian Crossing in front of community centre, Castledermot (AY19/0617, AY04/0118)**

Councillor Redmond noted report this matter was referred to TAAG and the survey and inspection work were not yet completed. Mr Coppinger stated that the survey would be completed by September 2018. The members noted the report.

### **Constituency Boundaries (AY17/1217)**

Councillor Redmond asked for an update on this matter. The Cathaoirleach stated that a further report would issue from the Boundary Commission on the 30 June 2018 and it was agreed that after this date, an invitation would be forwarded to the three TD's for South Kildare inviting them to a meeting to discuss the boundary commission report. This was agreed by the members.

**AY03/0518**

**Update on the Municipal District Road Works**

The District Engineer circulated the report to the members and gave them an update on the works being carried out to date.

Councillor Miley complimented all the hard work carried out to date by the Municipal District Office. In regard to Meeting Lane, he was glad to hear that there would be good lighting and that CCTV would be installed.

In regard to the Skateboard Park, Councillor Miley was worried that this could lead to late night activities there but he noted CCTV would help in this regard. The District Engineer stated that the skateboard park was going to be open plan with no walls and it would be well lit up with CCTV.

In regard to hedgecutting, Councillor Miley stated that there were a number of junctions with hedges overgrown such as the old N78/old N9 and they needed to be cut back. The District Engineer stated that hedgecutting was a matter for the landowners but he noted there were a number of landowners who were not looking after the hedges around their properties. Councillor Miley stated that the hedgerow on the Long Avenue is not being looked after and he asked that the council contact the land owner in this regard. The District Engineer stated that he would contact the landowner and come back to the members with any reply.

In regard to the condition of the rural roads after the bad weather during Storm Emma, Councillor Miley asked whether the council received extra funding from Local Government for restoration works on these roads. The District Engineer stated he was not aware of extra funding but he included one extra job in restorations/improvements which was Booleigh Cross to Kilboggan Cross.

In regard to a survey of the N78 Athy, Councillor Miley noted the council were in discussion with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). He asked for clarification as to what part of the N78 this survey was being carried out on as the turning points were dangerous as the arrows had been removed. The District Engineer stated that they were working in Athy from the town to the roundabout and the arrows were removed by TII as it was not their policy to have them there.

Councillor Redmond stated that Bord Gais carried out works last Thursday in the town and the whole town was at a standstill. He stated this work should have been carried out at

night. He noted there was a terrible smell of gas for 48 hours on the Carlow Road. He asked for a schedule of works on future works prior to disruption of traffic in the future. The District Engineer stated he was away during these works but he was not impressed as they were to carry out this work with minimum disruption to traffic and this was not the case. He stated that if planned operations were to be done outside working hours, he could put it in the conditions but it would incur an extra cost. He noted that emergency works were carried out on the Carlow Road due to a gas leak.

Councillor Redmond asked who would monitor the carpark at Meeting Lane. Ms Wright stated that the council were currently putting CCTV into and upgrading many carparks in the county which would not be monitored but if any issues arise they would be dealt with in the correct manner.

Councillor Redmond asked that the R418 should be 100kmph. He was informed by the members to put a motion in to the next meeting in this regard.

Councillor Wall stated that the rural roads were in a terrible condition with potholes after the bad weather during Storm Emma and associated flooding and he asked whether extra funding had been requested. The District Engineer stated that the council had applied for extra funding but no funds had been received as yet.

The members asked that a letter issue to the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) seeking additional funding for road repairs following the recent weather (Storm Emma)

Councillor Wall stated that last Thursday during the Bord Gais works in the town, it took two hours for many to get from one side of the town to the other and he said this was totally unacceptable at 11.00 am in the morning when businesses were trying to carry out their work and the community were trying to go about their business. In regard to the emergency works on the Carlow Road, Councillor Wall asked who paid for the restoration work after Bord Gais dug up the road in three places as they did not restore the road to its original condition. The District Engineer stated that if works had to be carried out by Bord Gais then when applying for road opening licences, they gave the council a deposit in advance. Councillor Wall asked whether this money would be enough to restore the road to its condition before they dug it up.

Councillor Wall asked whether some of the €500,000 allocated for the roundabout to Lidl could be used for the repair of ramps on Woodstock Street. The District Engineer stated

that TII do not operate on rural roads. However, he would be spending €150,000 on Stradbally Road for surface dressing and ramps.

In regard to hedgecutting, the Cathaoirleach asked whether the council could contact a landowner advising them that the council would cut their hedges and the cost would be recouped from the owner. Ms Wright stated that she might have powers to write the letter but not recoup the cost but she said she would check the legislation and come back to the members.

Councillor Wall stated that people pay their taxes, LPT and they deserve to have proper roads with no potholes. He stated that a plan of works needed to be put in place urgently in advance of receiving extra funding. The District Engineer stated he had less staff now than before to carry out works and work had increased with the change of Municipal District boundaries.

Ms Wright informed the members that an application had been made to Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment for Kildare County Council costs in relation to the recent storm. She advised the members that the correct procedure is to await a circular from DTTAS outlining the terms, conditions and timelines for applying for additional funding.

**Resolved** that a letter issue to DTTAS seeking additional funds for road repairs following Storm Emma and the District Engineer to contact the land owner regarding cutting of hedges on the Long Avenue and Ms Wright to check legislation as to whether a letter can issue to landowners to cut their hedges and the council recouping costs if they end up cutting them.

### **AY04/0518**

#### **Athy Distributor Road**

Mr Coppinger stated that work had begun and that the contractors were starting first with soil testing and would be followed up with archaeology survey next month. He added there was a slight delay in getting CIE insurances but this would be resolved. He said he would circulate a report to the members shortly. He stated the project was on target for the overall programme. Councillor Redmond asked for an update on the newsletter and when it would be issued. Mr Coppinger said the newsletter would issue in June 2018. Councillor Wall asked for an update on situation with sports club which would be effected. Mr Coppinger

stated he would get back to him in this regard as there was a six week window for soil testing and it should not be interfering with the pitch. The members would be kept updated on this matter. Councillor Wall asked whether there was a good line of communication with the residents. Mr Coppinger stated that there had been meetings with the residents and these were ongoing.

### **AY05/0518**

#### **Junction at Old Grange Cross on the R415**

It was agreed to take items 4 and 5 together:

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Miley:  
In light of further accidents taking place at the junction at Old Grange Cross on the R415, that the council fully implement safety measures to alleviate this issue immediately.

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

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Keatley:  
That the council prioritise the upgrade of Old Grange Cross to a safe standard in light of the continuing near misses and serious accidents that are taking place on a weekly basis.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Keatley and seconded by Councillor Wall.

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that this junction had been inspected by the Senior Engineer and the Road Safety Engineer at the National Roads Office, and improved safety measures would be examined in addition to identifying a funding source to complete any necessary improvements.

Councillor Miley stated that there were serious health and safety issues at this junction and they were raised with An Garda Síochána at the Joint Policing Committee meeting held before the meeting this morning. There had been a number of near misses at this junction and often with parents and their children in cars following matches in the local GAA pitch. He added locals know to be careful but visitors to the area going to these matches do not know the dangers at this junction. He stated that recently a car had pulled out straight in

front of him but only he was going at a slow pace, he was able to stop in time and no collision took place. He said this matter was with TAAG and nothing had happened. He had been informed that it would cost approximately €400,000 to realign this junction and the resources were not available at present. He also asked that the speed limit be reduced to 60 kph and to put a four way stop system in place. He asked for an immediate meeting on site with the Senior Engineer, District Engineer and other officials and members in order to move this job forward and that a traffic counter be installed which would show the usage of this junction.

The Cathaoirleach stated that the success of the local GAA club had meant this junction was now busier than ever. He said if the council do nothing in the coming weeks, the council could have a fatality. He said immediate action and timeline for improvements was required. The members and officials had talked about this matter for years and nothing had been done. He added the club and the landowner nearby were willing to help the council.

Councillor Wall stated that St Laurence's GAA Club need this sorted before a serious accident or fatality happens.

Mr Coppinger stated that there was no source of funding for the major scheme yet. He added he would look at other low cost options for them and he would come back to the members for the next meeting. He added the four-way system and reduction of speed limit to 60 kph would be looked at. He said he would continue to look at the long-term solution but it would take time.

Councillor Miley asked that black spot signage be put up today on both sides of this junction. Mr Coppinger said he would speak with the District Engineer regarding additional signage today.

The District Engineer stated that the council had already improved both sides of this junction and they had highlighted the junction and exhausted sign posting ideas and nothing was working. He added the issue was a blind spot coming from one direction and that in the long-term, the junction would need to be staggered.

Councillor Miley stated that the council had to slow the traffic down by reducing the speed limit and maybe using bollards to give more room to traffic coming from the small road with the GAA pitch to move out onto the main road.

Ms Wright stated they could look at the speed limit, put an advertisement in the paper and contact An Garda Síochána and the statutory timeline would be six to eight weeks for this to happen.

Mr Coppinger added that signs need to be effective and the speed limit would be looked at and it is the An Garda Síochána that would enforce this.

Councillor Wall suggested that a warning flashing light be installed at this junction today in the short-term.

Mr Coppinger stated that a member of his office would liaise with the members in regard to meeting on site in the next few days.

Councillor Miley asked that the two motions remain on the agenda as a standing item until this matter was resolved and the Cathaoirleach agreed with this.

Councillor Redmond asked whether this junction could be treated as an emergency. Mr Coppinger stated that he would come back to the members as to whether the resolution at this junction could be treated as an emergency.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Miley, seconded by Councillor Keatley short-term solutions be looked at as suggested by the members and that the long-term solution be examined and funding identified. Mr Coppinger to arrange a site meeting in the next few days.

### **AY06/0518**

#### **Upgrade - Junction at Oghill at the Railway Bridge**

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

That the council design an upgrade of the junction in Oghill at the railway bridge because of the lack of sight lines.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Keatley and seconded by Councillor Wall.

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that the Municipal District Engineer was aware of lack of sightlines and would comment on this issue at the meeting.

The District Engineer stated that this area was new to the Athy municipal District and that work had been carried out from Monasterevin to Oghill and surfaced both sides of the road. He added this area was close to the bridge and it would need a different type of design. He said he would refer this job to TAAG for assessment. Ms Wright stated that the speed limit for this stretch of road will be reviewed under the Countywide Speed Limit review.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Keatley, seconded by Councillor Wall that this section of road be put on the next speed limit review and that the speed limit be reduced.

### **AY07/0518**

#### **Traffic Management Plan and Lights in Monasterevin**

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

That the council outline to members the timeframe for works that were agreed with the Department of Education on both a traffic management plan and lights in Monasterevin.

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

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that a timeframe for the works had not been agreed at this time. However, a financial contribution had been received from the Department of Education to facilitate the next phase which would include the appointment of a consultant to complete the detailed design required.

Councillor Redmond stated that the planning application for the new school for St Paul's, Monasterevin was substantial. There was a meeting with council on 27 January 2018 in St Paul's Secondary School, Monasterevin and the Department of Education said they would give €550,000 for traffic management and other associated works. He noted that Mr Niall Morrissey had informed him that works could start once the tendering process had happened.

Councillor Wall said traffic management was a concern. He understood that some preliminary works had started as far as he knew. He stated that the report given should have stated that the council were ready to start the project.

The cathaoirleach said he had attended a number of meetings in St Paul's in order to ensure these roadworks did not delay the opening of the new school.

The District Engineer stated that the traffic lights could be done in three to six months and that one job was not delaying the other.

Ms Wright stated that the preliminary design for traffic measures had been carried out and the council were ready to proceed and there was no delay with the project.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Redmond, seconded by Councillor Wall that the traffic measures proceed.

### **AY08/0518**

#### **Road at Borradera Cross, Monasterevin**

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

Can the council immediately work on preparing a detailed roads design for the road at Borradera Cross in Monasterevin and can the Environmental Section visit this litter black spot?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informed the meeting that while the Municipal District Engineer was aware of the issue at this junction, a timeframe for the commencement of design works cannot be provided at this time.

A report was received from the Environment Section informing the members that the Area Community Warden would inspect the location. Reports of illegal dumping/litter should be made to the Kildare County Council Litter Report Freephone 1800 243 143.

Councillor Redmond stated that the District Engineer had met with some of the residents at this location. He asked for a detailed roads design for this area. The District Engineer said

he had visited the area in the last fortnight. He noted the road was too narrow, there was a drop on both sides of the road and there was no hedgerow or margin. He also noted there was an increased level of HGV traffic and cars using this road. He noted the road was not suitable for two HGV's coming from two different directions and he said while he was there he saw a car in a field but he was not sure of the circumstances. He stated the road would need to be widened and re-designed. He suggested that this project be referred to TAAG for assessment as his office had no design capability.

The report was noted.

**AY09/0518**

**Naming the roundabout at Junction 14 Monastervin, Snipe Bog**

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

Can the council name the roundabout at Junction 14 Monasterevin, Snipe Bog? The local townland that's well connected to the community.

A report was received from the Kildare Newbridge Municipal Office informing the members that this request should be referred to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), who are responsible for this roundabout as part of the M7 motorway. It should also be referred to the Parks Department for their information and consideration as they may be minded to discuss this request with TII.

Councillor Miley asked that this matter be referred to the Parks Section for report at the next meeting.

The report was noted.

**AY10/0518**

**Potholes on the L70581 Killeen West, Kildangan**

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

Can the council immediately move to fill the potholes on the L70581 Killeen West, Kildangan?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that this would be included on the road maintenance schedule of works.

The report was noted.

**AY11/0518**

**Proposed Car Park in Kildangan**

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Wall:  
Can the council confirm the up to date position with the proposed public car park in Kildangan?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that while some preliminary work had been carried out in 2017 (draft outline, survey work etc), further work on this project was deferred to ensure resources remain on the completion of the Kildangan Bridge project.

Councillor Wall stated he was worried that the project had been deferred and he asked what this actually meant. He stated that a member of the public had been helping with land for this project and he asked whether the council had contacted him that it was now deferred. The District Engineer stated that preliminary works had been carried out but his office did not have the design capacity to complete this project at present.

Ms Wright stated that deferred meant the council were waiting on the complete and final design. She stated that the council had written confirmation from Kildangan Stud stating they would allow the council to proceed to Part 8 when issues such as trees, bats, flora and fauna were resolved.

Councillor Wall asked that a letter issue to Kildangan Stud giving them an update on the situation. Ms Wright stated that she would issue this letter after the meeting.

The report was noted.

**AY12/0518**

**Completion of the Public Realm Upgrade in Narraghmore**

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Keatley:  
Can the council give a timeframe for the completion of the public realm upgrade in Narraghmore?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that the Municipal District Engineer had commenced marking out the public realm area in Narraghmore and delineators are now in place along the proposed kerb line, showing the scale of the project. Work was ongoing.

The Cathaoirleach stated that he had met with the residents in this regard. The District Engineer stated he had to find out how the council could accommodate this upgrade. He noted there were parking and access problems. He said he had no timeframe for completion available yet. He said he would come back to the members in a few weeks with an update.

The report was noted.

### **AY13/0518**

#### **Jobs Retention/Creation in the South Kildare Area**

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

That this municipal district immediately ask for a meeting with Mr Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer of IDA Ireland and the Minister for Business Enterprise and Innovation, to discuss all issues relevant to jobs retention/creation in the South Kildare area.

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

Councillor Redmond stated that the members need to speak with IDA Ireland and the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation to discuss all issues relevant to job retention and or creation in South Kildare. He noted that Mr Conor Simpson, IDA had met with the Chief Executive Officer recently in this regard. He noted the report issued by the District Manager highlighting ongoing and proposed projects for the town of Athy and noted some issues such as excellent road network and ample wastewater treatment capacity were not accurate. He noted that over 50% of the population leave Athy for employment every day and this had to be improved quickly.

Councillor Keatley attended the meeting with Senior Management of Athy Concentrates, Head of Enterprise, Alan Shine, Chief Executive of Kildare Chamber of Commerce after the announcement of the closure of the Coca Cola plant in Athy seeking assurance that the

owners would make sure that workers were being dealt with in a fair manner. He confirmed that Minister Heather Humpheries would be down in Athy on the 14 June 2018.

Councillor Miley complimented the Chief Executive and the Head of Enterprise as they engaged immediately after the announcement of the closure. 82 jobs were lost in Athy and this would have a massive effect on the economy. Athy Concentrates had been in the town of Athy for over 40 years and many families over the years had been employed there. He stated that there had to be more focus on employment in the town especially now that the geographical area had improved. He stated that he looked forward to meeting the Minister on the 14 June next.

Councillor Redmond stated he met with Minister Ring at the opening of the new library in Athy and he asked whether all members were invited to meet with Minister Humpheries on the 14 June next.

The cathaoirleach stated that he would confirm the details of the Minister's visit on the 14 June next with the members shortly.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Redmond, seconded by Councillor Keatley that a meeting be arranged on the 14 June 2018 with Minister Heather Humpheries, Mr Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer of IDA Ireland, Chief Executive Mr Peter Carey, Ms Jacqui McNabb, Head of Enterprise and others to discuss all issues relevant to job retention/creation in South Kildare.

### **AY14/0518**

#### **STEER Approved Housing Body**

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Redmond:  
Can the council immediately contact the STEER Approved Housing Body concerning the conditions that people are living in under their management in our local area?

A report was received from the Housing Section informing the members that representatives of Kildare County Council's Housing Department recently met with representatives of STEER Housing Association. At the meeting it was reiterated to STEER that issues relating to maintenance and management of units leased or owned by an Approved Housing Body was a matter for the AHB. It was suggested to STEER that a

more visible presence on the ground in certain areas where they had units might be warranted. It was noted by both parties that there had been a turnover of tenants recently in some units and the situation would be monitored.

Councillor Redmond stated that total mismanagement had been taking place at these apartments. Lifts were not working and general maintenance fell below the standard expectations. He noted the body was located in Donegal and he agreed that a housing officer was needed on the ground to cover maintenance and management of these apartments. He noted residents had contacted STEER but got no reply. He noted he was glad that the council had strong words with them.

The report was noted.

### **AY15/0518**

#### **Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)**

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Wall: Can the council confirm the number of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) applications accepted in the Athy District, are the council getting more engagement from landlords and does the council feel that more can be done to attract landlords into the HAP system?

A report was received from the Housing Section informing the members that at the 30 April 2018, the total number of active HAP tenancies in Athy Municipal District was 380; the Municipal District accounts for 23% of all active tenancies. Kildare County Council was satisfied that, with the exception of the single person rate, the HAP rates were sufficiently attractive to landlords in the municipal district area; the Athy Municipal District accounts for 39% of all single HAP tenancies in the county. There was an acute shortage of properties to rent in all areas of County Kildare and, at the time of writing, *myhome.ie* listed 25 properties to rent in County Kildare with Athy, Castledermot and Monasterevin accounting for 17 of these. Due to the implementation of revised procedures the approximate processing time for HAP applications was now 4 weeks. In the coming weeks, the HAP section would send a mail-out to letting agents in the area outlining the following benefits of the HAP scheme:

- Direct monthly electronic rent payment to the landlord;
- No need for the landlord to collect rent from tenants;

- Subject to certain conditions being satisfied, landlords may claim 100% relief on mortgage interest as an expense.

Councillor Wall stated that at last full council meeting, it was stated that 25% of HAP applicants were in the Athy area. He stated he took seven calls before the meeting today and four of them were from persons in homeless emergency accommodation. One family with six children and a new baby were in one room in a hotel in Carlow and another family of four from Kildangan were in emergency accommodation in Newbridge. He said there were still landlords who do not want to go on HAP. He stated that persons should not be taken off the housing list if they decide to go to HAP. He noted that the HAP staff were very good but the message was not getting out to the landlords that HAP was the way forward. He stated that people were crying out for accommodation but HAP was not working as landlords are not availing of this scheme.

The report was noted.

### **AY16/0518**

#### **Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, the Housing Aid for Older People and the Mobility Aid Housing Grant Scheme**

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Keatley:  
Can the council confirm that applications for the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, the Housing Aid for Older people and the Mobility Aid Housing Grant Scheme in the Athy Municipal District will be dealt with in a timely manner following the recent confirmation of next years increased level of funding?

A report was received from the Housing Section informing the members that all applications would be processed in accordance with procedures. Applications are only deemed valid on receipt of all required documentation including two quotations. It was, therefore, important that all documentation was submitted in a timely manner to ensure the application was processed as efficiently as possible. For the information of the members; the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government are shortly to commence a revised application procedure for grant funding which would see the introduction of a single application form for all three grant funding streams [i.e. housing adaptation, housing aid for older people, mobility aid]. While written confirmation with regard to Kildare County Council's 2018 allocation of funding for the housing adaptation grant scheme for older people and people

with a disability was awaited, it was understood from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government that Kildare had been allocated exchequer funding of €2.4m which would require matching funding from the local authority of just in excess of €600,000, bringing the total available funding to €3m. This represents total additional funding of €112,000 over that allocated in 2017.

The cathaoirleach stated he was glad that the three schemes were being streamlined. These schemes were allowing persons to live and stay in their own homes instead of nursing homes and assisted aid facilities. He added that more funding and resources were required as the demand was greater than ever. He asked that the council look for ways to speed up the process for these applicants.

The report was noted.

### **AY17/0518**

#### **Cleaning the River Lerr in Castledermot from St John's Down to Doyle's Bridge**

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

That the council immediately move to clean the River Lerr in Castledermot from Saint John's Down to DoYLES Bridge and out as far as the discharge of the sewage system under the auspices of the Barrow Drainage Board.

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

A report was received from the Environment Section informing the members that works were being undertaken at the area in question, subject to constraints from the Inland Fisheries and National Parks and Wildlife Service. This involves the removal of loose vegetation and the river banks would be strimmed. Due to the gravel bed in this river, it would not be possible to remove any tree/hedge or plants growth.

Councillor Miley noted that the council did a lot of work on this river over the years. However, the river had now been abandoned and it was overgrown badly. The river needed to be cleaned out and special care given to conservation. Large works need to happen along this stretch of river as the Tidy Towns were overpowered with the amount of work needed as it would lead to flooding down the road. He asked that this information be brought back to Ms Edel O'Brien for her attention.

Councillor Redmond stated that the overgrowth was visually bad but also it removed the oxygen from the river and destroyed the wildlife in the river. The council need to remove the trees and overgrowth from the river. He asked for a schedule of work from the Barrow Drainage Board in order to consider these works.

The Cathaoirleach stated that as every year passes, the foliage gets worse. He thanked the residents and Tidy Towns in the area for doing what they can over the years.

Mr Dunne stated that staff were utilised throughout the county. Ms O'Brien was both the Conservation and Flooding Officer. He stated that they did need to be conscious of flooding and the river would be cleaned and the whole situation would be reviewed.

Councillor Miley said the Barrow Drainage Board did great work but he asked Mr Dunne to go back to Ms O'Brien and ask that this section of river be mechanically cleaned before the river banks close in on the town.

Councillor Miley recalled that at a previous meeting, the Barrow Drainage Board were to give the members a quarterly update on their works and this report was never given to the members. He asked for this quarterly report to be sought from the Drainage Board and forwarded to the members.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Miley, seconded by Councillor Redmond that the river would be cleaned of foliage and overgrowth and that the whole situation would be reviewed in regard to removing the trees mechanically from the river. That a quarterly report be sought from the Barrow Drainage Board and forwarded to the members.

### **AY18/0518**

#### **Suspension of Standing Orders**

The Cathaoirleach proposed to suspend standing orders for twenty minutes to facilitate the completion of the business of the meeting.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Keatley, seconded by Councillor Wall that the standing orders be suspended for twenty minutes in order to facilitate the completion of the business of the meeting.

**AY19/0518**

**Closure of the Athy International Concentrates Plant - Athy**

The members considered the following joint motion in the names of Councillors Breslin and Wall: Given the dreadful news of the impending closure of the Athy International Concentrates plant in Athy, that the council confirm the projects, Environmental, Housing, Roads, Educational, Heritage and Infrastructural that they are involved with for the town at the moment including indicative timelines and expenditure on all these projects where possible.

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

A report was received from the Housing Section informing the members that the following projects in Athy Town were included in the Housing Departments Capital Programme: Dominican Lands - Stage 1 approval received in July 2017 for 25 units. Design team tender being prepared at the moment. The Stage 1 approved budget is €6.098m. It was anticipated that the design team would be appointed in June 2018 and that a Part 8 would be presented to the Athy Municipal District in Quarter 4 2018, subject to approval of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. Commencement on site in mid-2019 with completion in late 2020.

Flinter's Field - Part 8 approved at the Athy Municipal District meeting on 24 July 2017 for delivery of 35 units by Respond Housing Association on land owned by the council. On-site archaeological assessments carried out and reports submitted to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. This project was nearing tender for the main contract.

Glandore - Infill site - number of units to be confirmed. Stage 1 approval scheduled for submission to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in Quarter 2 2018. This was still at sketch scheme stage so the number of units and overall estimated budget had not been established.

A report was received from the Community and Cultural Section informing the members that a conservation plan was being developed for Woodstock Castle. The cost of this was €5k and should be complete before the end of the year. A programme of tree surgery works was being carried out at the moment with an estimated cost of €10k.

A report was received from the Planning Section informing the members that under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2018, St Michael's Church, Athy had received €3,500 match funding for conservation works, and the former Carlton Abbey site received €3,000 also for conservation works. The Forward Planning Team had commenced work on the Athy Local Area Plan 2018 - 2024. (Pre-draft public consultation stage completed).

Kildare County Council Heritage Grants 2018;

- Athy Heritage Centre Museum €650
- Athy Cemetery Committee €750
- Kildare County Show €800
- Ernst Shackleton Autumn School €1000
- Athy Heritage Museum - Care of Collections €1,453

A report was received from the Environment Section informing the members that in the Athy area, sufficient water and wastewater capacity was available to cater for existing and future development in the town and environs.

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

### **AY20/0518**

#### **Suspension of Standing Orders**

The Cathaoirleach proposed to suspend standing orders for ten minutes to facilitate the completion of the business of the meeting.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Keatley, seconded by Councillor Miley that the standing orders be suspended for ten minutes in order to facilitate the completion of the business of the meeting.

### **AY21/0518**

#### **Closure of Athy International Concentrates Plant - Request for special meeting**

The members considered the following joint motion in the name of Councillors Breslin and Wall:

Given the dreadful news of the impending closure of the Athy International Concentrates plant in the town of Athy, that the council confirm what contact they have already had with relevant agencies to progress alternative employment for the town, what plans the council

has for future employment in the area and if the council will agree to organising a special meeting for all government agencies involved in any way with prospective employment to include local public representatives and all key stakeholders as a matter of urgency.

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

A report was received from the Head of Enterprise informing the members that she was down in the Athy plant the day after the announcement of the forthcoming closure. She had a meeting with the General Manager Manqoba Khumula and the Human Resources Manager and spoke about a number of interventions that are possible but it was too early to give full details. She along with the Directors of Services, Joe Boland and Sonya Kavanagh and Chief Executive, Mr Peter Carey met with Conor Simpson, Regional Director of the IDA regarding future companies coming into the site. The Chief Executive met Coca Cola Ireland management on Tuesday 15th May, 2018. It was very early days and these processes would take time in order to allow the employees firstly adjust and to iron out Human Resources issues. In the coming months, they would be involved in a number of support initiatives, in areas of job coaching, job fairs, apprenticeships etc.

Councillor Wall stated that on the 22 May 2018, 82 jobs and ancillary jobs totaling 120 jobs were lost and it was a severe blow to the families of the employees and the community of Athy. He said the community had two options, either to give out or to fight back and fight back was the way to go. Councillor Wall stated he was glad Minister Heather Humpheries was coming to Athy on the 14 June next and he asked that a special meeting be convened with all the bodies associated and see what the future holds for Athy and what it had to offer and that the members meet separately to get their comments and ideas ready. The members suggested maybe meeting before the full council meeting on the 28 May next. He added that the report from the District Manager outlining the ongoing and proposed projects had to be highlighted and that the Coca Cola building and land purchased become the legacy of Coca Cola. He reiterated again that when motions were tabled that the appropriate official should be present at the meeting. He thanked Minister Ring for hearing their concerns.

The Cathaoirleach stated he would confirm the exact details of the Minister's visit to address Coca Cola on the 14 June next.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Wall, seconded by Councillor Redmond that a special meeting be arranged with the Minister Heather Humpheries, Mr Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer of IDA Ireland, Chief Executive Mr Peter Carey, Ms Jacqui McNabb, Head of Enterprise and others on the 14 June next and that the members meet separately before this meeting on the 28 May 2018 to get their comments and ideas in place to fight back for the town of Athy.

The meeting then concluded.