



Minutes of the Athy Municipal District held at 10.00 am on Monday, 19 April 2021 via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Councillor A Breslin (Cathaoirleach), Councillors VL Behan, B Dooley, I Keatley and M Leigh

Officials Present: Ms A Aspell (District Manager), Mr D O'Flaherty (District Engineer), Mr D Reel (Senior Engineer), Ms M Hunt (Senior Executive Officer), Mr J Murtagh (Executive Engineer - Development Control), Ms L Russell (Arts Officer), Mr C O'Toole (A/Staff Officer), Mr B McGrath (Meetings Administrator) and Ms O Mooney (Meetings Secretary).

AY01/0421

Declaration of pecuniary or beneficial interests under Section 177 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended

The District Manager explained that this item was now a standing item on all municipal district agenda going forward in accordance with Standing Orders. There were no declarations made.

AY02/0421

Minutes and Progress Report

The members considered the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Athy Municipal District held on Monday, 15 March 2021 and the progress report.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Dooley, seconded by Councillor Leigh and agreed by all the members that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Athy Municipal District held on 15 March 2021 be adopted and the progress report was noted.



AY03/0421

Kildare Failte

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms Mangan, CEO and Mr Mongey, Chairman of Kildare Failte to the meeting. She stated that Kildare Failte had made an excellent presentation to the full council at their March meeting. She noted that herself and Councillor Dooley had submitted their questions to them, and replies were received before the meeting today and she thanked Ms Mangan for these responses.

Ms Mangan stated that she would be linking in with as many people as possible including Patricia Berry in Athy. She added she was on the Shackleton Steering Group and a representative of Athy Heritage was on the Into Kildare Board.

The following questions were raised by the members;

- How would the St Brigid's Decade of Commemoration be organised on a county-wide basis? It was understood that Kildare Town would be the centre of operations but that the Athy Municipal District would be asked for funding at some stage and it would be important that Athy Municipal District would get its opportunity to market itself as a tourism destination also.
- Do the council need to look at extra funding for tourism and what kind of budget per year would Into Kildare receive?
- Has Into Kildare any influence on the extension of the Blueway?

The questions were replied to as follows;

- Mr Mongey stated that everybody should be involved in the St Brigids commemoration and when promoting the year, the council and Kildare Failte need to be ambitious as Kildare needs to do it right.
- Ms Mangan stated it was her job to promote the county and they were very lucky to have Shackleton in Athy. It was important to have a strategic approach to make best use of the budget. She added that the Chairman of Kildare Failte, Mr Mongey would be on the Steering Group for this commemoration.



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- Fingal get €10 million tourism funding, Kilkenny get €4 million and Kildare get €1 million.
- In regard to extension of Blueway, the Public Realm Team look after this but that promoting the Blueway and extension of same would be very important for Kildare Failte.

The Cathaoirleach stated that Shackleton attracts overseas investors and tourists and they continue to come every year. In regard to the Maid of Athy, connections with international people and a chance now to make the Athy Municipal District a national and international destination.

Ms Mangan said she was revising the tourism website shortly and she asked that the members consider them at budget time.

The Cathaoirleach suggested that in November/December 2021 that the members would meet with Into Kildare prior to their municipal district budget meeting. This was agreed by all the members.

AY04/0421

Update on Municipal District Roadworks

The District Engineer stated that a report had been circulated to the members providing an update on works which had been undertaken prior to and since the March meeting and also details of future planned works.

The following issues were raised by the members;

- Roadworks at Ballycullane – update
- Two bus shelters – Castledermot – understood there were challenges in rolling out bus shelters on local link route. LPT money was set aside for bus stops and they were hoping that these would progress in 2021. It was raised at previous meetings and it was understood that Mr Alan Kerry would meet with the members of the Athy Municipal District. An update was requested.



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The District Engineer stated that Ballycullane was not on the list as there were a number of issues. He was currently working on Nicholastown out to Bolgers Cross first. In regard to bus shelters, the council work hand in hand with Mr Kerry and were waiting on direction from Local Link.

The Cathaoirleach stated that the members were due to meet with Local Link and a date and time would be arranged to suit all and the meeting would be held via Teams.

AY05/0421

Athy Distributor Road

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr Reel to the meeting. He stated that the stage 2 tender was ongoing, and the completion date was 17 May 2021. The tenders would be processed by the council and recommendations made. They would then be formally sent to the Department of Transport and the Minister thereafter for approval. He added that he had been in continuous contact with the Department of Transport throughout the whole process. It would then move into contract award, then he hoped that the contractor would be on site for Quarter 4 2021.

The following questions were raised by the members;

- Can the members view the report prior to it being submitted to the Minister of Transport?
- Have all the CPOs been completed or was this an ongoing process?
- Was there an update regarding Irish Rail and Waterways Ireland negotiations?
- Was there an update on the proposed Athy Distributor Road's top surface (surface course material).

Mr Reel responded as follows:

- As there was a lot of sensitive commercial information within this documentation, it would not be available for viewing prior to being sent to the Minister for approval.
- Subject to Covid restrictions, the council had issued notice to treat and the lands were now council owned. 70/80% of land had been negotiated and there were a



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couple of cases where negotiations were ongoing. Matters of compensation rather than anything that would stop us proceeding with this project.

- In regard to Irish Rail and Waterways Ireland, draft agreements were in place and should be finalised by the Summer.
- In regard to surface course mater for top surface of Athy Distributor Road, he stated that he would come back to Councillor Leigh in this regard.

The Cathaoirleach stated that the Minister had been invited to visit the town of Athy but he was unable at the present time due to covid restrictions, but he would visit the town in the future.

The report was noted.

AY06/0421

Realignment Works at the Oak Park Crossroads, Newtown Allen

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

That the council carries out re-alignment works at the Oak Park Crossroads, Newtown Allen.

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

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that this would be referred to Road Design for realignment design and then quantified. This would be subject to availability of resources and funding being identified to progress the project.

Councillor Breslin noted that works had been carried at this junction i.e. signage but realignments works were required. The District Engineer stated that land acquisition was required to stagger this junction. He added that advanced stop signs had been installed but traffic continued to go through this junction.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Breslin, seconded by Councillor Keatley that this report be noted and that this matter be referred to Road Design for realignment design.



AY07/0421

Bin Emptying - Athy Municipal District

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

That the council share with the members schedules for bin emptying in the municipal district, and to inform us if there is scope to add new bins and to empty some bins more often.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Leigh and seconded by Councillor Breslin.

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section and the Environment Section informing the members that bin emptying was carried out five days a week and occasionally at weekends/Holidays as was required. A new system/regime for allocation of street bins was currently being drawn up for initial consideration by both the Transportation and Environment Departments.

The members raised the following issues;

- There were constant complaints received from ratepayers and community especially on Sundays regarding overflowing bins.
- They understood that there was already a programme in place to replace old bins and emptying of bins. Need to involve the Parks Section in discussions as they would look after the Barrow Walk and other such areas.
- The members did put money aside previously to modernise bins in the municipal district and queried whether this was used?
- Lions Club previously put bins into the People's Park but some had been removed since. Budget needs to be looked at with the District Engineer.
- Suggested three bins in one ie. compactors but these were more expensive.
- Replace wider opening bins with small opening bins which would reduce dumping of household rubbish and larger items.

The District Engineer gave the following replies;



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- The problem was that bins were not being used for small litter items but larger bags of household rubbish. There were certain hotspots where people were leaving bags full of household rubbish beside public bins and in the bins as well.
- Bin collection was being carried out five days a week and sometimes at weekends/bank holidays. With Covid restrictions, it had been scaled down a little as businesses etc were not open.
- A meeting was being arranged in the next few weeks with the Roads and Environment and Parks Sections and these matters would be raised at this time.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Leigh, seconded by Councillor Breslin that the report be noted and that a meeting be arranged shortly with the Roads, Environment and Parks Sections to find a solution to this problem.

AY08/0421

Flooding on the Scratham Road, Timolin

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

That the council look to address the flooding on the Scratham road Timolin, this road requires resurfacing works as several gutter grids at Millbrook estate, sit several inches above the road level.

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

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that this issue would have to be considered as part of an overall improvement to the road at this location. It was hoped that the works can be considered as part of the 2022 Road Works Improvement Scheme.

The following points were raised by the members;

- The road was in poor state and constantly flooding – no work had been carried out on this road for several years.
- The members understood that this road would be done this year. Drainage at least and then road surface before next Winter.



The District Engineer stated that there were issues with regard to taking over the Millbrook Estate. The plan for 2022 was to carry out improvement works on the whole area at the back of Moone and Timolin. He stated that the drainage aspect could be looked at prior to surfacing works.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Dooley, seconded by Councillor Keatley that the report be noted and that drainage works would be carried out first, prior to surfacing works.

AY09/0421

Junction Improvements – Side Road in Castledermot

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

That improvements be made to the junction to the "side road in Castledermot" to encourage articulated trucks to use the side road thus directing them away from the primary school.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Behan and seconded by Councillor Dooley.

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that the surface on the side road in Castledermot was in reasonable condition and was not a deterrent for HGV'S using it.

The following points were raised by the members;

- Locally known as "the side road" L8054 which links Kilcullen/Castledermot and the Athy/Castledermot roads - Great surface but the top of the junction was too narrow for large trucks to turn.
- There was a need to encourage large trucks to use this side road directing them away from the primary school.

The District Engineer stated that land acquisition was required to finish off the L8054 and a new surface was required at the junction. This was on a list of works to be completed.



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Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan, seconded by Councillor Dooley that this report be noted and land acquisition was required to finish off the L8054 and a new surface was required at this junction and this was on a list of works to be completed.

AY10/0421

Update on Drainage and Resurfacing of the back alleyways

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Leigh:
Can the council provide an update on the drainage and resurfacing of the back alleyways in older and former council estates throughout the municipal district?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that the Athy Municipal District Office had looked at the two back alleyways in Dominic's Park for improvement in the current year.

Councillor Leigh stated that he had discussed drainage works with the District Engineer and he would discuss this matter with him further.

The report was noted.

AY11/0421

Fixing of footpaths and kerbing in Ashville

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Leigh:
Can the council confirm if there is a timeframe to start fixing the footpaths and kerbing in Ashville as part of the upgrade for fixing paths in older estates?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that the location was on the list of Housing Estates where it was intended to improve sections of footpath. It was hoped to start work in the current year.



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Councillor Leigh stated that there were trip hazards due to tree roots grown and kerbing which was damaged. Some flooding issues had arisen also due to the condition service providers had left the area in.

The District Engineer stated that two crews were currently working on these older estates and they would be starting in Ashville shortly. He added he got the go ahead to commence the Roadworks Restoration Programme and that would be ongoing over the next three to four months.

The report was noted.

AY12/0421

Resurfacing Works – Leinster Street and Duke Street, Athy

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

Can the council confirm when it intends on carrying out resurfacing works along Leinster Street and Duke Street, Athy?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that a meeting with the TII was due to take place in the coming weeks and this would determine when the work on the N78 at Duke Street and Leinster Street would be carried out.

Councillor Dooley understood that there was a vast network of roads to be maintained and the council would probably be carrying out the works when restrictions were lifted. Businesses would be reopening and he asked that road works have as little impact as possible to the people/businesses of Athy while they are starting up their businesses again.

The District Engineer noted the concerns outlined.

The report was noted.

AY13/0421

Structure/Safety Audit on the wall in Abbeyfield, Ballitore

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



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Can the council confirm if it has any plans to carry out a structural/safety audit on the wall in Abbeyfield, Ballitore?

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Section informing the members that there were no plans to carry out a structural/safety audit on the wall at Abbeyfield, Balitore.

The members asked the council to establish who owned the wall.

The District Manager stated that the site was in the ownership of a receiver and the council were engaging through their solicitors at the moment. She stated that she would ask the Environment Section to engage under the Dangerous Structures Act and the members decided to discuss this matter further with the District Manager and the District Engineer after the meeting.

The report was noted.

AY14/0421

Memorial – St Mary’s Cemetery, Athy

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

That the council provide funding to commemorate all those buried in St Marys Cemetery Athy. This fund will enable the design and construction of a suitable memorial to the memory of all those sadly neglected souls, that died in Athy’s Workhouse and County Home.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Dooley and seconded by Councillor Breslin.

A report was received from the Corporate Services Section informing the members that they were happy to work with the members in relation to this, however, funding would need to be identified, possibly LPT funding and consideration needed to be given as to whether this was a local Municipal District or a council wide initiative. Consideration would also need to be given to the type and design of such a memorial. As you are aware the council had in place a Civic Memorial Policy and applications for and recommendations on civic



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memorials were considered by the Civic Memorial Technical Committee who make recommendations to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) for consideration. The CPG then determine if the applications go to full council or municipal district for final decision.

The following issues were raised by the members;

- The majority of people do not know where St Mary's Cemetery was in Athy and that it was the famine graveyard 1840-1850 and 20% of the town's population were laid to rest there in mass graves with no record of their burial on site.
- We need to educate ourselves on the mistakes of the past and put a memorial for those who were buried there during the famine and in more recent times those who died in the Mothers and Baby Home in Athy.
- Joe Dooley from Tegral wrote a poem called "You never had a chance" in the name of infants who had died, and Councillor Dooley read two verses from this poem
- Our predecessors were part of the problem and we need to show leadership and apologise for what was allowed to happen during these terrible times.
- The County Librarian was working to get family records for those concerned and was in contact with St Vincent's Hospital regarding collection of records etc.
- It was agreed that in time, the survivors of the Mothers and Baby Homes would address the full council and that this motion should be referred to full council.

The District Manager stated that the executive was very supportive, and she stated that in order for proper recognition and a memorial to be approved that this matter be referred to the full council.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Dooley, seconded by Councillor Breslin and agreed by all the members that the report be noted and that this matter be referred to the full council for consideration.

AY15/0421

Public Realm Projects

The Cathaoirleach requested that items 15, 18 and 19 be taken together and all the members agreed.



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Item 15 – Update on Public Realm Projects

Item 18 - Question – Councillor Aoife Breslin

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Breslin:
Can the council confirm a date when the redevelopment of Emily Square, Athy will commence?

A report was received from the Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team informing the members that the Consultants were finalising the tender package for a Works Contractor for Emily Square, it was hoped that we would have a tender package prepared later in the year 2021/early next year 2022. Along with the development of Emily Square, the council were progressing the proposed Shackleton Museum. The council's appointed Consultants for both the building refurb and extension, and the Exhibition Consultants were progressing with the detailed design and the council hope to go to tender for a Works Contractor the third quarter of 2021, with works to start on the Building the last quarter of 2021. The council propose to commence works to Emily Square in 2022, the exact timing of which would have to be coordinated with the works to the Athy Distributor Road to minimise the impact of traffic disruption in the town.

Item 19 - Question – Councillor Brian Dooley

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Dooley:
Can the council provide an update on the Emily Square redevelopment?

A report was received from the Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team informing the members that the Consultants are finalising the tender package for a Works Contractor for Emily Square and it was hoped to go to tender later in the year 2021/early next year 2022. Along with the development of Emily Square, the council are progressing the proposed Shackleton Museum. The Council's appointed Consultants for both the building refurbishment and extension, and the Exhibition Consultants were progressing with the detailed design and the council hope to go to tender for a Works Contractor the third



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quarter of 2021. The Shackleton Museum would be delivered ahead of Emily Square to accommodate delivery of the Athy Distributor Road.

Ms Hunt stated that she had circulated the quarterly update on Public Realm Projects to the members prior to the meeting.

The following issues were raised by the members;

- This was an ideal opportunity now with feel good factor with projects to move onwards with Emily Square.
- This location was core part of the town and it was important to carry out this work. Great feel good factor with increased outdoor recreation and the Blueway opportunities paving the way to kick start tourism in the municipal district.
- Access to Emily Square via wheelchair was difficult at corner at Vodafone Shop in Athy – would this be corrected.
- Two/three years ago, there was no project list and there was no Public Realm Team – Great to see projects being driven by a great team. Small funding was required for areas outside of Athy such as Castledermot, Tanyard, Ballitore and Kilmeade.
- Any reason why Shackleton Project (€1.3 million funding) was not on report.

Ms Hunt replied as follows;

- There was still a shortfall of €250,000 in regard to Shackleton. They hope to open Shackleton and Emily Square at the same time. They should be on site by end of this year and works would commence on the Anderson side of the Square. There would be access for the disabled and all the community to use this new redeveloped square. The next quarterly report would be updated to include Shackleton.
- In regard to Kilmeade, the Senior Engineer and Ms Hunt had met on site together and the area would be survey and the Public Realm Team would put together a design for the area.
- In regard to Castledermot Health Checks, she hoped to brief the members either before or after their next meeting in May.



The Senior Engineer confirmed that Kilmeade had been surveyed and he was working on preliminary items and then he would circulate them to the Public Realm Team for design and then he would come back to the members in due course with the outcome. The reports were noted.

AY16/0421

Barrow Blueway

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

That the council consider extending the Barrow Blueway to the county boundary in the south of Kildare and to include a bridle path in this section to attract equine tourism.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Behan and seconded by Councillor Dooley.

A report was received from the Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team informing the members that the proposed development of the Barrow Blueway immediately south east of Horse Bridge, Athy was refused planning permission as there was a concern it would adversely affect the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation. The development of a bridle path would obviously be a different concept to what the Blueway offers, and we would need more clarity around the proposal. If Councillor Behan would like to contact the Strategic Projects & Public Realm team to provide more detail, they would be happy to consider what was involved.

The following issues were raised by the members;

- Since the lockdown began, many people had been using this Barrow walk from Carlow to Athy and many sports clubs in Carlow were training and coming towards Athy. However, it was not accessible to all i.e. wheelchair access these issue needs to be revisited. There was a need for leisure and equestrian trail as Ireland was so far behind other countries.
- Area from Maganey to Carlow was a matter for Carlow County Council but he agreed with Councillor Behan that the number of people using this walk was growing every weekend.



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- When you come off at the Horse Bridge, directional signage was required.

The Cathaoirleach re-iterated to Councillor Behan that she could contact the Public Realm Team directly as stated in the reply.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan, seconded by Councillor Dooley that the report be noted and Councillor Behan would contact the Public Realm Team directly in order to give them more detail.

AY17/0421

LEADER Commissioned Report – Barrow Blueway

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

That the council as lead authority on the Barrow Blueway confirm to the members when the current LEADER commissioned report on appropriate business locations along the new Barrow Blueway will be complete.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Leigh and seconded by Councillor Breslin.

A report was received from the Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team informing the members that the final draft of the document would be finalised by the end of May, and were planning on a public zoom launch where all members would be invited to attend.

The Cathaoirleach stated that businesses had set up along the Blueway which was great. However, how were the council in relation to casual trading byelaws in conjunction with this?

Ms Hunt stated that the Public Realm Team were working in conjunction with Corporate Services in this regard.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Leigh, seconded by Councillor Breslin that the report be noted.



AY18/0421

Sewerage Odours – Geraldine Road and the Kildare Road, Athy

The Cathaoirleach requested that items 20 and 21 be taken together and all the members agreed.

Item 20 – Motion – Councillor Aoife Breslin

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

That the council engages with all relevant agencies to find a solution and eradicate the serious issues of sewerage odours on Geraldine Road and the Kildare Road, Athy.

Item 21 - Question – Councillor Brian Dooley

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

Can the council confirm what is the cause of the dreadful sewage smell on the Geraldine Road, Athy?

The motion were proposed by Councillor Breslin and seconded by Councillor Dooley.

A report was received from the Building and Development Control Section informing the members that issues of malodours emanating from the public foul sewer in the Geraldine Road area of Athy are caused by Prusselstown Green Pumping Station which was underutilised as it was servicing only 13 houses. The 13 houses do not provide enough effluent for regular pumping to the public mains. As result of this, the effluent was septic upon entering the public mains causing complaints of odours/smells in the houses along Geraldine Road and issues in the WWTP. Development Control had met the developer who was engaging with their Pumps Engineer to try to modify the set-up so that the pump would kick in more regularly and prevent the lines from going septic.

The following issues were raised by the members;

- This matter had been between Irish Water and the council for some time now. People were having to leave their homes every weekend due the horrific sewerage odour.



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- Irish Water was not addressing this matter. The members were due a briefing from Irish Water at full council and a solution would need to be sought and raised at this time.

Mr Murtagh explained that his report above was the current situation and the matter would be monitored. He stated he would keep the members informed of any progress.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Breslin, seconded by Councillor Dooley that the report be noted and that the members be kept updated in finding a solution to this problem.

AY19/0421

Kildare 2021 Arts Act Grant Scheme, Bursaries and Awards

Ms L Russell, Arts Officer stated that this report was circulated to the members prior to the meeting. Please see attached, Appendix A for information.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Leigh, seconded by Councillor Dooley and agreed by all the members that the Kildare 2021 Arts Act Grant Scheme, Bursaries and Awards be approved.

The meeting then concluded.