



**Minutes of the Athy Municipal District Meeting
held at 10.00 am on Monday, 17 October 2022
in the Council Chamber**

Members Present: Councillor B Dooley (Cathaoirleach), Councillors V Behan, A Breslin, M Leigh

Officials Present: Mr A Dunney (A/District Manager), Mr D O'Flaherty (Area Engineer), Mr S Deegan (Senior Engineer), Mr K Kavanagh (Senior Executive Officer), Ms F Millian (Head of Finance), Mr G Hooban (Executive Engineer) Ms P O'Brien (Senior Executive Officer), Mr B McGrath (Meetings Administrator) and Ms C Gallagher (Meetings Secretary).

AY01/1022

Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

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

There were no declarations of interest.

AY02/1022

Minutes and Progress Report

To adopt the minutes the monthly Athy Municipal District meeting held on Monday, 19 September 2022 and to note the progress report.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Breslin, seconded by Councillor Leigh and agreed by all members that the minutes of the meeting be adopted and the progress report be noted.

AY03/1022

Municipal District road works update



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To receive an update on the municipal district road works.

National Transport Authority (NTA) – Active Travel Measure Updates

- No update since the last Athy Municipal District meeting. Project Team dealing with this.

Department of Transport – Climate Adaption Projects

- No projects completed in Athy Municipal District

Municipal District Restoration Improvement Works – RI Program

- All surveying and preparatory works on all RI and RM for 2022 completed.
- no. extra RI projects are surfaced
- Contractor has been appointed to 2 no. RI jobs.
- R417 Maganey to County Boundary (Completed and lined with cats-eyes installed)
- L7071 – Blackditch (Completed)
- L7063 – Ricardstown (Completed)
- L7065 – Eskerhill (Completed)
- L8037 – Timolin (Completed)
- L8089 – Bo Choill Road (Completed)
- L8012 – Kilrush (Completed)
- L8017 - Oldgrange (Completed)
- L7063 – Cherrymills to Cloney (Completed)
- L-8012 – Moone Village (Road Markings and Pedestrian Crossing to be installed)
- Margins and hedgerows along 2 remaining jobs need certain preparatory works.
- Kilrush – requires some lining
- Carried out junction realignments at L8089 – Bo Choill Rd.
- Drainage requirements were also completed on 2 new roads.

Local Improvement Schemes

- Portersize Lane
- Lowtown Lane



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- Castlereban North Lane
- Crookstown Lane
- Ballymount, Blackrath

Community Involvement Schemes

- L80571 Castlereban
- L80351 Crookstown Lane
- L60951 Blackrath Lane
- L70653 Rickardstown Lane
- L80161 Rathsillagh Lane
- L60901 Calverstown Lodge Lane
- L80531 Ballinacarrick Lane

Signage Works

- Continuing our update of signage in the Athy MD
- Upgrading signage on completed resurfaced roads.

Road Markings

- Upgrading road junction markings at the present time.
- Renew all road markings including cat's eyes along the newly surfaced section of the R417. – 3.1km
- Renew all road markings on R-448 from Castledermot to Moone – 6.8km.

Drainage Works

- A number of villages (including Narraghmore) have had drainage systems cleaned
- Jetting drainage lines on various roads
- Cleaning gullies on a number of roads
- Carrying out water cuts along roads

Road Patching



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- Carrying out patching along various sections.

Street Sweeping

- Street sweeping to areas
- Bin collection
- Narraghmore village

Community Works

- Carried out preparatory work to facilitate both Tri-Athy and Gordon Bennett Events. This involved road closures etc.

General Maintenance

- Seat installation at Athy library completed.
- General cleaning of depot.
- Electrical second fix and floor coverings of New depot at Gallowshill nearing Completion. Next week will see carpentry second fix and installation of plumbing fittings.

Municipal District Restoration Improvement Works – RM Program

- R448 Skenagun to Moone.
- L4009 Maganey to Levitstown.
- R747 Brookmount to Wicklow bounds.
- L8068 Bert to Milltown.
- L8031 Milltown to Cardenton.
- L6094 Wood road, Narraghmore.

Councillor Breslin asked when will the depot be finished.

The District Engineer advised that the depot will be finished within the next month.



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Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Keatley and seconded by Councillor Behan that the report be noted.

AY04/1022

Update on 2022 LPT expenditure year to date

The LPT Coordinator was unavailable to attend, in her stead Mr A Dunney advised that the members had been previously circulated with a report regarding the latest update on the 2022 LPT expenditure year to date.

The updated was noted by the members.

AY05/1022

Athy Draft Budget Plan 2023

Ms Millane informed the members that in accordance with Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 the total draft General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for Kildare County Council was €15,610,006 for 2023. She noted that the prescribed period for this year's Draft Budgetary Plan started on 14 October. She advised the members that this year's budget meeting was scheduled for 21 November and that a briefing would be held on Microsoft Teams on 14 November. She also explained that it was a reserved function of the members of a municipal district to adopt the draft budgetary plan either with or without amendment and that the Chief Executive may take account of the draft budgetary plan, as presented to the members of that municipal district, without amendment if they do not adopt a draft budgetary plan.

Ms F Millane confirmed the following points to the members:

- The total provisional General Municipal Allocation for the Athy Municipal District was €2,451,719.
- Local Property Tax was retained at +10% at the September Full Council meeting.
- Correspondence was received from Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, Peter Burke in response to a letter from Ms F Millane regarding funding.
- There were concerns still regarding rates. There had been no new valuations received in 2022.



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Ms P O'Brien added to discussions on the draft budget plan by advising that there had been changes regarding the calculation of Resident Association Grants. She noted that these changes were recently agreed at Full Council. The grants will be calculated based on acreage and this means there will be more parity across the county. She also advised that there was approximately an additional €6k needed for Resident Association Grants from LPT funding from the Athy Municipal District members.

The following points were raised by the members:

- Is there any way to increase income from pay parking
- Is there funding available to support water services when the service level agreement ends with Irish Water
- Is funding given to Tidy Towns groups or towards entry to the competition
- Has funding for litter bins been set aside

Ms Millane responded as follows:

- Reducing the time allocated for free parking would be the only way to increase income on pay parking.
- There is an overall budget for public water services and there is no plan to change this
- The Environment Department allocate grant monies for Tidy Towns, a list of allocations will be requested and forwarded to members
- Funding has been allocated to Resident Association groups for litter bins

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Leigh, seconded by Councillor Behan and agreed by all members present that the Athy Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plan for 2023 be adopted. Ms F Millane will contact the Environment Department to request a list of Tidy Town grant allocations be forwarded to the members.

AY06/1022

Taking in charge of Castle Gate, Nurney, Co Kildare

The members considered the taking in charge of Castle Gate, Nurney, Co Kildare. A report had previously been circulated to the members for their consideration.



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Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Breslin, seconded by Councillor Behan and agreed by all members that Castle Gate, Nurney be taken in charge.

AY07/1022

Section 38 proposed construction of a new bus shelter on Main Street (R448), Castledermot, Athy (in-bound)

The members considered the Road Traffic Act 1994 - Section 38 proposed construction of new bus shelter on the Main Street (R448), Castledermot, Athy (in-bound).

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan, seconded by Councillor Breslin and agreed by the members that the Road Traffic Act 1994 - Section 38 proposed construction of new bus shelter on the Main Street (R448), Castledermot, Athy (in-bound) was approved.

AY08/1022

Update on Roads Projects and Roads Planning in the Athy Municipal District

Mr Deegan presented the members with an update on the Roads Projects and Roads Planning in the Athy Municipal District these included;

Athy Distributor Road

- Construction 50% Complete

Junction works

- Phase 1a, Berts Cross

Bridge Programme

- Moone Village Bridge
- Cloney Bridge
- Bo Choill Road/Newtown Bridge
- Booley 2 Bridge

The members raised the following points:



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- What is the time scale for Berts Cross
- What is the timescales for village surveys
- The Cathaoirleach thanked the Roads Department for their open communication with the members and the public in relation to the Athy Distributor Road

Mr Deegan advised the members that:

- Berts Cross is prioritised for Phase 1a works, the tender process is complete, then a consultant for these works
- The technical team are mid-stream on surveys, they will liaise with the Municipal District office and then link in with LPT funding.

The report was noted.

AY09/1022

Road signage at Woodlands

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Aoife Breslin. That the council install additional signage requesting motorists to slow down at Woodlands, Castledermot.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the Athy Municipal District office will carry out a speed survey on the Woodlands Road. Depending on the outcome of the speed survey, the various options available can be considered.

Councillor Breslin noted that option need to be looked at to slow down the speed of vehicles at both Barnhill and Wooldands.

The District Engineer advised that he would carry out a speed audit and get back Councillor Breslin with the outcome of the audit.



Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Breslin and seconded by Councillor Leigh, on the basis that a speed audit would be carried out, that the report be noted.

AY10/1022

Surface dress Sherriff Hill Road

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Veralouise Behan. That the council surface dress the Sherriff Hill Road.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the Athy Municipal District office has the Sherriff Hill Road listed for resurfacing in 2023. Athy Municipal District have been surfacing all the roads around Moone and Timolin in the last two years.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan and seconded by Councillor Dooley that the report be noted.

AY11/1022

Surface dress and flooding measures on the Shed Road

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Veralouise Behan. That the council surface dress and deal with the flooding issues on the Shed Road, Athy.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the Athy Municipal District office will include the flooding issues on the Shed Road as part of routine maintenance schedule for the Autumn/Winter schedule.

Councillor Behan noted that the road dips under the bridge and that is where most of the flooding occurs the road needs to be raised if possible.



The District Engineer advised that the bridge at Kilkea to Shed Road will be worked on, drainage will be done first then the road will be resurfaced.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan and seconded by Councillor Dooley that the report be noted.

AY12/1022

Replace fencing on Hamilton Road

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Mark Leigh.

That the council replace the dilapidated fence with a new fence on Hamilton Road in Castledermot.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the fence was erected as part of improvement works to Hamilton Road a number of years ago. This fence can be considered for replacement as part of LPT works for 2023.

Councillor Leigh made the following points:

- Has a group been identified to carry out the works under LPT?
- A heritage walk should be considered.
- What is the status of the General Area Plan – can an update from Public Realm be sought?
- Should a Resident's Association carry out the work?

The District Engineer noted the following:

- A playground has been highlighted as a need for the area
- The whole area has to be looked at from a connectivity perspective through a General Area Plan
- Public Realm would carry out a General Area Plan



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- Phase 1 of work in the area would be the playground, Phase 2 would include work on the connectivity issues.

Mr A Dunney advised Councillor Leigh that he would speak to the Director of Services for Planning, Mr E Ryan and ask that an update from Public Realm be provided.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Leigh and seconded by Councillor Breslin, on the basis that an update from Public Realm will be sought, that the report be noted.

AY13/1022

Signage on approach to rail bridge UB51 on L8084

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Aoife Breslin.

That the council, in conjunction with Iarnród Éireann, provide additional adequate signage on approach to the rail bridge UB51 on road no L8084 detailing both the restricted height of the bridge and the issue of the curvature of the road as traffic exits the bridge.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the Athy Municipal District office will contact Iarnród Eireann with a view to examining the issue of the signage on the L8084, it would appear there are a number of issues in relation to this. The first issue is to prevent HGV's turning onto the L8084. The second issue is the restricted height of the railway bridge.

The members raised the following points:

- HGVs end up turning around on the road when they realise they will not fit under the bridge
- This item is to be kept on the progress report



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The District Engineer advised that the whole area will be looked to try to prevent HGVs progressing to the point where they need to turn, causing major traffic upset when they see they cannot continue.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Breslin and seconded by Councillor Behan, on the basis this item is kept on the progress report, that the report be noted.

AY14/1022

Review priority for vehicular traffic at Grange Cross junction

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Veralouise Behan.

Can the council confirm if it has plans to review priority for vehicular traffic at the Grangemellon Cross junction?

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the junction at Grangemellon has a stop sign coming from the Ballyroe direction. Athy Municipal District will re-examine the junction to see if signage can be improved at this junction. It could also be considered for a Low Cost Improvement Scheme in 2023.

The report was noted.

AY15/1022

Footpath on R418

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Mark Leigh.

Can the council confirm if there are plans to install a footpath between the Texaco garage and the Clanard Court Hotel on the R418 in Athy?

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the Athy Municipal District office in conjunction with the Road Design Section has completed a survey and is now designing a footpath between the Garage and the Clanard Court Hotel. While the council have had discussions with the relevant owners/stakeholders in relation to this project, further discussions will be required.

Councillor Leigh noted that this is the last area in Athy which needs a footpath. A walkability study deemed it necessary for accessibility.



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Councillor Dooley noted that there was money set aside for this and agreed that it was need for connectivity to the town.

The report was noted.

AY16/1022

Install new bins in Athy town

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Mark Leigh.
Can the council confirm when the new bins, purchased in May, will be installed in Athy Town?

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the Athy Municipal District office planned to commence the installation of the new bins this summer. Due to the extensive road program, the project has been delayed. It is now proposed to commence the work this autumn/winter.

The report was noted.

AY17/1022

Installation of directional signage at junction of N78 and L8078

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Aoife Breslin.
Can the council confirm if there are plans to install directional signage at the junction of the N78 and L8078 at Burtown Cross for Kilkea village?

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that there are no plans to install directional signage at Burtown Cross (junction of N78 and L8078). There is signage at Irishtown Cross indicating Kilkea. The council would prefer traffic would go closer to Athy and use the L4008 to get them onto the R418

Councillor Breslin expressed that she was unhappy with the answer provided and would resubmit item in the form of a motion.

The report was noted.



AY18/1022

Information on housing units in Athy Municipal District

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Brian Dooley. That the council provide a list of all housing units in the Athy Municipal District under their control awaiting major works, to include the number of units, the length of time they've waited for these works to be carried out and when the council envisage works being carried out to bring the units back into use.

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

A report was received from the Housing Department that each month the members are given a Vacant House Report which details the total for the county and a breakdown by Municipal District. The detail, presentation and content of this report has been agreed by the Housing SPC. The report also further breaks down the works required into major works or minor works.

This month's report shows that there are 11 properties requiring major works and 14 properties requiring minor works in the Athy Municipal District.

The members raised the following points:

- Vacant houses can draw anti-social behaviour
- Turnaround time for making a house habitable is too long
- The difficulties in securing contractors and supplies were acknowledged
- When houses are ready they should be allocated asap

Mr A Dunney agreed with the sentiments made by the members but noted that vacancy rates had dropped from 4.8% last November to 2.7% and end of September this year. He also noted that there is now a budget for housing maintenance and a vacant homes unit.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Dooley and seconded by Councillor Leigh that the report be noted.



AY19/1022

Vacant House reporting

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Brian Dooley. Can the council confirm if there has been an increase in the number of houses being reported as vacant in the last 3 months in the Athy Municipal District on the Vacant Houses website?

A report was received from the Housing Department There are 6 properties listed on www.vacanthomes.ie for the Athy area, 4 were entered in the last 3 months.

The report was noted.

AY20/1022

Historic markings on the Crom Abu Bridge

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Brian Dooley. That the council have the historic markings on the Crom Abu bridge in Athy, which over time have depleted, restored by a stone mason.

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

A report was received from the Planning Department as Crom Abu Bridge (KD035-022008-) is a recorded monument, the Kildare County Council Heritage Officer will investigate, in consultation with the National Monuments Service (Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage), the possibility of restoring the inscription.

Councillor Dooley emphasised the historical importance of the bridge and that it is imperative to maintain our heritage by restoring historically marking like this.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Dooley and seconded by Councillor Behan that the report be noted.



AY21/1022

Number of units on Derelict Property Register

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Brian Dooley.
Can the council confirm how many units in the Athy Municipal District are on the Derelict Property Register?

A report was received from the Environment and Water Services Department that the council investigates reports of dereliction and takes enforcement action in accordance with the Derelict Sites Act 1990 in an effort to have the dereliction abated.

A derelict site is defined in the Act as any land which detracts, or is likely to detract, to a material degree from the amenity, character or appearance of land in the neighbourhood of the land in question because of –

The existence of structures which are in a ruinous, derelict or dangerous condition
The neglected, unsightly or objectionable condition of the land or any structures on the land
The presence of litter, rubbish, debris or waste on the land.

If it is considered that issues can be easily remedied within a relatively short timeframe, the Council may work informally with a property owner instead of serving a legal notice and provide the owner(s) with a list of works and the opportunity to carry out such works. Many cases are resolved in this way and this approach is always the initial focus.

In other instances, the Council may serve a legal notice requiring works to be carried out and may also progress matters through the Courts.

It is also open to the local authority to compulsorily acquire under the 1990 Act, though this can expose the Council to financial risk.

Challenges relating to resolution are often linked to issues which ultimately resulted in the site becoming derelict in the first place — financial hardship, difficulties in financing



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development, legal or title disputes over ownership, estate issues following inheritance, receivership, property being abandoned, etc.

Therefore, there can often be delays in progressing files due to difficulties in ascertaining the names of owners and accordingly, there is often recourse to land registry which can be time consuming. Indeed, disputes arising from title / probate tend to be the cause of many issues.

The issue of “dereliction” may sometimes be subservient to more fundamental issues such as building control, breaches of planning / licensing and should be progressed using remedies other than derelict sites legislation.

Ultimately if cases are not resolved following formal notice, the site can be listed in the derelict sites register. As a general principle, a low number so registered is a positive sign (though often perceived otherwise) that cases are being resolved and that the council is being proactive.

There are currently 8 Derelict Sites listed on the register in the Athy Municipal District.

Councillor Dooley thanked Mr K Kavanagh for the detailed report and noted that it is difficult to identify who owns certain derelict sites. Councillor Dooley encouraged members to report any derelict sites they are aware of and to remind the public to do the same.

Mr K Kavanagh advised that his team should be made aware of any difficulty with derelict sites and they will investigate the matter.

The report was noted.

AY22/1022

Site for Athy Gymnastics Club

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Mark Leigh.



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That the council work in conjunction with Athy Gymnastics Club to identify a site in Athy Town for a new clubhouse and training centre.

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

A report was received from the Economic, Community and Cultural Development Department that there is a limited supply of Kildare County Council owned properties in Athy, however the Kildare Sports Partnership team will engage with the club to ascertain their needs and explore what possibilities are available in the area.

The members raised the following points:

- The club has had two different basis since 1974, it takes up to 4 hours to set up weekly
- The club has a waiting list of 250 children waiting to join
- Contact should be made with Kildare Sports Partnership and other relevant stakeholders to arrange a meeting with the members of this municipal district and representatives from the gymnastics club to ascertain the possibility of a public or private partnership

All members present agreed that the club should be supported.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Leigh and seconded by Councillor Breslin that the report be noted. Meeting Administrator, Mr B McGrath will make contact as noted above.

AY23/1022

Progress to playground and nature area in Tanyard, Ballitore

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Veralouise Behan.

Can the council provide an update on progress made to the playground and nature area in the Tanyard, Ballitore?

A report was received from the Economic, Community and Cultural Development



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Department that the playground and nature area in the Tanyard, Ballitore is not in the Parks Department current programme of works for this year. The Parks Department will engage with the local community in the coming year to assess the needs and suitability of the site. There are a number of competing priorities in the municipal district and further work on the project will require identification of funding.

A report was also received from the Housing Department that Initial feasibility carried out for an infill development of social housing on the Tanyard lands adjacent to the river to the west of the site for inclusion in the delivery programme under Housing for All. The Housing Department will liaise with the Parks Section in their development of proposals for a playground and nature area.

Councillor Behan accepted that this work is not on this year's programme of work as there are competing priorities in the area but advised that Ballitore needs support.

Both reports were noted.

The report was noted.

AY24/1022

Artwork on utility boxes

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Aoife Breslin. Can the council confirm if there are plans to allow artwork to be displayed/placed on utility boxes in Athy, similar to what occurs in Monasterevin and Abbeyleix?

A report was received from the Arts Officer that Creative Places Coordinator Eilish Langton will liaise with TUS and the Area Engineer to discuss options around this. The Arts Service are keen that artistic excellence is maintained for all public facing projects.

The members made the following comments:

- They thanked Eilish White for all her work in Athy
- Tourism needs to be prioritised in Athy over the next few years



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- Shopfront displays projects will move forward before the end of year
- The Youth Café is a great project and some of the more artistic children could be involved in helping with the shopfronts.

The report was noted.

The meeting concluded.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach Cllr Brian Dooley

Meeting Administrator Brian McGrath