



**Minutes of the Athy Municipal District Meeting
held at 10.00 am on Monday, 15 January 2024
in the Council Chamber**

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

Online: Councillor I Keatley

Officials Present: Mr A Dunney (District Manager), Mr M Kavanagh (A/District Engineer), Mr M McLoughlin (A/Senior Executive Officer), Mr C Flynn (Senior Executive Engineer), Mr K Kavanagh (Senior Executive Officer), Mr S Wallace (A/Senior Parks and Landscape Officer), Ms E Price (A/Administrative Officer), Mr B McGrath (Meetings Administrator), Ms A Noone (Meetings Secretary) and others.

AY01/0124

Declaration of Conflicts or Pecuniary Interests

Declarations of (a) conflicts of interest or (b) pecuniary or beneficial interests under section 177 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended.

There were no declarations made.

AY02/0124

Minutes and Progress Report

The members considered the minutes the monthly Athy Municipal District meeting held on Monday, 11 December 2023 and the progress report was noted.



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Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan seconded by Councillor Dooley and agreed by all members that the minutes of the Athy Municipal District meeting held on 11 December 2023 be adopted and the progress report be noted.

AY03/0124

Municipal District road works update

The members received an update on the municipal district road works.

National Transport Authority (NTA) – Active Travel Measure Updates

No update since 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

No update.

Municipal District Restoration Maintenance Works – RM Program

No update.

Local Improvement Schemes

No update for 2024.

Community Involvement Schemes

No update for 2024.

Signage Works

Continuing our update of signage in the Athy Municipal District.

Upgrading signage on completed resurfaced roads.

Signage works started on R-417 for Tankardstown.

Walterstown junction all signs renewed.



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Road Markings

Upgrading road junction markings.

Drainage Works

A number of villages have had drainage systems cleaned.

Jetting drainage lines on various roads – ongoing.

Cleaning gullies – ongoing.

Carrying out water cuts along roads – ongoing.

Carrying out drainage works at Mullaghreelan.

Completed drainage works at Kilgowan / Usk.

Survey completed at Mullamast. Drainage works to follow.

Completed jetting drainage lines on all streets in Athy before Christmas.

Road Patching

Carrying out patching along various sections. – ongoing.

Street Sweeping

Street sweeping to areas – ongoing.

Bin collection – ongoing.

Completed installation of ten new bins along Leinster and Duke Street, Athy.

Community Works

Carried out preparatory work to facilitate the “Big Switch”.

General Maintenance

Hedge cutting along regional roads.

The members raised the following:

- Thanked the Municipal District Office for the work carried out especially over the Christmas period.



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- There had been a fatality over the weekend and wished to send condolences to the family and friends of the victim.
- Could additional routes be added to the salting route, this came up every year and always the same response. Towns were growing and this needed to be looked at.
- Could salt boxes be included in resident association grants.
- The areas outside rural schools wouldn't need to be salted on weekends.
- Would safety road markings on Ballintubbert Road be carried out soon.
- Had Moone/Timolin road and Commonstown Hill been chipped.
- Could the hedge in Dun Brinn be cut back as it was impeding the footpath.
- Could the culvert at Boherbawn be tightened up, disrupting resident living beside it.

Mr M Kavanagh advised the members of the following:

- Salting routes were at full capacity and no new routes would be added.
- Ballintubbert road was on the list for Restoration Maintenance this year.
- 6ml chip had been put down at Moone/Timolin, Commonstown Hill, the final 10ml would go down once the weather improved.

Mr M McLoughlin advised the members to direct the public to the council's website for a list of salting routes.

The report was noted.

AY04/0124

Rectify issues in Moone Village

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

That the council rectify issues following upgrade works carried out in 2021 to Moone Village.

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



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A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that a meeting has taken place with a representative from the residents of the estate and Kildare County Council. A number of issues (minor adjustments) were identified. The Municipal District Office plan to address these in quarter one in consultation with the residents' representative.

The members raised the following:

- This work had been carried out during the pandemic as part of an initiative by the National Transport Authority supporting local communities.
- There were issues outside the shop and school.
- Part of the footpath was too wide and some car parking spaces had been removed outside the shop.
- There were some drainage issues.
- The car park at the church had never been marked.
- The pencil bollards at the school had made a great improvement, especially to parking around the school.

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

AY05/0124

Pedestrian lighting along the footpath from the SDR along the slip way at Etex

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

That the council install pedestrian lighting along the footpath from the new Southern Distributor Road along the slip way at Etex, across from what was Murphys of Sunnyside, which is a fantastic pedestrian connection to the town but has no public lighting.

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

A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that an assessment in accordance with the Kildare Lighting infrastructure



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Priority Schedule (KLIPS) will be carried out to determine the most appropriate location for public lighting. Works will be carried out if the assessment ranks it appropriately and a funding source can be identified.

The members raised the following:

- The Southern Distributor Road had been a gamechanger to the town with people using it to walk on during the day/evening.
- Could the council work with Waterways Ireland to provide lighting on the footbridge along the Blueway. Residents of Dun Brinn were using slipway which was quite dark.

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

AY06/0124

Footpaths in Woodstock Street, Athy

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

That the council carry out remedial and restoration works to the footpaths in Woodstock Street, Athy.

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

A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that these works can be examined under the programme of works for 2024.

Councillor Breslin thanked the A/District Engineer for the walkaround the previous week. This street was one of the nicest in Athy but unfortunately had been underinvested in recent years. More work was needed. There was an older population living along here and accessibility was a huge problem. A speed survey was needed.

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



AY07/0124

Survey on Castleroe West Estate

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Behan.
That the council carry out a survey on Castleroe West Estate, Maganey regarding the safe accessibility of emergency services to the estate.

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

A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that the from a visual survey, the existing car parking is causing issues within the estate. Additional car-parking spaces may be required, located in the existing grassed areas. A design would be required, and a funding source identified.

Councillor Behan advised that this estate was built a long time ago and families didn't have as many cars as they do now. There was an incident where an ambulance couldn't get to an elderly resident. This was a health and safety issue.

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

AY08/0124

Footpaths and lighting in Graysland Estate

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Leigh.
Can the council confirm when works will start on footpaths and lighting in Graysland Estate, Athy?

A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that in relation to the footpath element of the question,
No works are currently planned for the footpaths. A determination can be made once all other works are complete,



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In relation to the public lighting element of the question,
The lighting at this location will be completed under PLEEP (Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project), which is an LED retrofitting project in which Kildare County Council is participating with eight other local authorities. Under the project all the remaining non – LED lights will be replaced with LEDs. The surveying of lights will commence in County Kildare in Quarter one, 2024.

Councillor Leigh advised that he had a commitment from the previous area engineer and was hopeful that the work would be carried out soon.

The report was noted.

AY09/0124

L8007/L8008 roads in Ballyshannon

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Leigh.
Can the council confirm if the L8007/L8008 roads in Ballyshannon are due to be listed in the full road maintenance scheme for 2024?

A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that the L8007 received surface maintenance only two years ago. The L8008 is on our program for surface maintenance in 2024.

The report was noted.

AY10/0124

Doggy bins and bags along the SDR

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Dooley.
Can the council confirm if doggy bins and bags are to be placed along the new Southern Distributor Road in Athy?



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A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that the Kildare County Council does not provide separate bins for the disposal of dog waste. General litter bins are deemed suitable for this purpose to maximise efficiency and reduce the number of collections necessary.

The members raised the following:

- There was a huge volume of people using the road for daily exercise/walking dogs.
- There was a huge issue with dog litter along this road.
- There was not one single bin along the road for rubbish.

Mr M McLoughlin advised there were no plans to provide bins on that road but if the members wanted bins provided along that road they would have to be relocated from elsewhere.

The members advised that they would be agreeable to moving three bins to the Southern Distributor Road.

The report was noted.

AY11/0124

Resurfacing the L8014 road

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

Can the council consider adding the L8014 road to the resurfacing schedule for 2024?

A report was received from the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department informing the members that this road is on our rolling three year programme for restoration improvement.

Councillor Behan thanked the Municipal District Office for the report and asked was there a timeline for this.



Mr M Kavanagh advised that it would probably be 2025 subject to funding.

The report was noted.

AY12/0124

Rural areas to develop outdoor recreation amenities

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Behan.
That the council identify rural areas to develop outdoor recreation amenities in line with new guidelines that have been published in the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy.

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

A report was received from the Parks Department informing the members that there is no objection in principle to the identification of rural areas and development of outdoor recreation amenities in the Athy Municipal District. However this will have to be balanced with existing amenity and recreation projects identified in the Municipal District and the resources to deliver them. Additionally, an overall Outdoor Recreation Strategy will need to be prepared and this will also dictate where funding applications under the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Structure Scheme are made and funding allocated.

Councillor Behan said there was more of an appetite for outdoor parks. It would be good to identify some rural areas for this.

Councillor Dooley suggested that it could be an option to partner with other state bodies like Waterways Ireland and Coillte.

Mr S Wallace advised that the guidelines had just recently been published and they would be working with Kildare Sports Partnership and the Planning Department on any projects.

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



AY13/0124

Contactless Water Refill Stations

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Dooley. That the council, in line with our sustainable development goals, look to introduce Contactless Water Refill Stations on walking routes around the Athy Municipal District and liaise with Waterways Ireland to agree areas where this facility could be provided to support walking tourism along our Blueway. An example of this is along the Barrow walk in Ballinabranna Co. Carlow.

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

A report was received from the Strategic Projects and Public Realm Department informing the members that the water refill station beside the River Barrow at Milford was installed by the Ballinabranna Water Co-op, a local group water scheme. It was funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and is part of a wide National Federation of Group Water Schemes project that will see similar projects installed at 16 group water schemes nationwide.

It is an objective of the Barrow Blueway Placemaking Plan to provide water stations along the route subject to additional funding sources being identified to allow installation progress. Environment Section are trialling a unit with an integrated fountain in the Riverbank Arts Centre. The unit has a digital counter which displays the number of single use plastic bottles avoided. The cost of purchase was approximately €1500 with a service cost of approximately €200 per annum. Factors to consider here are that the unit is placed indoors in a well-used public facility; routine cleaning is carried out by the Riverbank staff and a new water connection was not required. All factors contribute to lower costs overall; however the station is only available for use while the premises is open.

The introduction of Water Refill stations will require an assessment of several factors – location of unit, location of water infrastructure for the unit, maintenance agreements and a funding source to cover the costs incurred to install and connect but also for the annual maintenance and water consumption costs based on usage.



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The Council Parks team have provided costs below based on a contactless unit for Kildare Town Playground:

- Purchase of contactless unit €5000
- Irish Water connection €2500
- Installation of unit and pipework to water main (10m connection distance) €2700

There will be an ongoing charge by Irish Water for water consumed which will be based on usage.

Maintenance will be needed to clean the units and repair them.

Staff and financial resources to cover these costs will need to be identified to be able to install units.

The members raised the following:

- Could some locations be identified for this.
- Supported sustainability in the community and would be helpful to tourists.
- It was great value for money.
- Could possibly look into funding from the Climate Action Grants.
- Ballinabranna and the Greenway in Waterford had this and it worked well.
- This would create less littering from plastic single use bottles as it would encourage people to bring a reusable bottle.

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

AY14/0124

Timeline of Emily Square redevelopment

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

Can the council provide an update on the timeline of Emily Square redevelopment?

A report was received from the Strategic Projects and Public Realm Department informing the members that the an application for funding has been submitted to the Failte Ireland



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Just Transition Fund. It would be premature to indicate a timeline for development on Emily Square without confirmation of the funding needed to progress.

Councillor Dooley accepted the report and asked was there a rough timeline on this.

The District Manager advised that the application was currently under assessment.

The report was noted.

AY15/0124

Electricity credit entitlements

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Behan.
Can the council confirm if it would consider adding a leaflet to the tenancy handbook informing tenants about their electricity credit entitlements in relation to newly housed tenants of properties that had been vacant for up to 2 years?

A report was given at the meeting by Ms E Price that it was down to the energy suppliers to inform customers of their entitlements.

Councillor Behan accepted the report and understood that the onus was on energy companies to advise customers themselves but she would try to get the word out there so tenants were aware.

Ms E Price advised that she would mention this to the allocations team.

Councillor Breslin mentioned that MABS had done a lot of work on this and that in some cases less fortunate vulnerable families had been given these entitlements when originally being refused.

The report was noted.



AY16/0124

Wall at Abbeyfield, Ballitore

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Breslin.
Can the council provide an update on the condition of the wall at Abbeyfield, Ballitore outlining what plans there are for remedial works to be carried out?

A report was received from the Housing Department informing the members that Kildare County Council are finalising the transfer of the 42 sites at Abbeyfield, Ballitore under a Part V site resolution plan. Once in Kildare County Council's ownership remedial works will be carried out on the wall subject to funding being available.

Councillor Breslin thanked the Housing Department for the report and asked if there was a timeframe for this.

Ms E Price advised that the matter was progressing well but was currently with the Solicitors.

The report was noted.

AY17/0124

Memorial at St Mary's Cemetery

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Breslin.
Can the council outline a time frame for the provision of a memorial at St Mary's Cemetery, Athy given that the HSE Estates have confirmed that they are amenable to Kildare County Council taking charge of the upkeep and continuing with their plans to erect a memorial?

A report was received from the A/Arts Officer informing the members that The communication from the HSE regarding the upkeep of the site is welcomed. The Arts Service team is available to work with the local community and colleagues within the council as plans for this project progress, taking into consideration available resources. An LPT allocation has been ringfenced for this project from three Municipal Districts.



Councillor Breslin thanked the Arts Officer for the report and also thanked the local media for highlighting this and also thanked the relevant departments in the council who had been dealing with it and was glad it was finally coming to a resolution. She noted that there had been an agreement that all Municipal Districts would allocate money to this memorial.

The District Manager advised that he would write to the other Municipal Districts on this matter but noted that the cemetery would not be taken in charge by the council.

The report was noted.

Item 19 was taken at this point.

AY18/0124

Bottle banks in Edmund Rice Square

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

That the council find a more suitable location for the bottle banks that are currently in Edmund Rice Square, Athy.

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

A report was received informing the members that the Environment section is willing to look at any potential sites that Cllr. Leigh can suggest. The constraints on alternative or additional sites include:

- Access for service vehicles.
- Absence of overhead cables.
- Setback of 50 metres from any residences.
- Safe access for public including adequate sightlines, lighting.

It should also be noted that there was a longterm objective to make improvements to Edmund Rice carpark (discussed with previous Municipal District engineer)- if this is still the



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plan, this could include repositioning the banks within the carpark to reduce illegal dumping and also to improve the look of the site with hard and soft landscaping, improved signage etc.

The members raised the following:

- There was a lot of rubbish dumped in front of the bottle banks over the Christmas period.
- Could a meeting be held to discuss this further.
- Moving the bottle banks would have a better visual impact on the area.
- A business had given commitment to take the bottle banks in their car park in exchange for a small piece of wasteland from the Council. Could this be looked at.
- This matter had been ongoing for years.

Mr K Kavanagh advised that he acknowledged the members queries and was not against moving the bottle banks but a suitable alternative location needed to be found nearby.

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

AY19/0124

Columbarium Wall Installation at New St. Michael's Cemetery

The members received a presentation from the Environment Department on proposed Columbarium Wall Installation at New St. Michael's Cemetery Athy as part of the 2024 Cemeteries Capital Improvement Program.

The members raised the following:

- Thanked Mr C Flynn for the presentation.
- It was a very suitable location for the columbarium walls and a great design.
- This design was similar to other examples around the county that had worked well.
- Could it be expanded in the future.



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Mr C Flynn advised the members that this project did not require a Part 8 but he presented the plan to them as a courtesy. He advised the members to email him with any issues or feedback on this matter.

The report was noted.

AY20/0124

Video doorbells as part of the house alarm scheme

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

That the council carry out a feasibility study to include video doorbells as part of the house alarm scheme already in operation for all those in receipt of the state pension in the Athy Municipal District, subject to LPT funding being provided by the elected members.

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

A report was received informing the members that the Community department has limited staff resources available to administer a new grant scheme under LPT. Given the nature and level of the work involved in implementing a new scheme, it has not been factored into our workplan. We would also have to consider the complexities of GDPR around video doorbells and providing funding for same.

The members raised the following:

- Disappointed with the report, no proper thought behind it.
- The council had a scheme in place to fund alarms for older people, this could be an extension of this scheme.
- This would be beneficial to the older and more vulnerable members of the community.
- This would be a way of adding extra security.
- These systems were reasonably priced between €25 and €100.
- Could this be raised with the community section again.



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The District Manager advised that he would speak with the Community section again and raise the members requests.

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

The meeting concluded.