



**Minutes of the Athy Municipal District Meeting
held at 10.00 am on Monday, 15 May 2023
in the Council Chamber**

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

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

AY01/0523

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.

AY02/0523

Minutes and Progress Report

To adopt the minutes the monthly Athy Municipal District meeting held on Monday, 17 April 2023 and to note the progress report.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan seconded by Councillor Leigh and agreed by all members that the minutes of the Athy Municipal District meeting held on 17 April 2023 be adopted and the progress report be noted.



AY03/0523

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 in 2022, and no details available yet on 2023 projects.

Municipal District Restoration Improvement Works – RI Program 2023

All surveying and preparatory works on all Restoration Improvements for 2023 completed.

Three Restoration Improvements on regional roads have been completed.

R-415 at Crookstown school.

R-418 at Bray to Gallowshill i.e. tie-in to the Athy Distributor Road.

R-418 at Kilmead on the Athy/Kilcullen road.

Restoration Maintenance surveys commenced, hedgerows finished, Drainage and edging underway.

Local Improvement Schemes

Allocation for 2023 not yet finalized with Department of Agriculture.

Community Involvement Schemes (CIS)

Allocation of CIS jobs for 2023 not agreed as yet.

Signage Works

Continuing our update of signage in the Athy Municipal District.

Upgrading signage and delineation on completed resurfaced roads.

Signage works completed on Shed Road and surrounding areas.

Chevrons and signs Maganey.

Road Traffic Accident repairs at Carrigeen Cross.

Nicholastown signs have been erected.



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Road Markings

Upgrading road junction markings at the present time.

Drainage Works

A number of villages have had drainage systems cleaned.

Jetting drainage lines on various roads – ongoing.

Cleaning gullies on a number of roads – ongoing.

Carrying out water cuts along roads – ongoing. Also, as part of Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance works.

Completed drainage work at Prusselstown Green/Geraldine road.

Carrying out drainage works at Shamrock Lodge.

Road Patching

Carrying out patching along various sections. – ongoing.

Restoration Maintenance and Restoration Improvement patching repairs also.

Street Sweeping

Street sweeping to areas – ongoing.

Bin collection – ongoing.

Install ten new bins along the R417 Monasterevin Rd, Athy.

Community Works

Arranging for preparatory work to facilitate both Tri-Athy and Gordon Bennett Events. This will involve road closures etc.

General Maintenance

New wheelchair friendly seat installation on Monasterevin road, Athy.

General cleaning of depot.

New depot at Gallowshill completed, now decorating and outfitting. Footpaths and surfacing around the building being completed



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Municipal District Restoration Improvement Works – RM Program

All surveying and preparatory works on all Restoration Maintenance for 2023 completed.

Drainage and edging being completed.

Municipal District LPT program of works

Footpaths in William Pearse Terrace have been completed.

Footpaths in Ashville have been completed.

Waiting for contractor to commence work in Kilkea village.

Back entrance to Bleach completed, awaiting contractor to surface.

Back entrance to Dominic's Park completed, awaiting contractor to surface.

April 2023

Drainage works for resurfacing in Kilkea complete.

Welcome to Athy signs erected.

Winter Maintenance schedule completed at the end of April.

The members raised the following points:

- Thanked the Municipal District Office for their ongoing work and acknowledged the workers were out early in the morning, and over the weekend.
- When would the footpaths in Abbeylands be done.
- When would works at the back lane in Bleach be completed.
- Could a temporary surface be put in place on the Carlow Road at the crossover of the new road to facilitate the substantial amount of cyclists from the Tri-Athy event.
- Could the hedge at Bert cross be cut back as there was a recent accident there and it was a health and safety concern.
- Could the grass on the Carlow/Athy road be cut to facilitate an upcoming litter pick.
- Could the hedgegrow be cut back at Blackhall Lane, it is an accident blackspot.
- Could the members attend the new Gallowshill Depot, suggested holding a Municipal District meeting there.



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The District Engineer advised:

- It was now outside of hedgecutting season but health and safety was a priority so any spot deemed dangerous would be cut back as requested.
- The Municipal District office would cut the grass to facilitate the community litter pick.
- An upcoming meeting with Tri-Athy had been arranged and any matters would be addressed at that meeting.
- The depot at Gallowshill hasn't been fully outfitted just yet, the office will liaise with the members to allocate a visit or hold a Municipal District meeting in the depot.

The report was noted.

AY04/0523

Capital Programme 2023-2025

The members considered the Capital Programme 2023-2025.

The District Manager discussed the Capital Programme with the members and advised them it comes on the agenda every May. It was noted that there was significant investment in the Athy Municipal District which supported projects such as the Athy Distributer Road, Emily Square, the Barrow Blueway and social housing projects.

The members raised the following:

- Thanked the district manager and acknowledged that there was significant investment in the Athy Municipal District.
- Noted that the infrastructural spend in the county was welcome as well as supporting public realm and community projects.
- Could the members get a written update on the Barrow drainage and flood relief programme.
- With the recent announcement from Government about scrapping development levies to stimulate more building activity, where would the shortfall in funding be made up and how would it be operated.



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The District Manager said the members will receive an update on the Barrow drainage and flood relief at the June meeting. In relation to the shortfall in funding from development levies, the council will be sending invoices to the Department every month to collect the arrears.

Councillor Dooley advised the members that Anne Graham Chief Executive of the National Transport Authority would be attending the next full council meeting and asked the members to come up with a list of questions for Athy Municipal District.

AY05/0523

Improve road markings on the L4006

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Leigh.
That the council improve the road markings on the L4006 Ballintubbert Road and erect signage to prevent dangerous overtaking.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the L-4006 is the road between Athy and Ballintubbert. The quarry in Ballintubbert generates a large amount of Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic on this road. Road improvement works were carried out here in 1999 and resurfaced in the last few years. The Municipal District Office will review the lining on this road as it has faded. This will indicate where it is safe to overtake and where it is not. This work will be carried out in the near future as part of our Road Lining upgrading works. The road lining work should be a sufficient measure to prevent dangerous overtaking.

The members raised the following:

- An Garda Síochana had been asked to monitor the road.
- Could “no overtaking” signs be erected.
- There was a substantial amount of traffic on the road, could the Municipal District office tie in with Laois County Council on any future upgrade works.



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

AY06/0523

Roadworks on the L4007 from Skerries to Booleigh

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

That the council carry out roadworks on the L4007 from Skerries to Booleigh where the road is uneven and even travelling at the speed limit may cause damage to cars.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the L-4007 between Athy and Booleigh is a bog road and it has distorted in recent months. It is on the list of works scheduled for this year. It is hoped work will commence in the near future.

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

AY07/0523

Footpaths in St Patricks Avenue

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

That the council carry out the replacement of the footpaths in St Patricks Avenue, Athy.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that these footpath repairs will be added to our list of footpath upgrade works this year. There are a number of issues in relation to trees and entrances at this location. Existing trees may have to be removed and replaced with more appropriate trees that do not undermine the footpath. The other issue is with entrances. Athy Municipal District will only replace like with like. So if there is no vehicular entrance we will not make provision for one.



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Councillor Breslin supported the motion and noted the footpaths needed remedial works due to the lifting from trees and asked was there a list of footpaths that were due to be upgraded this year that could be circulated to the Members.

The District Engineer advised the members that the trees planted a number of years ago weren't suitable and they would liaise with the Parks Department to see what type of trees would be suitable to plant and not lift the footpath.

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

AY08/0523

Street works in Narraghmore village

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

That the council give a completion date for the street works in Narraghmore village.

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

The following report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department. The design of the scheme in Narraghmore is now complete and with both the Project Team and Municipal District Office for tender/construction.

An update from the Municipal District Engineer will be provided at the meeting.

The District Engineer informed the members that the previous Director of Services had instructed that due to the Municipal District not having enough resources for this project that it would be referred to the project team or public realm. Winter maintenance programme became a priority and the Municipal District do not have a design facility to complete the design.

Mr M McLoughlin mentioned there had been an internal discussion on this matter but there was no answer as of yet.

The members raised the following:



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- Enquired if the Municipal District office did not have the resources to carry out this work could the Public Realm or Sustainable Transport team take this project on.
- The community coffee shop was very busy especially on the free coffee morning for OAP's every Thursday, the area needed to be made safer.
- The Narraghmore development association had been very patient to date but something needed to be done soon.
- There was a substantial number of bikes outside the coffee shop on weekends and safe measures needed to be put in place.

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

AY09/0523

Parking tickets at motorway junctions

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

That the council refrain from giving parking tickets to cars parking at motorway junctions in this municipal district, in order to car-pool.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department. The Transport Department is responsible for the implementation of the Road Traffic Act and regulations and will issue fixed charged notices where vehicles are parked in an inappropriate or unsafe manner or do not display current motor tax. While the council supports car-pooling, vehicles that park in a manner which undermines the safety for other road users at these locations will result in the issuing of fines.

The members raised the following:

- Councillor Keatley advised that he had received a number of emails from people within the district who had received parking tickets.
- There were between 15-20 cars parked at these junctions daily and some had been broken into. Safe parking facilities needed to be provided.



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- Could the National Transport Authority provide funding for the park and ride facility where these cars could park with proper lighting and cameras. The issue should be brought to the full council meeting in May.
- Could the council give some instruction to people on where they should park.
- A message needed to be put out to motorists to park appropriately.

Mr M McLoughlin advised the members that two parking tickets for non-display of motor tax and two parking tickets for dangerous parking had been given. The council were not ticketing people who park in close proximity to these junctions, once they had parked safely.

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

AY10/0523

Secure parking facilities close to motorways

The members considered the following motion in the name of Councillor Behan
That the council provide secure parking facilities close to motorways in this Municipal District to encourage and facilitate commuters who wish to car pool thus taking more vehicles off the road.

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

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that a design for a Part 8 was prepared for a park and ride facility in 2016 at this location, however no funding stream has been identified for this project or similar projects.

The members raised the following points:

- Could a letter be written to the National Transport Authority or Department of Transportation to request funding.
- Monasterevin residents had raised that some had received parking tickets.
- A park and ride facility would be a good solution and have a positive effect on the environment and is eco-friendly.



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- The grass verge had massive potholes and got very messy during the winter months.
- Bus shelters and bus stops needed to be prioritised in rural areas.
- Rural bus services should be better promoted.
- Suggested more frequent meetings with the National Transport Authority to identify solutions.

Mr M McLoughlin advised the members that Transport Infrastructure Ireland were currently carrying out a survey at these junctions.

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

AY11/0523

Fencing in New Line Grove, Kilmead and Coneyboro, Athy

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

Can the council provide a time scale for when the fencing will be replaced in New Line Grove, Kilmead and Coneyboro, Athy?

A report was received from the Roads, Transport and Public Safety Department that the Municipal District Office have contacted the contractor to carry out the work. If there is no progress in the next few weeks, the Municipal District Office will undertake the required works.

Councillor Breslin asked could these works be expediated as the residents have been very patient to date.

The report was noted.

AY12/0523

Wastelands at Coney Meadows

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



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That the council outline plans for the wastelands at Coney Meadows in Coneyboro Estate.

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

A report was received from Members Services that there is a grant of planning permission reference 20/1274 for this site.

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

AY13/0523

Cost rental properties

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

Can the council provide an update on the number of cost rental properties in the Athy Municipal District and advise how this compares to other municipal districts across the county?

The following report was received from the Housing Department. To date, no cost rental properties have been delivered in the Athy Municipal District.

The following cost rental units have been delivered:

- 56 units in Celbridge-Leixlip in 2021
- 146 units in Kildare-Newbridge in 2022
- 40 units in Naas in 2022

Councillor Leigh stated that it was disappointing not to see any cost rental properties in the Athy Municipal District and noted that they were badly needed.

Councillor Dooley suggested that this matter be raised as a motion at a future meeting and queried if any pilot projects could be run to provide more cost rental properties in Athy Municipal District.

The report was noted.



AY14/0523

CPO of derelict units

The members considered the following question in the name of Councillor Dooley.
Can the council provide an update on the impact made by the CPO process on owners of derelict units in this Municipal District?

A report was received from the Housing Department that the Vacant Homes Team erected several pre-Compulsory Purchase Order notices on vacant properties in Athy town over the last number of weeks and we are pleased with the reaction to date. We have had contact from several property owners, and we continue to work with these owners to try find solutions that would result in the properties being brought back into use.

To date three properties have been successfully compulsorily purchased by Kildare County Council in Athy and files are currently being prepared to commence this process for a further two properties.

Addressing vacancy/dereliction in Athy is a priority for the Vacant Homes Team and we will continue to liaise with owners and pursue all avenues available to address this issue.

The District Manager informed the members that work for the vacant homes team was ramping up especially with the new legislation to support it. Some of these vacant properties would not be suitable for social housing and the Department had advised the council to sell these properties on the open market. The District Manager noted that under Section 183 of the Local Government Act, the members would be required to approve this.

The report was noted.

Councillor Dooley stepped out of the meeting at this point and Councillor Behan took over as chair.

AY15/0523

Giant Hogweed issues in Athy

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



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That the council outline how it plans to address the issues created by Giant Hogweed in this municipal district.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Behan and seconded by Councillor Keatley. A report was received from the Planning Department that Kildare County Council has no role in the control of invasive species within private ownership. However, each year the council applies for funding for invasive species control projects with Himalayan Balsam and American Skunk Cabbage being the two identified projects in 2023. Generally speaking, if any invasive species (including Giant Hogweed) is found on lands in the care of Kildare County Council, the Area Engineer will control same. Furthermore, where planning applications are submitted that relate either in whole or in part to lands that include invasive species, planning conditions may be attached to a grant of planning permission to require developers to undertake a survey for invasive species and to develop a Management Plan with respect to same.

The members raised the following points:

- Giant hogweed was poisonous and could leave people scarred for months.
- Could the council highlight to the public the dangers of Giant Hogweed, to know how to identify and treat it.

Mr S Wallace advised that it was the responsibility of the council to control invasive weeds on council owned land and there was an ongoing consultation from the natural parks and wildlife service to improve the legislation around this.

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

The members decided to move item 16 until Councillor Dooley returned to the meeting.

AY16/0523

Signage at Moate of Ardscull

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



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Can the council confirm when the information signage will be erected at the Moate of Ardsclull?

A report was received from the Planning Department that information signage will be prepared by the Heritage Officer and the Parks Department by the end of Quarter three 2023. Signage will then be erected as soon as possible thereafter.

The report was noted.

AY17/0523

Tidy Towns Grants Allocations 2023

The members considered the Tidy Towns Grants allocations for 2023 for the Athy Municipal District.

Tidy Towns Grants Allocation 2023					
	TT Group (10)	Population Category (from TT report)	Proposed Budget Allocation	Proposed LPT Allocation	Total
Athy MD	Athy	E	€ 10,213	€ 6,472	€ 16,685
	Castledermot	C	€ 1,614	€ 1,023	€ 2,637
	Kilmead	B	€ 638	€ 404	€ 1,042
	Calverstown	B	€ 638	€ 404	€ 1,042
	Ballitore	B	€ 638	€ 404	€ 1,042
	Narraghmore	B	€ 638	€ 404	€ 1,042
	Nurney	B	€ 638	€ 404	€ 1,042
	Kilkea	A	€ 255	€ 162	€ 417
	Moone	A	€ 255	€ 162	€ 417
	Timolin	A	€ 255	€ 162	€ 417
	Total			€ 15,781	€ 10,000

The members raised the following:

- That grants had been generous and well due.
- These grants were of huge benefit to Athy and the surrounding towns.
- Tourism was a priority and the presentation of the towns and villages within the Municipal District is important.



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Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Keatley, seconded by Councillor Leigh and agreed by the members present that the Tidy Towns grant allocations for 2023 for the Athy Municipal District be approved.

AY18/0523

Abandoned Cars/Caravans in Athy

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

That the council outline what powers it has to deal with abandoned cars/caravans in the Athy Municipal District.

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

A report was received from the Environment Department that the abandonment of vehicles is a prosecutable offence under existing legislation i.e. Section 71 of the Waste Management Act 1996, as amended. Section 56 of the Waste Management Act also empowers the council to take measures to prevent or limit environmental pollution caused by the holding of “waste”, which potentially could include abandoned vehicles.

There is potential to address the issue of abandoned vehicles under litter legislation, e.g. if the vehicle is regarded as litter or likely to become unsightly, deleterious etc.

The last registered owner is legally responsible for an abandoned vehicle. After investigation, the council will then follow a procedure of issuing notifications to the registered owner. This may include placing an abandoned vehicles notice on the vehicle.

The registered owner is formally written to and is typically given 21 days in which to remove the vehicle. If it is not removed within the 21 days, the council may arrange to have it removed. There is a cost of removal and storage to the taxpayer in so doing.

The following should be noted:

- Vehicles on public roads which are causing an obstruction, or a road safety hazard, should be reported to the Gardai.
- While a vehicle with no tax or insurance may be an indicator that a vehicle is abandoned, the issue of no tax or insurance on a vehicle on a public road does not automatically deem a vehicle abandoned. Having no tax or insurance on a public road is a matter for the Gardai and does not fall under the remit of Kildare County Council.



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- Vehicles in estates which are owned by persons resident in the estate will not be deemed abandoned.
- Vehicles on private lands, private car parks or in estates not taken in charge by the County Council will not be deemed abandoned.
- Broken down vehicles, poorly parked vehicles or vehicles involved in residential parking disputes are not considered abandoned.

Unwanted vehicles can be disposed free-of-charge at an Authorised Treatment Facility (ATF). There are a number of these facilities within the county.

It should also be noted that An Garda Síochána has powers in this area under Road Traffic legislation.

Councillor Dooley returned to the meeting and resumed chair.

The members raised the following points:

- Abandoned cars had been a massive issue in the last number of years within housing estates in the Municipal District. One estate alone had three abandoned vehicles outside houses.
- Residents associations had raised this issue to the members.
- How could a broken down vehicle left in one spot for a substantial amount of time not be considered abandoned.
- Could this matter be brought to Joint Policing Committee and Environment Strategic Policy Committee.

Mr Kavanagh advised that it would depend on what was considered litter and what was considered abandoned. If the car was outside someone's private residence then it was a matter for An Garda Síochána. It could also be difficult to prove how long a car had not been moved for. It was agreed that they would speak with Councillor Breslin offline.

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



AY19/0523

Shop Front Scheme

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

Can the council outline its plans to promote the “Shop Front Scheme” to businesses in the Athy Municipal District that may not be aware of the grant scheme.

A report was received from the Local Enterprise Office that details of the Shop Front grant Scheme 2023 have been widely published across the County via the following communication channels:

Information of the 2023 Scheme was circulated to all Elected Members in each of the Chief Executive reports and progress to date.

Launch of the 2023 scheme was put into all papers via press release and widely circulated on social media channels and details linked to our website.

Two online briefings via webinars were held, one during the day and one in the evening for all businesses.

A door to door leaflet drop was conducted in all major towns including Athy by the economic team.

With particular reference to Athy, as a recipient of the €100k street scape grant all businesses within the town’s main streets have been extensively consulted both on the street scape funding and the shop front grant scheme.

We will continue to reach out and activate the business support measures available to all businesses.

Councillor Dooley asked the members to continuously remind businesses who could avail of this scheme and noted the improvements could be seen on many business premises around the town who had previously availed of the grant. He thanked Councillor Leigh for his work on the Streetscape Scheme and hoped this money would be utilized in the next few weeks.

The report was noted.



AY20/0523

Sports pitches on Fortbarrington Road

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

Can the council give a timeframe for the proposed sports pitches complex on Fortbarrington Road?

A report was received from the Parks Department that the parks team indicated in the works programme presented to the members in March that we hope to commence preparing a masterplan for these lands at the end of this year subject to the completion of the other works commitments ahead of it on this year's programme. This will likely take a year to complete. Development of the site will not be possible until planning is approved for the masterplan, detail design of the elements within the plan are finished and completion of the housing proposed for the adjacent site which is scheduled for 2026. Additionally, finance will need to be identified to develop any proposals arising from the masterplan. Councillor Leigh mentioned that he was disappointed at this report as Athy is crying out for pitches and the GAA has reached capacity, the soccer teams have had to amalgamate. The council need to find a funding stream fast, could they consider buying the pitches adjacent to the show grounds.

The report was noted.

The meeting concluded.