

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of East Cork Municipal District Held on 3rd May, 2016 at 2.00 p.m. at the Mall House, Youghal.

I LATHAIR: Cathaoirleach Michael Hegarty presided.
Cllrs. O' Sullivan, McCarthy, Linehan Foley, Collins & Twomey.

Ag Freastal: Mr. Maurice Manning, S/Director of Services
Mr. Dave Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Christy Ring, Executive Engineer
Mr. Paul Murray, Executive Engineer.
Mr. Joe McCarthy, East Cork Municipal District Officer
Mrs. Helen Mulcahy, (Youghal Office)
Mrs. Geraldine O' Connell (Youghal Office)

1. Minutes of Meeting Held on 7th March, 2016.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 7th March, 2016 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Linehan Foley, seconded by Cllr. Hegarty and unanimously adopted by the Members.

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations:

2.1 Hearing of Deputation from Knockadoon Enhancement Project.

Mr. Billy Harrington Chairperson and Ms. Siobhan Shanahan, Secretary gave the following report to the Members in relation to the Knockadoon Enhancement Project:

“Knockadoon Enhancement Project is a voluntary group whose members are drawn and elected from the local community and whose purpose is to enhance and develop our local Knockadoon area for the enjoyment and pleasure of locals and visitors.

The purpose of our deputation is to represent our community by expressing our grave concern at the condition of the Knockadoon-Ballymacoda Road – the L3816. Our community lives on a peninsula and are entirely dependent of this road for access to services. The issue of the roads was raised at an open community meeting in November 2015 after which we wrote to the County Council Office, TDS and Councillors, we had another large public meeting in February of this year attended by some of those present here and the level of concern and anger at the condition of our road was extensive.

The reasons for our concerns are multiple and include the safety of our children who use the road to travel to school daily and to cycle and walk for recreation. There are buses travelling on the road four times per day. There are parts of the road where it is impossible for a bus/lorry and in some places a bus/car to pass safely without risking hazardous ditches and holes.

Who uses this road besides the community, their families and children:-

- We have 2,500 children and their families coming to the Dominican Camp every summer – these students walk and cycle the local roads.
- Several local, county and national sports clubs use the facilities at Knockadoon during the year for training purposes. Along with sports clubs, music, science and religious groups also use the camp throughout the year and now that the chapel has been officially consecrated as a public oratory we expect volume of traffic to increase.
- Sonas our local caravan park has 82 caravans and is frequented by the caravan owners and campervans during the tourist season.
- There are a considerable number of local businesses using heavy goods vehicles, (The Oyster Company, BH Forklift Hire, O’ Driscoll Kitchens).
- We have noticed a huge increase in fishing tourists and walking clubs showing an interest in the amenities accessible at Knockadoon.

We have a real fear that the current condition of the road will result in a fatal accident in the near future. The poor condition of the road and the hazardous conditions it presents for drivers and walkers is a major health and safety concern.

A significant proportion of the 5km route suffers from:

- Surface raveling and particularly edge raveling.
- Some bleeding.
- Surface distortion.
- Alligator cracking.
- Edge cracking and break up.
- Potholes and patching.
- Poor to defective drainage and surface water pooling.

Based on the prevalence of defects and the severity of these defects in some places we are of the opinion that the road should have a very low visual rating score. Suggesting that the road should be recommended for a full surface restoration.

We are aware that the Knockadoon-Upper Garryvoe road has been included in the road maintenance programme for this year which we believe involves resealing and skid resistance improvements.

It is appreciated that some patching has been done and we understand the resource and financial restraints placed on the Cork County Council at the moment, nonetheless we are of the view that complete surface restoration is required for practically all of the route with particular attention paid to the edging and that some sections require either overlay or other strengthening”.

The Members stated that they are aware of the activities which take place in Knockadoon and reiterated that it was crucial that this section of road is addressed. The Members advised the deputation to make a case for funding for this road at higher government level.

The Mayor thanked the deputation for their presentation and informed them that a report will be made available to the Members and they will then proceed to follow up on same.

2.2 Town Development Fund:

Mr. Joe McCarthy, Municipal District Officer circulated the following report in relation to the Cork County Council Town Development Fund, East Cork Municipal District to the Members:

“1. Purpose:

The Chief Executive issued a document in January 2015 in relation to the Town Development Fund. Inter alia, the document states that “the overriding purpose of the Town Development Fund is to provide a specific level of funding to Municipal Districts for the purpose of supporting initiatives which are targeted at assisting with the economic development of the main towns within the Municipal Districts”.

2. Scope:

The scope for the fund includes:-

2.1 Enhancements to the public realm and infrastructural fabric of the core commercial districts of towns,

2.2 Catalyst funding to support local retail/business/commerce associations in developing matters such as town profiles, branding and marketing initiatives, retail promotional footfall events, etc.

2.3 Catalyst funding to support the development of Town Partnership type structures in towns which would bring an overarching level of co-ordination of activity across the many groupings that exist in many towns, all of whom individually work to enhance a towns offering but who might benefit from a more co-ordinated approach to their involvement together and in their interaction with the Council and its MD’s.

2.4 Funding to support existing community groups who work towards town enhancement who have the capacity to enter into community contracts for the further expansion of their community work.

2.5 Funding to support the development of existing local festivals in towns.

2.6 Funding to support the development of the Council’s Arts Programme into the main towns in particular of the Municipal Districts, thus enhancing the contribution of the Arts in their role in promoting economic development of towns.

2.7 Funding to support schemes such as incentivised painting schemes, schemes to support initiatives at reducing/removing dereliction in town centres and the promotion of public arts schemes in towns”.

In 2015 the Members agreed that most, if not all, of the Town Development Fund be directed to Youghal, the primary considerations being that the former Midleton Town Council had been fortunate in having significant funding to invest in meeting relevant objectives for the town centre in Midleton, in that improving the economic potential of the town centre in the other main town of Youghal would benefit the Municipal District and the progress made by Youghal over the past several years, in relation to enhancements to heritage, tourism and the public realm, the development of partnership through the Youghal Socio Economic Development Group and Enterprise Youghal and the focus on economic development through heritage and tourism and their promotion through town profiling, branding and marketing, should be fully supported by the Municipal District. It is recommended that this strategy be adopted again for 2016.

Having regard to the foregoing the following programme of interventions is presented for the members consideration and approval:-

1. Incentivised Painting Scheme.

Such a scheme is specifically mentioned in the document issued by the Chief Executive. The former Youghal Town Council ran such a scheme successfully in the recent past and the Municipal District continued the scheme in 2015. There is evidence that running the scheme again would likely attract more interest and engagement and would significantly reduce/remove dereliction and enhance the attractiveness of the town centre. The previous schemes provided for a limited pallet consistent with the heritage identity and character of Youghal and this scheme would contain this requirement. It is suggested that the Members consider providing funding of €18,000 for the new painting scheme in 2016.

2. Clock Gate

The Clock Gate is an iconic and primary element of the heritage infrastructure of Youghal. The Members have had impressive and detailed reports submitted to them advising of the significant grant funding achieved and of the importance of the Clock Gate to the heritage offering available in Youghal. The benefit of the significant funding invested in the Clock Gate will, obviously not materialise until the project is completed. In order to maintain progress, and perhaps, even accelerate progress to completion so that the Clock Gate may contribute to economic activity in the town centre, it is recommended that the Members consider providing funding of €10,000 towards this project.

3. The Raleigh Quarter.

The Raleigh Quarter was officially re-launched in 2015 and will be an important addition to the heritage identity and heritage offer of Youghal in the context of “Irelands Ancient East”. Work needs to be done to properly promote and market the Raleigh Quarter and it is recommended that an initial budget of €2,000 be provided in 2016 for this purpose.

4. Signage Scheme.

In the document issued by the Chief Executive reference is made to the retail survey carried out by consultants in 12 of the towns in the County, including Youghal. One of the deficiencies identified in the retail survey report attributable to all 12 towns was the lack of appropriate signage. Youghal has provided attractive and informative signage in the recent past, relating to areas within the town centre and in particular providing directions to heritage areas and structures and providing information regarding heritage structures in addition to identifying infrastructure such as public car parks. This has proved to be beneficial and needs to be expanded to strengthen town profile, identity, branding, marketing and promotion objectives. It is recommended that the Members consider providing funding of €5,000 to encourage the adoption and application of improved signage on business premises in the town centre, consistent with the heritage palette and profile advocated in the Heritage Plan and to progress the removal of inappropriate and garish modern signage from the premises.

5. Youghal Socio-Economic Development Group.

The Youghal Socio Economic Development Group was established through RAPID (Revitalise Areas by Planning Investment and Development) in 2007 and has proved itself as a model of Town Partnership and as a very efficient and effective agency in securing grants and investment in developing tourism in Youghal. YSEDG had the support of the former Youghal Town Council and received support from Cork County Council, SECAD, the Local Enterprise Office, Enterprise Ireland and Failte Ireland.

The Members are aware of the impressive projects with which YSEDG is associated, such as the Clock Gate, the Town Walls, St. Mary's Collegiate Church, the Convent Gardens and the Raleigh Quarter. The Members are also aware of their proposal to expand the benefit of their experience and expertise into the wider Municipal District and of how valuable that experience and expertise might be.

It is recommended that the Members consider providing funding of €20,000 to YSEDG to support their work during 2016.

6. Yew Wood Venues.

Yew Wood Venues are responsible for promoting and marketing the arts (music, exhibitions, plays, film etc.) through the wonderful venues of St. Mary's Collegiate Church and the Mall Arts Centre, this also showcases Youghal's heritage. Clearly this work is consistent with the promotion of Public Arts as referred to by the Chief Executive.

It is recommended that the Members consider providing a sum of €3,000 to fund the activities of Yew Woods Venues in promoting and marketing the Arts.

7. Enhancement of the Public Realm.

The importance and effectiveness of enhancing the public realm in order to support and improve the retail function in town centres has been referred to in the document issued by the Chief Executive and in the retail survey report made by consultants.

Excellent examples of such work are Nealons Quay, the Raleigh Quarter and Barry's Lane in the vicinity of the Clock Gate and the Courthouse. Such works have an immediate beneficial effect and enhance the setting of heritage buildings and areas.

In order to extend the enhancement of the public realm generally in the town centre it is recommended that the Members consider providing funding of €60,000 to include areas such as the Gaol Steps, Barry's Lane, Kent Street and Market Dock.

8. Presentation of Vacant Premises.

Both the Incentivised Painting Scheme and the Signage Scheme may be availed of to reduce dereliction and to improve the appearance and attractiveness of the general environment of the town. It is hoped that those schemes will encourage owners of vacant premises to have them decorated, which would of course, improve the prospect of letting the premises. It is recommended that an additional €2,000 be provided to contribute towards the cost of the installation of attractive and informative displays in the windows of vacant commercial properties which would eliminate the perception of abandonment to which some such properties can give rise. Imaginative intervention can achieve attractive improvements at modest cost.

9. Queen of the Sea Festival.

For many years the importance of local festivals in attracting visitors to towns has been recognised and promoted and the provision of funding to support the development of existing local festivals in towns is referred to in the document issued by the Chief Executive. Youghal has several festivals organised each year, Moby Dick, Mackerel, Medieval, Spooktacular and the Queen of the Sea.

It is recommended that the Members consider funding of €2,000 to support the development of the Queen of the Sea Festival in 2016.

We are satisfied that the proposals set out in the foregoing are fully consistent with the purpose and scope of the Town Development Fund as set out in the document issued by the Chief Executive and would deliver strong support to encourage economic development in the town centre”.

Cllr. McCarthy stated that while she accepts the fact that a lot significant funding was provided for the town of Midleton before the abolition of the Town Councils she strongly opposes the fact that no funding has been assigned to Midleton and stated how it is very important to recognise both towns. Cllr. McCarthy informed the Members that she cannot sign off on the current recommendations.

Cllr. O' Sullivan stated that there is an onus on the Members as elected representatives not to be parochial and stated that money needs to be spent where money is needed. Cllr. O' Sullivan informed the Members that funding is needed in Youghal as the town centre has been annihilated over the past 10 years.

Cllr. Linehan Foley concurred with Councillor O' Sullivan and stated that Youghal has been decimated with unemployment and depends solely on tourism. Cllr. Linehan Foley stated that funding needs to be invested in the Clock Gate to showcase the building.

Cllr. Twomey stated that she supported Cllr. McCarthy.

Cllr. Hegarty proposed that the matter be deferred to the next meeting and suggested that the Members meet in committee to discuss same. The Members were in full agreement with this proposal.

2.3 Pay Parking Dividend.

Mr. Joe McCarthy circulated the following report on Pay Parking Dividend to the Members:

“The Chief Executive has advised of funding through the Pay Parking Dividend for 2016. In 2015 the initial allocation provided €25,000 for Youghal and the Members approved expenditure of this amount to repair and refurbish the playground at Blackwater Heights. A similar initial allocation of €25,000 has been made for 2016 and a final distribution of the remaining dividend from 2015 allocates an additional €10,000 to Youghal giving a total of €35,000 to be now approved for spending.

It is recommended that this funding be approved for the following works:

1. Repair and refurbishment of the Millennium Park Playground.

As with Blackwater Heights Playground to which funding was allocated in 2015, the Millennium Park Playground also requires attention and it is recommended that €12,000 be allocated for repair and refurbishment works in this playground in 2016.

2. Upgrade of Paving in O' Rahilly Street.

In considering and approving the footpaths works programme in March it was suggested that an allocation under the Town Development Fund or other fund might be made to upgrade the proposed replacement footpaths on O' Rahilly Street, Youghal, from concrete to limestone. This would better integrate O' Rahilly Street, and by association Main Street, with the public realm enhancement works already carried out and proposed in the Market Square and the quays areas. In order to achieve this upgrade it is recommended that additional funding of €13,000 be provided from the balance of funding available under the Pay Parking Dividend in 2016.

3. Coach Parking Facility at Raheen Road.

Facilitation of parking for coaches has been raised on several occasions. The provision and identification of coach parking areas is necessary in order to encourage visits to heritage sites. It is recommended that €10,000 be approved for the provision of coach parking facilities on Raheen Road, which will benefit and encourage visits to both the Town Walls and St. Mary's Collegiate Church and Graveyard.

The playground and paving projects would deliver high visibility and quality improvements to the general environment and attractiveness of the town".

On the proposal of Cllr. Linehan Foley which was seconded by Cllr. Hegarty the members unanimously approved the allocation and expenditure of the Pay Parking Dividend as recommended in the report.

2.4 Grants 2016.

On the proposal of Cllr. O' Sullivan which was seconded by Cllr. Linehan Foley, the Members unanimously approved the allocation of grants under Community Grants Schemes for 2016 as set out in the schedules circulated to the Members.

3. Business Prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District Members for transaction at Meeting.

None.

4. Other Business set forth in the Notice convening the Meeting.

None.

5. Notices of Motions.

5.1.1 Cllr. Susan McCarthy, received on 30th March, 2016.

"That the new street lighting be switched on, on the R632 Ladysbridge to Castlemartyr road from Bridgetown Estate to Castlemartyr village".

The Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. Dave Clarke informed the members that he is awaiting a response from Dermot Kelleher, Public Lighting Administrator who is presently on leave but understood that all works were completed and awaiting connection by ESB Networks.

5.1.2 Cllr. Susan McCarthy, received on 30th March, 2016.

"Council report on works to pillar at Cotswolds Estate".

Cllr. Collins seconded this motion.

Mr. Dave Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer informed the Members that these works were to take place after Christmas but had to be deferred due to the flooding crisis. Mr. Clarke informed the Members that a contractor has been appointed to carry out these works which should commence shortly.

5.1.3 Cllr. Susan McCarthy, received on 30th March, 2016.

“That the banners that have been placed on the railings by the Owenacurra River and the bridge to Lidl and McDonalds be removed. Residents and shoppers alike have complained that they are an eyesore”.

Mr. Joe McCarthy, Municipal District Officer agreed to refer this matter to the Planning Enforcement Section to investigate.

Mr. Dave Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer suggested the Members that shoppers should communicate back to the advertisers and bring this matter to their attention.

5.1.4 Cllr. Susan McCarthy, received on 30th March, 2016.

“Can we please get a timeline for proposed resurfacing and traffic management works at

- Killeagh Main Street
- Section of N25 Castlemartyr to Killeagh Road at east end of Castlemartyr village.
- Traffic Management works to be carried out at CBS Primary and Secondary Schools, Rosary Place, scheduled to be completed this year”.

Cllr. Linehan Foley informed the Members that she had received an e-mail informing her that the TII was meeting shortly with the Board of Management of Killeagh National School with specific starting dates for these works

Mr. Joe McCarthy, Municipal District Officer stated that he would request an update from the TII in relation to the works at Killeagh and Castlemartyr.

Mr. Dave Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer informed the Members that the Cork County Council Road Safety Officer visited the sites at the CBS Primary and Secondary Schools and carried out a survey in relation to traffic calming measures at these locations. Mr. Clarke informed the Members that draft proposals would be brought before the management of both schools for the preparation of the Part VIII Process and stated that works should commence in the Autumn.

5.1.5 Cllr. Noel Collins, received on 7th April, 2016.

“That the footpaths, in the interest of pedestrian safety, be repaired from no. 65 Main Street, Midleton, upwards, where exist unlevel and broken areas including the need also, to resurface the surrounds of water meters and stop cocks”.

Mr. Dave Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer informed the Members that the Midleton Town Centre Enhancement Plan needs to be advanced and this would provide new footpaths in the area mentioned.

In relation to the surrounds of the water meters and stop cocks the Engineer informed the Members that while these were a matter for Irish Water he would inspect the localized defects.

5.1.6 Cllr. Noel Collins, received on 7th April, 2016.

“That Council report when the flood defences development will be completed in Midleton town, with emphasis on flooding zone, at entrance to Riverside Park, Bailick Road, Midleton”.

Mr. Maurice Manning, S/Director of Services informed the Members that they will be aware that Cork County Council proposes to manage a flood relief scheme on behalf of the OPW and stated that a brief is presently being prepared with the appointment of a consultant expected to go to tender in the next two to three weeks.

5.1.7 Cllr. Noel Collins, received on 7th April, 2016.

“That Council, if funding for recreational works is available, give consideration to the implementation of improvements to the grounds of Aras Cuimhne an Phiarsaigh to include a water fountain, on existing garden, fronting main entrance door”.

Mr. Joe McCarthy, Municipal District Officer informed the Members the he was not in favour of the provision of a water fountain at this location as he considered them as notorious as targets for vandalism and stated that this area is quite isolated and subject to considerate unacceptable behaviour.

Cllr. Hegarty concurred with Cllr. Collins motion and stated something needs to be done as the area in question has become unsightly and neglected.

Cllr. McCarthy seconded this motion and requested that the area be made more attractive and inviting to the public.

Cllr. Twomey supported this motion and stated that the area is a hub for anti-social behaviour and informed the Members that a wooden bridge which has been badly damaged at this location is in need of repair.

The Municipal District Officer agreed to investigate this matter.

The Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. Dave Clark informed the Members that a number of clean ups and grass cutting has taken place here over the past two years and stated any major works to take place here could be considered under future programmes.

5.1.8 Cllr. Noel Collins, received on 7th April, 2016.

“As discussed by the Cloyne District Community Council Ltd., Council report on development proposals with Council for Cloyne town, to include the clearance of derelict sites, to make way for community and recreational facilities plus improvements to the grounds and renowned tower thus providing a major historic tourist attraction, in this very historic town in East Cork. All files with Council for report”.

Mr. Dave Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer informed the Members that considerable money has been spent in Cloyne in the past number of years.

Cllr. Hegarty asked how much funding has been drawn down for footpath and flood repairs.

The Senior Executive Engineer informed the Members that Cork County Council had been allocated €11m county wide in respect of the December/January storm damage and stated that the roads in East Cork had suffered a considerable further amount of damage during the recent floods which took place on 26th February last.

Cllr. Hegarty raised the issue of easterly storm which took place on April 10th last and asked if an assessment could take place on coastal damage resulting from this storm.

The Senior Executive Engineers informed the Members that there was no direct funding available for these works but suggested the Members engage with the Coastal Management Unit.

Mr. Maurice Manning, S/Director of Services informed the Members that the Coastal Management unit are aware of this damage and stated that Garryvoe is being investigated with a view to having some works done.

In relation to the clearance of derelict sites Mr. Manning informed the Members that this is the responsibility of the property owner and advised the Members that any derelict or unsightly property should be brought to the attention of the Council for inclusion on the Derelict Site Register.

5.1.9 Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley, received on 11th April, 2016.

“Any update on safety measures for crossing at Holy Family Church Youghal, due to the amount of elderly people and young people living in this area”.

The Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. Dave Clarke agreed to investigate this matter.

5.1.10 Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley, received on 11th April, 2016.

“Asking our engineer to have a look at a ramp on footpath from Oakvale bungalows to Holy Family Church, as residents from the bungalows are unable to use footpaths with wheelchairs”.

Cllr. Linehan Foley informed the Members that many residents in Oakvale which is part of St. Raphael’s Centre are wheelchair bound.

Mr. Paul Murray, Executive Engineer agreed to investigate this motion with a view for the provision of a dropped kerb.

5.1.11 Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley, received on 11th April, 2016.

“Calling on East Cork Municipal to look at Knockane Cross as a matter of urgency as it is highly dangerous”.

Cllrs. McCarthy and Twomey supported this motion.

Cllr. Hegarty informed the Members that advance warning signs had been removed from this area also.

Mr. Dave Clarke, Senior Executive Engineer informed the Members that he would raise this motion through the National Roads Design Office for the attention of the TII.

5.1.12 Cllr. Danielle Twomey, received on 27th April, 2016.

“That this Municipal Council calls for a policy to be put in place that the Irish tri-colour flag be flown at every Municipal District Office on Easter Sunday every year at full mast”.

Cllr. Collins seconded this motion.

Mr. Maurice Manning, S/Director of Services informed the Members that this should be referred to the Corporate Policy Group, Cork County Council.

6. Correspondence.

No correspondence was received.

7. Any Other Business.

1. Cllr. Linehan Foley circulated a petition from the residents of Meadow Valley Residents regarding a safety measure at the estate and requested a report on same for the next meeting

2. Cllr. Linehan Foley raised the issue of unfinished railings at Na Papoga Estate, Youghal which need to be fenced off for Health and Safety reasons. Mr. Paul Murray, Executive Engineer agreed to investigate same.

3. Cllr. McCarthy raised the issue of coastal erosion at Ballybrannigan Beach which has resulted in the closure of the beach and requested that some sort of contingency funding be sought in order to carry out the necessary repairs at this location.

Cllr. Hegarty fully supported Cllr. McCarthy on this item and stated that 2 loads of concrete would suffice to re-open the slipway to the much used beach.

The Members agreed that the next meeting of the Municipal District Council take place on June, 7th at 2.30 pm. at the Midleton Office.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.