

***Minutes of January Meeting of Mullingar Area Committee, held at 2.00pm on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2008 in the Council Chambers, County Buildings, Mullingar.***

- Presiding** : Cllr.M.Dollard, Cathaoirleach.
- Members Present** : Cllrs.Penrose, McCarthy, Troy, Collins, Glynn, Bourke, Cornally, Cooney.
- Apologies** : Cllr. McLoughlin
- Officers Present** : Mr.G.Lambden, Area Director;  
Dr.P.McCool, Area Engineer;  
Mr.E.Brennan, Administrative Officer,  
Ms.C.Byrne, Staff Officer.
- In Attendance** : Mr.Olly Gallagher, Senior Services Supervisor  
Mr.Andrew Heduvan, Technician Grade II

**Item 1: Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr.Glynn, seconded by Cllr.Penrose, the minutes of November Area Meeting held at 2.00pm on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2007, were unanimously approved.

**Matters arising:**

Cllr.Troy enquired if a letter had issued to the Department regarding the introduction of legislation to make it necessary for pedestrians to wear high-visibility jackets at all times. George Lambden advised that a letter had been sent and the Council was awaiting a reply.

**Votes of Sympathy:**

Votes of Sympathy were proposed in respect of the following:-

- To the wife and family of the late Seamus Kenny, Ballinea;
- To the family of the late Jim Gannon, Castletown-Geoghegan;
- To the family of the late Joe Dolan, Mullingar;
- To Cllr.McCarthy on the recent death of his brother in law in London.

**Votes of Congratulations:**

Votes of Congratulations were proposed in respect of the following:-

- To Martin Fagan and Mullingar Harriers Athletic Club on Martin's qualification for the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

**Item 2: Replies to Questions**

The Replies to Questions were noted and supplementary questions answered.

**Item 3: Part VIII Planning commencement - Rathconnell**

- (a) On the proposal of Cllr.McCarthy, seconded by Cllr.Bourke, it was unanimously agreed to commence the planning process under Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000 for the realignment of the N52 route between Rathconnell and Macetown, Mullingar.
- (b) On the proposal of Cllr.Cooney, seconded by Cllr.Troy, it was unanimously agreed to commence the planning process under Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000 for the commencement of works in Multyfarnham under the Village Enhancement Programme.

**Item 4: Review of completed works 2007**

Mr.Paul McCool presented a slide show outlining some of the works carried out in the Mullingar Area during 2007, e.g. footpaths, roadworks, sewerage works, disability works etc.

The Members complimented the Area Engineer and the Area Director and staff of the Mullingar Area on the excellent works carried out during 2007.

Cllr.Collins asked if a copy of the photographs of completed works could be circulated to the members of Mullingar Town Council also and this was agreed.

At this stage the Members adjourned for a tea break.

**Resumption:**

At this stage, the Cathaoirleach agreed to take a supplementary Agenda item in relation to the taking in charge of housing estates. Pat Keating from the Legal and Enforcement Section was in attendance for this item.

Mr.Keating advised the Members that Carra Vale and Green Park Meadows are now ready to be taken in charge by Westmeath County Council. He further stated that Pettiswood Manor, Ardmore Close, College Hill and Heathfield Park and Close would be ready to go before the Members of the County Council at their February Meeting.

Cllr.Glynn enquired if the Planning Enforcement Section has been in contact with the residents of College Hill, particularly in relation to a problem with an ESB pylon, as well as drainage problems in that estate. Mr.Keating advised that he would be meeting again with the residents before bringing a report back to the full Council at their meeting in February.

On the proposal of Cllr.Penrose, seconded by Cllr.McCarthy, it was agreed that Carra Vale and Greenpark Meadows would be recommended to the full Council for taking in charge. It was further agreed that the estates of Pettitswood Manor and Ardmore Close, College Hill and Heathfield Park and Close would be put before the Council Meeting in February and if the Council Members agree, that these estates also be taken in charge in March, 2008.

## **Item 5: Mullingar Area Budget 2008**

George Lambden went through the report on the 2008 Budget for the Members.

Referring to the proceeds from paid parking, he advised Members that the sum of €788,617 is available to spend on works in the Mullingar Area in 2008 and a list of proposed works was in front of Members for approval.

After Mr.Lambden had outlined each part of the report for Members, the Members asked the following questions.

Cllr.Penrose proposed that the sum of €25,000 set aside for traffic calming measures in housing estates should be increased to €50,000.

George Lambden advised Members that should they wish to provide an additional €25,000 for traffic calming measures, it would have to be taken away from another item in the report and this was noted. Cllr.Penrose then did not proceed any further with this proposal.

Cllr.Penrose enquired why funding was not included for the upgrading of the diving board area at Lough Owel. Mr.Lambden stated that the works needed at Lough Owel will cost in the region of €500,000 and a study has been commissioned in relation to necessary works at all lakeshore areas throughout Westmeath. He stated that this report might identify a process for providing funding for the works at Lough Owel.

Mr.Paul McCool then went through the Appendix to the report for the benefit of the Members, outlining the various locations for road restoration, road surfacing, footpaths etc. He pointed out that no allocation was made by the Department in 2007 for cul-de-sacs and while he has included some cul-de-sac roads for works in the current year, he stated that the funding for these works will come from the Council's own resources.

Cllr.Cornally asked if Grange Village could be included under Local Road Surface Dressing and it was agreed that this could be considered under cul-de-sac funding.

On the proposal of Cllr.Bourke, seconded by Cllr.Cornally, the Budget for the Mullingar Area for 2008, as presented to the Members, was adopted without any amendments.

## **Item 6: Meetings in 2008**

The list of proposed dates for meetings of the Mullingar Area Committee had been circulated to Members, with the following being the selected dates:-

Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 at 2pm in the County Buildings, Mullingar  
Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 at 2pm in the County Buildings, Mullingar  
Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2008 at 2pm in the County Buildings, Mullingar  
Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2008 at 2pm in the County Buildings, Mullingar  
Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at 2pm in the County Buildings, Mullingar.

On the proposal of Cllr.Glynn, seconded by Cllr.Penrose, the above dates were unanimously agreed.

**Item 7: Correspondence**

Letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2007 from SKS regarding the provision of CCTV in Mullingar Town was noted by the Members.

**Item 8: Notices of Motion**

**8.1 Cllr.M.Dollard:** That in the context of the provision of a new Civic Centre and refurbishment of the present Council Buildings, that a room would be set aside for the members of the Press.

**Reply:**

**The Civic Offices project is progressing on schedule for an official opening of the new facility by 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2009 (in time for the Local Elections).**

**The following modifications are to be encompassed in this programme of work for the upgrading of the existing County Buildings:-**

- **Re-design of Council Chamber to incorporate good quality ICT and Audio Visual facilities;**
- **Installation of lift to facilitate disabled access;**
- **New male and female toilets;**
- **3 No.Party Meeting Rooms;**
- **New Cathaoirleach's Office;**
- **Press room with communication links;**
- **Refurbishment/renovation of all public spaces.**

**8.2 Cllr.M.Dollard:** That appropriate funding would be put in place in the context of the 2008 Budget Estimates in order to provide traffic calming measures in both Newpark Court, Kinnegad and Millview, Milltownpass.

**Reply:**

**There are no proposals to provide traffic calming measures at these locations in 2008.**

**8.3 Cllr.M.Dollard:** In the context of improved pedestrian safety, that the Council would outline the position in relation to footpath provision/ improvement between the "Hill" public house and the old forge at Rathwire.

**Reply:**

**This footpath is included in the 2008 Roads Estimates.**

**8.4 Cllr.M.Dollard:** In the context of provision of playgrounds for children, that the Council would advise if the question of such a facility has been considered for the Killucan/Rathwire area.

**Reply:**

**In 2008, the Council is seeking to provide an additional playground facility in each Electoral Area in the county in accordance with the adopted policy in the Playground Provision Scheme. Having due regard to population increases and the hierarchy of settlements in the county, playground provision in Rochfortbridge, Delvin, Glasson and Mullingar Town Park is being proposed this year. Playground provision in these areas will be dependent on land availability in public or community ownership, site suitability, the requirement for public consultation and the submission of proposals for the agreement of the Elected Members of each Area Committee of the Council.**

**The Playground Provision Scheme also allows for the Council to assist, subject to funding availability, community groups who can provide funding and land themselves towards progressing community-led playground facilities. Grant funding for Community Groups submitting projects for consideration will be on the basis of a maximum 50% grant funding of appropriate projects, up to a maximum grant allocation of €50,000. The Community Group themselves must raise at least 25% of the funding requirement for the playground proposal.**

**8.5 Cllr.K.Glynn:** To call on Westmeath County Council to improve pedestrian safety in the vicinity of Nugents' Corner in the form of pedestrian/zebra crossings, as this crossroad is a hazard to both young and old pedestrians.

**Reply:**

**It is proposed in 2008 that works be carried out at Nugents Corner to improve access for the disabled, subject to Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government providing the necessary funding for disability access works.**

**8.6 Cllr.K.Glynn:** To call on Westmeath County Council to carry out a thorough resurfacing programme at Tudenham, Mullingar, as this road is in a terrible condition in many parts.

**Reply:**

**The carpark at Tudenham was fully resurfaced in 2007. Potholes on the access road will be repaired as soon as possible.**

**8.7 Cllr.K.Glynn:** To call on Westmeath County Council to immediately prioritise the entrance to Ardilaun Green/Heights for safety measures, firstly to ensure residents can enter and exit safely and also this will be the final instalment which will ensure excessive speed is kept to a minimum.

**Reply:**

**As advised at the Mullingar Area Meeting held in September, 2007, there are no plans or funding to provide a roundabout on the Western By-Pass to cater for this private development.**

**8.8 Cllr.K.Glynn:** To call on Westmeath County Council to resurface the Rathaspic Road in Rathowen, which is in poor condition.

**Reply:**

**This relates to Local Road No.5920 which is included for restoration in 2008.**

**8.9 Cllr.J.Penrose:** That Westmeath County Council would repair and resurface the road leading into Higgins' at Williamstown, Ballynacargy, as parts of this road are in a very bad condition.

**Reply:**

**This relates to local cul-de-sac road No.59111. Potholes will be patched on this road as soon as possible.**

**8.10 Cllr.J.Penrose:** That Westmeath County Council would dig out the area where the bottle banks are located in Multyfarnham and resurface this area with tarmacadam, as every time a vehicle stops at this location to use the bottle bank, the grass verge gets ploughed up.

**Reply:**

**Remedial works will be carried out at this location as soon as possible.**

**8.11 Cllr.J.Penrose:** That Westmeath County Council would carry out safety works on the bad bend at Ballyedward, as this is causing great concern to users of this road and there has been a recent bad accident in this location.

**Reply:**

**This relates to Local Road No.5803. This location will be examined and if possible, minor works carried out to provide additional road width.**

**8.12 Cllr.J.Penrose:** That Westmeath County Council would carry out restoration works on the road leading into Fulmorth, Multyfarnham, as this road is in a very bad state of repair.

**Reply:**

**This relates to local cul-de-sac road No.18205 which is included for surface dressing in the 2008 Roads Estimates.**

**8.13 Cllr.J.Bourke:** That Westmeath County Council would inform the travelling public of roads that are gritted on frosty mornings, in the interests of road safety.

**Reply:**

**At present, all National Primary and Secondary roads are gritted and 110 kms of Regional roads are gritted. Nine drivers and trucks are involved in winter gritting operations. 690 kms of roads are gritted in total, both national and regional roads. The regional roads that are gritted at present are Mullingar to Athlone R390, Mullingar to Castlepollard R394, Coole to Delvin R395, Killucan to V of the Downs R156, Kilbeggan to Kinnegad R446, Rochfortbridge to Offaly county boundary R400 and R391, Horseleap to Donore Cross. /.....**

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**Arrangements will be made to place appropriate advertisements in the papers setting out details of roads that are gritted.**

**8.14 Cllr.J.Bourke:** That Westmeath County Council would repair and surface the cul-de-sac road that stretches from Marlinstown to the railway line at Baltrasna.

**Reply:**

**This relates to local cul-de-sac road No.57131 which is included for surface dressing in the 2008 Roads Estimates.**

**8.15 Cllr.J.Bourke:** That Westmeath County Council would upgrade the Knockdrin road LSO 5706 at the t-junction with Brockagh, as there have been a number of accidents at this junction recently.

**Reply:**

**Signage at this junction will be upgraded as soon as possible.**

**8.16 Cllr.J.Bourke:** That Westmeath County Council would consider installing a public light at the Cooksborough-Cloughan junction, as this is now a collection point for children boarding school buses.

**Reply:**

**This light has been included in the 2008 Roads and Lights Estimates.**

In the absence of Cllr.McCarthy, the Cathaoirleach formally moved the following Notice of Motion.

**8.17 Cllr.D.McCarthy:** That Westmeath County Council would indicate what progress has been made with the building of Old Persons Dwellings in Rathwire, as there are some senior citizens in rented accommodation in the area that is about to be demolished later this year and as a result, these persons may become homeless.

**Reply:**

**A contractor has been appointed and difficulties with clearing the site have recently been resolved. It is anticipated that the contractor will commence on site within one month.**

In the absence of Cllr.McCarthy, the Cathaoirleach formally moved the following Notice of Motion.

**8.18 Cllr.D.McCarthy:** That Westmeath County Council would relieve the flooding and repair the road outside Pat Taaffe's house at Lynn, Mullingar.

**Reply:**

**This will be examined and remedial works carried out as soon as possible.**

In the absence of Cllr.McCarthy, the Cathaoirleach formally moved the following Notice of Motion.

**8.19 Cllr.D.McCarthy:** That Westmeath County Council would erect a sign at the junction of the Old Dublin Road with the Baltrasna Boreen, to indicate the location of Marlinstown Graveyard, as many people, especially visitors to the town, are confused as to which road to take, since the by-pass was opened.

**Reply:**

**A sign will be erected at this location as soon as possible.**

In the absence of Cllr.McCarthy, the Cathaoirleach formally moved the following Notice of Motion.

**8.20 Cllr.D.McCarthy:** That Westmeath County Council would take steps to prevent vermin invading private houses in the Clonmore area, which residents believe are originating from Council property.

**Reply:**

**Council staff are not aware of any vermin problem on the adjacent Council property. Nevertheless, a pest control specialist will be employed to survey the Council's property and carry out pest control if necessary. Any residents experiencing problems should consider similar action.**

**8.21 Cllr.R.Troy:** To call on Westmeath County Council to immediately relieve the flooding outside John Mulligan's house at Ballysallagh, Ballynacargy.

**Reply:**

**The new footpath works proposed for Ballysallagh in 2008 should rectify any drainage problems at this location.**

**8.22 Cllr.R.Troy:** To call on Westmeath County Council to repair the sides of the road at Irishtown, Ballynacargy.

**Reply:**

**This relates to Local Road No.1902. Edge repairs will be carried out as soon as possible.**

**8.23 Cllr.R.Troy:** To call on Westmeath County Council to set aside an appropriate sum of money in the 2008 Estimates to ensure that Loughanstown Boreen is properly reinstated.

**Reply:**

**It is unclear whether this relates to Local Road 59261 at Rathowen or Local Road 10158 at Portnashangan. Neither location has been included for works in the 2008 Roads Estimates.**

Cllr.Troy advised that he was referring to the road at Portnashangan leading towards Ballinafid and it was agreed that the Council would look at this road.

**8.24 Cllr.R.Troy:** To call on Westmeath County Council to surface dress the road in front of Brian Hamill's house at Lynn, Mullingar.

**Reply:**

**This relates to Local Road 1138. Pothole and road edge repairs will be carried out as soon as possible.**

**Any other business:**

Cllr.Cornally advised that a sign for Sligo at the Dublin Bridge, Mullingar is turned the wrong way and she asked that this sign be reversed.

Cllr.Troy stated that Multyfarnham needs a post box, particularly as the local post office was closed in 2007. He asked if a letter would issue to An Post in order to have a post box provided at an early date in Multyfarnham.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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Cathaoirleach

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Date