

Minutes of the Athlone Municipal District Meeting which was held in the Civic Centre, Church Street, Athlone at 3.00 p.m. on Monday 4th September, 2017.

Attendance:

Mayor:	Cllr. A. O'Rourke
Members:	Cllr. T. Farrell, Cllr P. Hogan, Cllr. F. Keena, Cllr. A. McManus, Cllr. M. O'Brien
Apologies:	Cllr J. Dolan
Officers:	Barry Kehoe, Director of Services Pat Keating, District Manager Pat Nally, District, Engineer Michael Kelly, Senior Engineer Gerry McCormack, Broadband Officer Frank Dolan A/District Administrator Eilish Reilly, Staff Officer Maria Kearney, Assistant Staff Officer
Others:	Mr Stephen O'Connor SIRO Mr John Dwyer SIRO Deputation from Huawei Mr PJ Griffin RPS

Votes of Congratulation / sympathy

Mayor O'Rourke extended his sympathies to the family of Paddy Turley of Baylin who passed away in recent weeks. He also sympathised with the family of Aidan Gallagher who passed away in July, Aidan worked for the Urban District Council some years ago.

Mayor O'Rourke extended his congratulations to the Galway Senior and Minor teams on their historic whitewash in Croke Park yesterday and particularly given the many connections locally with the Galway set-up now and in the past.

He also extended his congratulations also to the Rose of Tralee, Jennifer Byrne and the Byrne family who have strong Athlone and Westmeath connections and to wish her well for the year ahead.

Cllr. McManus offered her congratulations to the Westmeath Rose Eve Cooney who represented the county so well at the Rose of Tralee and to the very deserving winner Jennifer Byrne who will be a great ambassador for the Country.

Cllr McManus extended her sympathies to the Turley family on the death of Paddy and also to the Moran family, Coosan on the death of Adrian Moran.

Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr. Farrell Seconded by Cllr. O'Brien and resolved,
"That we hereby adopt and confirm the Minutes of the July Monthly Meeting which was held on the 3rd July, 2017.

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Brien and Seconded by Cllr. McManus and resolved,
"That we hereby adopt and confirm the Minutes of the in committee meeting held on the 22nd June, 2017 to consider the Athlone Municipal District Public Participation Network (PPN) submission and response with Athlone Municipal district PPN representatives.

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Brien and Seconded by Cllr. McManus and resolved, "That we hereby adopt and confirm the Minutes of the in committee meeting held on the 9th August, 2017 to consider 1. Speed Limit Review 2, Athlone Flood Alleviation Scheme 3 Church St. Enhancement.

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Brien and Seconded by Cllr. McManus and resolved "That we hereby adopt and confirm the Minutes of the in committee meeting held on the 28th August, 2017 to consider 1. Athlone Flood alleviation scheme including a site visit to the Quay, Athlone 2. Budget 2018

Matters Arising:

Mayor O' Rourke asked if there was any update with regard to the building on Lloyds lane and also the lighting of the Castle.

Pat Keating advised that he was still awaiting a report on valuations in relation to the building on Lloyds lane. Mr Pat Nally advised that a response was awaited from the consultants in relation to the lighting of the Castle.

To receive a presentation on SIRO (National Telecoms Infrastructure)

Mr Stephen O'Connor SIRO delivered a presentation to the members in relation to the roll out of SIRO's fibre to building broadband. He gave a background to the members on the service to be provided and advised them in relation to the schedule of works in the Athlone Area. He advised that he hoped that the service would be live in November-December 2017.

The members while they welcomed the presentation and the detail therein advised of their concern in relation to the lack of broadband in rural areas and that this was not addressed as part of this rollout.

Mr O'Connor advised the members that rural broadband was not part of this project and may be addressed under the National Broadband Plan. Mr O'Connor outlined the positives of having such a facility in the town of Athlone.

To receive a presentation on Athlone Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Mr. Barry Kehoe Director of Services advised the members in relation to the work that has been done in relation to arriving at this stage of the project. He advised that RPS were appointed as consultants for the Scheme.

Mr PJ Griffin RPS delivered a presentation to the members in relation to the works proposed and planning implications in each of the eight cells under the Scheme. He advised that RPS were in ongoing consultation with Irish Water in relation to the Athlone Main Drainage projects where they impact the Flood Alleviation Scheme

Mr. Kehoe stated that Cell 3 was currently going through the Part 8 planning process and the closing date of submission was the 4th September, 2017. He advised that the Chief Executive's Report would be presented to the members at the Council Meeting of the 18th September.

Mayor O'Rourke stated that he was delighted to see this piece of critical investment finally progressing and that a timeline was in place. He advised that liaison is key as there are a lot of big investment projects taking place simultaneously. He advised that following a visit to view some flood alleviation work carried out by the OPW in Dublin that the quality of work was exceptional and that it was aesthetically pleasing.

Cllr O'Brien welcomed the presentation and agreed with Mayor O'Rourke's comments in relation to the work carried out by the OPW in Dublin. He stated that he wished to commend Minister Kevin Boxer Moran for all his work in relation to the scheme.

Cllr Frankie Keena thanked Mr. Griffin for his presentation and stated that it was important that people and their properties were protected. He asked what the rationale for choosing Cell Three to start with was and also expressed his concern in relation to the CFRAMS maps as the data in relation to the 2015 floods was not included. PJ Griffin advised that each cell was an individual project and were being progressed where work could progress quickly. In relation to CFRAMS Mr. Griffin advised that RPS in carrying out their assessments of works required in relation to flood alleviation included the data for 2015 floods.

To note proposed Flood Defence works at Iona Park.

Mr PJ Griffin outlined in detail the works required at Iona Park. Mr. Pat Nally advised that the works required were below the Part 8 threshold.

To consider the Chief Executive's Report on the Review of the Speed Limit Bye Laws

Mr. Michael Kelly Senior Engineer outlined the proposed changes to the speed limits and advised that all National Routes required the consent of the TII in relation to the amendments proposed. He advised the members that the Chief Executive's Report would be presented to the members for their consideration at the Council meeting of the 18th of September, 2017. Cllr. Farrell felt that it was important to clarify that the N55 (Ballymahon-Athlone) subject to consent would be reduced from a 100KMH speed limit to 80KMH.

To receive a Report on the Taking In charge of Housing Estates in the Athlone Municipal District

Mr. Barry Kehoe presented the report to the members and outlined the estates in question. These are:

1. Drumaconn, Athlone
2. Crofton Court, Moate
3. The Orchard, Athlone
4. Canal Walk, Athlone

Cllr Keena asked if correspondence could issue to Resident Associations of the Estates concerned to clarify exactly what was included in the taking in charge in relation to the responsibility of the Council and the Residents.

To note design drawings for schemes included in the Annual Roads Programme, Clar Programme, Regional and Local Roads Safety Improvement Works Programme and National Road low Cost Safety Works Programme

Works to take place at following locations:

1. Ard Grainne, Moate.
2. Auburn Villas, Athlone.
3. Ballymore;
4. Bullet Road, Glasson
5. Moyvore,
6. Annagh
7. Streamstown Railway Station
8. Valley Court, Athlone.

Mr Pat Nally District Engineer briefed the members in relation to the works proposed at different locations under the various programmes. He advised the members that the works had been sent out for tender and the works would be expected to be completed by the end of October 2017. He stated that an additional project, the crossing at Moate GAA that required agreement with the GAA would be presented at a future time.

To receive an update on Church St Enhancement

Pat Keating District Manager updated the members in relation to Church St Enhancement. Mr. Keating advised the members that radio advertisements will be broadcast two weeks in advance of the one way system and also that free one hour parking in the car park at The Strand would be introduced once the one way system commences and will remain in place for the duration of the main contract works

Mayor O'Rourke asked what the update was in relation to Northgate Street. Mr Nally District Engineer advised that work would continue on Northgate Street for the next two to three months. He stated that works had commenced at the crescent on Monday the 4th September, with Mardyke Street scheduled next for works. Cllr Tom Farrell wished that it be clarified that if the new signal lights to be installed would be automated. Mr Nally advised that the lights would be automated.

To receive an update on the Acquisition of Lands for the Railway Field Road.

Mr Barry Kehoe, Director of Services advised the members that Westmeath County Council were awaiting agreement from Bus Eireann in relation to the bus parking to be provided in the Railway Field for the buses that will be displaced by the road scheme. He advised the members that the area of land subject of the acquisition was in the region of 1.07 acres.

Questions

The answers to questions were circulated and supplementary questions were answered as attached

Correspondence

Mr Frank Dolan A/District Administrator advised the members that no correspondence had been received.

Motions.

The replies to Notices of Motion, as attached, were considered by the Members:

At 5.30pm the Mayor asked that the Standing Orders be suspended, to allow the meeting continue; this was proposed by Cllr Farrell, seconded by Cllr Keena and resolved.

AOB

Mayor O'Rourke informed the members that he had visited Cllr Dolan and that he was making a good recovery, and he wished to send his good wishes to him and his family. All the members concurred.

Mayor O'Rourke advised the members that he had invited the Galway hurling team to stop in Athlone but that they were unable to do so as they had a tight schedule to adhere to.

Mayor O'Rourke welcomed Ms. Maria Kearney to the Athlone Municipal District meeting.

Cllr O'Brien asked what the updated position was in regard to the holding of a civic reception for Mr. Joe Ward. He also welcomed Ms. Maria Kearney.

Mr Pat Keating stated that arrangements for the holding of the civic reception would be put in place.

Cllr Tom Farrell stated that he was aware that Minister Zappone was in Athlone on that day. He asked if there was a protocol in place for when a Minister visited the town. Mr Barry Kehoe advised that there was a protocol in place whereby a Minister visited a Council building or was coming to meet Council officials. He advised that the visit on the day had been organised by Central Council and that Westmeath County Council had no input.

Cllr. Keena spoke about the tragic death of the three homeless people the previous week. He stated that it was not correct that the government and the minister for Housing would blame Local Authorities in relation to building of Social Housing. He stated that the members had approved the Part 8 planning process for the social houses at Clonbrusk , however now the Council awaited government response before the project could be advanced. Mr Barry Kehoe advised that he would not comment on the Minister's comments as he did not hear what was said, he stated that the members were updated at the July Council meeting. He stated that the tenders were submitted and they were being assessed at the present time by staff in Housing and once the process was complete it was hoped that a contractor would be appointed.

Both Mayor O'Rourke and Cllr O'Brien stated that Local Authorities should not be blamed for delays in delivering housing.

This concluded the business of the meeting.



MAYOR

2-10-17

DATE