

Minutes of the October Meeting of the Municipal District of Callan-Thomastown

Date: Wednesday 13th October, 2021 at 4.00p.m.

Venue: Meeting conducted via MS Teams remote access.

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| Chair: | Cllr Michael Doyle |
| Present via MS Teams | Cllr Peter Chap Cleere, Cllr Deirdre Cullen, Cllr Matt Doran, Cllr Joe Lyons, Cllr Patrick O'Neill. |
| Apologies: | None. |
| In attendance via MS Teams: | Ms Mary Mulholland, Director of Services; Ms Fiona Deegan, Meetings Administrator; Mr. Declan Murphy, Area Engineer; Ms Carmel Brett, Staff Officer; Ms Sian Moloughney, Kilkenny People; Ms Edwina Grace, KCLR 96 FM. |

1) Confirmation of Minutes

(a) Minutes of the Municipal District meeting of Wednesday 8th September, 2021

The minutes of the Municipal District meeting of Wednesday 8th September 2021 were proposed by Cllr Doran, seconded by Cllr Cullen and agreed.

Matters arising from the minutes:

Following a request at the September Municipal District meeting for an update on proposals for the Slatequarries, Ms F Deegan said a feasibility study was carried out by Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP) in January 2021 and the outcomes of this are currently being looked at by KLP and Kilkenny County Council (KCC). She noted this was a sensitive area best suited to an eco-tourism project and Tipperary County Council have yet to complete their side of works here.

Ms Deegan said both KLP and KCC had funded the launch of the Lingaun app, and further updates will be brought to the members when more outcomes progress.

2) Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

(a) Monthly Roads Update (Declan Murphy)

Mr D. Murphy A/Senior Executive Engineer updated the members on the following road related matters, outlining various projects updates and timelines.

- Road Works Programme 2021 – Mr Murphy said all CIS, LIS and restoration maintenance works are now complete, with works to Ladyswell Street, Thomastown postponed until 2022. He listed footpath works completed and commenced, drainage works in Callan completed, and Low-Cost Safety works completed and commenced.
- Town & Village Renewal Schemes – 2019 application works for the Rower now complete, updates given for 2020 applications at Stoneyford-Ennisnag, Hugginstown and on external camping charging points and bays in Thomastown and Callan;
- Rural Regeneration Roads Projects – Thomastown Public Realm Logan Street/Low Street update;
- ORIS projects – update given on Moat Field Phase 2;
- CLÁR – Coolagh Crossroads main works now complete; update on traffic calming and safety measures for Kilmoganny (possible due to additional funding secured under Clár 2021);

- Active Travel – updates given on Callan one-way system/Public realm and Flaggy Lane, Callan ring road widening of footpaths, Graiguenamanagh footpaths Moneen and Mill Street Thomastown permeability footpaths works;
- Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Funding – update given on Thomastown viewing area at Scouts Den car-park and Bennettsbridge River Route Street Space;
- Climate Adaption and Resilience Works 2021 – update on works at Ballycabbus, works at Inistioge now complete;
- General – Draft Graiguenamanagh Mobility Management Plan update to be given under Item 2(b) of agenda. Three-year multi annual restoration improvement programme 2022 – 2024 discussed at workshop, update given on installation of three compacting bins for Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown given, St Marys railings, Callan nearing completion.

The members thanked Mr. Murphy for his update and raised the following items:

- Update following recent meeting of TII and Road Design Section regarding Danesfort/motorway works – no decision has been made yet on which two projects of the four submitted for funding will be successful;
- Update on speeding issues in Bennettsbridge – funding applied for to carry out measures in 2022 under Low Cost safety works;
- Potential of three-year plan for development of County Kilkenny villages – D Murphy is consulting with the Community Section regarding possible funding avenues for smaller villages;
- Procedure for ensuring roadside hedges are cut bordering lands owned by state bodies – same procedure applies to state bodies as all other individuals, i.e. statutory notices are issued and if not complied with KCC can carry out the works and recoup costs incurred from the relevant landowner;
- Illegal littering in roadside hedgerows – this is an ongoing problem, highlighted when hedges are cut back at this time of year;
- Update and timeline for public lighting on path from filling station to garda station in Bennettsbridge – hope to progress this before year end;
- Footpath and downpipes on Green Street, Callan – paving ordered for damaged footpath, downpipes will be inspected;
- Possibility of increased lighting on Clodeen Lane, Callan – public lighting works cannot be carried out under discretionary funding, other potential funding streams to be explored in 2022;
- Request for improved signage at entrances to Callan town from by-pass – to be discussed with TII and Road Design Section.

(b) Draft Graiguenamanagh Mobility Management Plan (MMP) (Declan Murphy)

Mr Murphy informed the members that four submissions were received following public consultation period on the draft Graiguenamanagh MMP, with no subsequent changes being made to the draft plan.

Appropriate Assessment determination carried out in October 2021 found the Study would not give rise to any effect on ecological integrity.

Approval and adoption of the Graiguenamanagh Mobility Management Plan was proposed by Cllr Cleere, seconded by Cllr Cullen and agreed.

(c) Monthly Rural Development Update (Mary Mulholland)

Ms Mulholland highlighted the significant role played by plans such as the Graiguenamanagh MMP in successfully securing departmental funding for various projects.

She also appealed to the public not to discard litter from vehicles on the public road, noting that some packaging found had been there a considerable number of years.

She said KCC is awaiting decisions for allocations of 2021 Town & Village renewal funding, with two applications submitted for projects in this Municipal District; a decision on the application for Callan under Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) is due by end October/early November.

She said the Small Events grant scheme will be re-advertised with a closing date for applications of 5th November.

She informed the members that the volunteer centre, launched in May, has a garda vetting centre which aids the public to compile and process their applications.

The Sessions House project in Thomastown has commenced, and health checks are underway in Thomastown also.

The Streetscapes project has commenced, limited to five locations.

Ms Mulholland said she would like to remind community groups to put forward projects at an early stage so they can be developed into applications for funding – she would like to have a programme of projects in every Municipal District for 2022.

The members thanked Ms Mulholland for her update and raised the following items:

- Possibility to transfer any underspend on the Streetscape Scheme to other locations outside the five stipulated – a request for this has been sent to the Department, no reply received to date;
- Request for the public to take personal responsibility on the issue of illegal littering.

(d) Monthly Greenway Update (Fiona Deegan)

Ms Fiona Deegan gave members an update on the Greenway development based on report from Mr. Seán McKeown (Director of Services), outlining the current status of the following:

- Detailed Design;
- Construction;
- Ferrybank Car Park Options;
- Railway Abandonment;
- Links to Slieverue and Glenmore;
- Business Development Officer (BDO) and Engineer;
- Project website details;
- Resident Engineer details.

Members thanked Ms Deegan for her update and raised the following items:

- Identify feasibility of extending a link from the Greenway at Rosbercon side into Woodstock and ultimately continue into Thomastown and on to Kilkenny City – to be followed up with Greenway project office, KLP and Trail Kilkenny
- Invitation to be extended to Trail Kilkenny to attend a Municipal District meeting and update members on all County Kilkenny trails was proposed by Cllr Cleere, seconded by Cllr Doyle and agreed.

3) Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District members for transaction of such meeting.

There were no items for discussion

4) Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting

There were no items for discussion

5) Notices of Motion

There were no items for discussion

6) Correspondence

Request made to Cllr Doyle from Kings River Committee to make a presentation to the members at a Municipal District meeting – Ms Mulholland said she is compiling a report relevant to the Kings River, it was proposed by Cllr Cleere, seconded by Cllr Lyons and agreed that the members would review this report prior to receiving the committee.

7) Any other Business

Ms Deegan informed the members that the Municipal District Budget meeting is scheduled for 10th November, immediately prior to the November Municipal District meeting.

The members discussed and expressed preferences for virtual online meetings and face to face meetings going forward.

It was agreed that the November meetings would be online and the December meeting would take place in person.

Cllr Lyons raised the issue of recent bank closures in Co. Kilkenny and proposed that the Municipal District write to banks and Government outlining the effect this has on towns and surrounding areas and request reversal of the closure decision, this was seconded by Cllr Doyle.

Members discussed the issue at length, outlining the difficulties for communities regarding lodgements and removal of ATMs, and for those who do not bank online.

Ms Mulholland pointed out that Municipal Districts do not have any role in the commercial decision-making processes of any companies and felt that correspondence in this regard would not impact in any way on decisions already made. It was suggested that the Municipal District had a responsibility to reassure communities that every effort would be made to protect businesses and footfall in county towns affected, Cllr Doyle agreed with this opinion to support businesses.

Cllr Cleere said as he was an employee of Bank of Ireland it would be inappropriate for him to be party to any communication as suggested above.

Cllr Lyons clarified that the Municipal District should request a reversal of decision by AIB to become a cashless bank in Callan, and for Bank of Ireland to continue to provide ATM services.

Cllr Cullen expressed a wish for vacated bank buildings to be available for community use.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 17.15

Chairperson: Cllr. Michael Doyle

Date: 24/12/24