

Borough District of Drogheda – January 2015

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough District of Drogheda held in Barlow House, West Street, Drogheda, on Monday, 12th January, 2015 at 6.00 p.m.

In attendance:

Mayor: Cllr. K. Callan

Members: Cllrs: P. Bell, R. Culhane, K. Flood, F. Godfrey, I. Munster, P. Smith.

Officials: Joan Martin, Chief Executive
Mary T. Daly, A/Director of Services
Frank Pentony, Director of Services
Gerry Kelly, Senior Engineer
David Storey, Senior Executive Officer
Catherine Duff, Senior Engineer
Paddy Donnelly, Meetings Administrator / A/Director of Services

Apologies: Cllrs: T. Byrne, O. Tully and A. Cassidy

Also In Attendance: Michael McDonnell, Tobin Consulting Engineers
Patrick Cunningham, Tobin Consulting Engineers
Michael Lally, Tobin Consulting Engineers
Padraig Farrell, Irish Water

Minute No. 01/15

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st December, 2014, were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. F. Godfrey and seconded by Cllr. P. Bell.

Minute No. 02/15

Housing & Community Progress Report

Mr. David Storey presented the Housing & Communities Progress Report dated 5th January 2015 and addressed the members questions in relation to same.

Members raised a number of issues including the progress and success of the HAP Scheme, upon which Mr. Storey confirmed there would be a local publicity campaign later in the year.

In regard to housing construction, Mr. Storey confirmed that he was aware of the proposed housing construction programme nationally, but details of the scheme were not available at local level yet. The matter would be reported on at future meetings.

Minute No. 03/15

North Quay Water Main

The Mayor, Cllr. K. Callan welcomed the Director of Services responsible for Operations, Mr. Frank Pentony and the Senior Engineer for Water Services, Ms. Catherine Duff, together with Mr. Michael McDonnell, Mr. Patrick Cunningham and Mr. Michael Lally from Tobins, and Mr. Pdraig Farrell from Irish Water.

Mr. Michael McDonnell of Tobins thanked the Mayor and members for the opportunity to present the plans for the replacement of 300 metres of watermain at the North Quay, Drogheda which has been the subject of numerous bursts over the last number of years. Mr. Patrick Cunningham of Tobins presented to the members the traffic management plan, together with details of the construction and how the process would be managed by the contractor that would be appointed in due course. The members were advised that it was important to make the project managers, Tobins, aware of any issues at this stage so that they could be included in the Schedule of Works that would be tendered for. Changes to this schedule after the tender had been awarded would present difficulty and affect the overall cost of the project.

In clarification to the members' queries it was confirmed the works would commence in Quarter two of 2015 and would not affect the St. Patricks Day Parade. Arrangements would be put in place to facilitate the Maritime Festival. The members were advised that there would be a Public Meeting and Ms. Catherine Duff, Senior Engineer, advised that there would be correspondence to all those living and operating businesses on the site of the works and that they would be kept updated in regard to the progress of the works before they commence and during the works.

The Mayor thanked the team for the presentation, wished them every success with the project, and looked forward to having a successful completion resulting in no further mains bursts in the area in the future.

Minute No. 04/15

Declaration of Roads to be Public Roads

The members were circulated with a list of roads that will be declared public roads under Section 11 of the Roads Act, 1993. These included Riverbank, Green Park, Sea View, Seantobar and Termon Abbey. The members welcomed this and noted the contents of the circulation.

Minute No. 05/15

National Ports Policy – Drogheda Port Company

Ms. Mary T. Daly, Acting Director of Services brought to the attention of the members a report in relation to the Drogheda Port Company with the options set out therein.

Cllr. Smith, in welcoming the report did not agree with its findings, and was of the view that the port should be taken in charge by the local authority as an administrative arm of the local authority.

The Chief Executive, Ms. Joan Martin outlined that from her perspective as Chief Executive the local authority did not have the skill set necessary to run a commercial port of the size of Drogheda. There were significant challenges and ongoing issues that needed to be addressed and this needed an experienced team.

There was some discussion in regard to the matter and it was confirmed to members that a due diligence exercise would be carried out in relation to the financial and legal issues pertaining to the port. At this stage the legislation has not yet been publicised, but it is unlikely to bring any changes that would change the view of the Chief Executive that the port should operate in any way other than as an independent company, with the share holding being transferred from the Department to the County Council subject to the legislation. The members will be kept advised on the progress in this matter.

Minute No. 06/15

Refurbishment of Council Offices, Fair Street., Drogheda

The Chief Executive expressed her delight in being present when the plans for the refurbishment and development of the site at Fair Street were being presented to the members. She appreciated that it had been some time since the fire at Fair Street, but was glad now at this stage to see the report presented in relation to the project. It was still her vision that the objective of this development would be to increase the activity in Fair Street and to include a shared space which would accommodate a partner in the education sector.

Ms. Mary T. Daly, Acting Director of Service advised the members that the matter will come before Council as a Part VIII Planning Notice following a Public Consultation period. The members will be kept advised of the progress in relation to this matter.

Minute No. 07/15

Operations, Infrastructure and Marine Progress Report

Mr. Gerry Kelly, Senior Engineer, presented to the members the report dated 22nd December 2014 and addressed the members queries in regard to same.

The Senior Engineer also circulated a preliminary notice in regard to the Road Works Programme and sought the member's comments in relation to same. He asked that comments be returned so that he could present the Road Works Programme in full at the February meeting.

Cllr. Munster raised the matter of Leonards Cross and the Mayor requested that the matter be discussed in full at the next meeting. Ms. Mary T. Daly confirmed that the matter of Leonards Cross was a Capital expenditure item and not something that would be included in the Road Works Programme.

Minutes No. 08/15

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. F. Godfrey

Seconded by: Cllr. K. Callan

"That the Borough District of Drogheda Council implement an action plan to make safe and rejuvenate medieval Narrow West Street. The present dangerous state of the street is a major Health and Safety issue for all who use it. It has been in a state of decline for the past 10 years and is now a shameful disgrace and having a serious negative impact on the image and business of the town of Drogheda".

Reply:

The Council has had meetings with retailers in the area regarding Streetscape Improvement Proposals. The Council is examining the possibility of undertaking elements of works in the public realm brought to it by the traders. The Council is also involved in the development of a Town Centre Revitalisation Strategy which will look at a 3-5 year programme of actions. The upkeep of the privately owned buildings in the area is the responsibility of the owners. The Council has and will where necessary continue to exercise its powers under dangerous buildings legislation.

Minutes No. 09/15

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. I. Munster

Seconded by: Cllr. K. Flood

"That the members of the Borough District of Drogheda call on the government to:

- Immediately reverse domestic water charges which are an unfair and unjust double charge being forced on already struggling households.
- Stop the roll out of metering and redirect the €539m loan finance from the National Pension Reserve Fund towards fixing the massive leakage problems and interruption to supply.
- Recognise that Irish Water is not fit for purpose since it is unaccountable to the Minister and therefore to the Oireachtas and the citizens of this State.
- Prevent Irish Water from any further excessive spending of taxpayer's money, including the proposed further €35m on the use of external consultants in 2015.
- Oppose any duplication of services being delivered by Irish Water and Local authorities and retain these services within full public ownership now and in the future.
- Listen to the widespread public anger that exists towards this Government and Irish Water by the Irish people, who are now rightly organising and mobilising in protest and opposition to these water charges through the Right2Water public campaign which includes activists, citizens, community groups, political parties and trade unions."

Reply:

This is a matter for the members.

There followed a roll call vote on this matter. The vote was recorded as follows;

For: Cllrs. P. Bell, K. Callan, K. Flood, F. Godfrey, I. Munster **(5)**;

Against: Cllrs. R. Culhane, P. Smith **(2)**;

Abstain: None **(0)**;

Absent: Cllrs. T. Byrne, A. Cassidy, O. Tully **(3)**.

Minute No. 10/15

Suspension of Standing Orders

Proposed by: Cllr. K. Callan

Seconded by: Cllr. F. Godfrey

That Standing Orders be suspended in order to permit the meeting continue to 20:15 hours to ensure the business of the agenda is completed.

Minute No. 11/15

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. K. Flood

Seconded by: Cllr. K. Callan

"This Council commends the actions and community spirit of the citizens and volunteer rescue organisations of Drogheda and South Louth during the recent flooding and asks that a full investigation into why areas that have never flooded before were so affected this time"

Reply:

There were numerous areas within the county of Louth which flooded, following the rain storm on the 13th November, 2014, which had never flooded before. This was due to the extreme rain event, when over 40 mm fell in Louth in the one day, on already saturated ground. The drainage systems were unable to cope with the quantity of runoff with the result that areas that had not flooded in living memory were flooded. The data resulting from these floods has been referred to the consultants who are preparing the flood risk maps for the CFRAMS project.

The commendation of the community spirit and voluntary assistance from the various organizations is a matter for the council.

The Senior Engineer will revert at a later meeting with figures in regard to this matter.

Minute No. 12/15

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Bell

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Smith

"That this Council take immediate steps to protect the listed building known locally as 'Harty's Cottage' located on Crushrod Avenue."

Reply:

The Council has written to the owner setting out the measures required to protect this building.

Minute No. 13/15

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Bell

Seconded by: Cllr. K. Callan

"That this Council install pedestrian crossing points and safety rails on the approaches to the Beechgrove Roundabout."

Reply:

The current Beechgrove roundabout design provides for informal pedestrian crossings with splitter islands on the two main approaches. There are no proposals to modify this. It should be noted that the traffic light solution recommended by the executive at the time would have incorporated signalised pedestrian crossings. This was not proceeded with at the behest of the members.

Minute No. 14/15

Notices of Question

The following Notices of Question were noted by the members:

Cllr. F. Godfrey

"I am calling on the Council to erect weight restriction signs on the Townrath Road as it is being used as a rat run by large heavy laden lorries. The road is not wide enough for the two way traffic of these lorries and it is causing major inconvenience and concern for the Townrath community"

Reply:

The proposal to apply a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes on the Townrath Road is recommended for approval.

Cllr. K. Flood

"Can Louth County Council examine the possibility of installing speed ramps where the rumble strips currently are on Flaxmill Lane?"

Reply:

This proposal will be examined after the completion of the annual works programme and staff resources become available. A policy on speed reduction measures in general and ramps in particular needs to be developed and agreed through the SPC. The demand for such measures far exceed the funding available to carry out the works.

Cllr. T. Byrne

"What are the exact details of the contract between Louth County Council and Airtricity in view of the lack of action when the public lighting was out in the Moneymore Housing Estate in Drogheda on Sunday evening, 23rd November, and the ongoing problems with the public lighting in the Liscorrie Housing Estate in Drogheda?"

Reply:

The contract with the public lighting contractor requires the service provider rectify problems with three or more lanterns within three working days of the fault report. The timescale is five working days for two lanterns and ten

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working days for a single lantern. Liscorrie is not in the charge of the Council. The contract with the service provider does not cover estates that are not in charge.

Minute No. 15/15

Correspondence

Correspondence circulated with the agenda was noted by the members.

Minute No. 16/15

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was recorded in respect of Mrs. Betty McGinn, Ballsgrove, Drogheda.

The Mayor brought to the members attention that a Book of Condolence had been opened in respect of the Charlie Hebdo and associated incidents victims, and advised the members that one of the shooting incidents was in Saint Mandé, with which the town of Drogheda has a twinning arrangement. At the request of the Mayor the members observed a minute silence.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

The minutes were confirmed at a meeting of Council held on

Date: _____

Mayor: _____

Meetings Administrator: _____