

Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Dundalk held in the Town Hall, Dundalk, on Tuesday, 4th November, 2014

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. D. Breathnach

Members: Councillors: M Butler, E. Corrigan, M. Dearey, M. Doyle, J. Green, C. Keelan, J. Loughran, J. McGahon, K. Meenan, P. Savage, T. Sharkey, M. Yore

Officials: Frank Pentony, Director of Services
Gerry Kelly, Senior Engineer
David Storey, Senior Executive Officer
Patrick Connolly, Executive Engineer

Apologies: n/a

Minute No. 30/14

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7th October, 2014, were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. M. Dearey and seconded by Cllr. P. Savage.

Minute No. 31/14

Matters Arising

Cllr. Sharkey raised the matter of the recording of the briefing in regard to the gritting of roads. The Meetings Administrator confirmed that the minutes were a record of decisions taken and were not a verbatim note of the minutes.

In reference to Minute No. 26/14, Cllr. Keelan queried whether there had been any response from Irish Water in regard to taking in charge of developments. Mr. Frank Pentony, Director of Service advised the members that there was no update on the matter at this time.

Minute No. 32/14

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was recorded on the death of Mrs. Madge Fitzpatrick, mother of Peter Fitzpatrick T.D.

Minute No. 33/14

Carlingford Bus Shelter

Mr. Paddy Connolly, Senior Executive Engineer circulated location maps and details of a proposed bus shelter to be erected in Carlingford Village. Mr. Connolly addressed the members queries in regard to same and confirmed that the project was being funded by the National Transport Authority.

There was a discussion in relation to bus shelters, with the Cathaoirleach suggesting that the matter of bus shelters should be dealt with by the Strategic Policy Committee with a view to forming a policy in regard to such infrastructure, and that when candidate locations were identified in line with the policy other submission should be made to the National Transport Authority and/or CIE in regard to same. This was proposed by Cllr. Savage and seconded by Cllr. Dearey.

Minute No. 34/14

Housing & Communities Progress Report

Mr. David Storey, Senior Executive Officer presented the Housing and Communities Progress Report dated 23rd October 2014 and addressed the members queries in relation to same.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Declan Breathnach congratulated Túath Housing Association and Louth County Council on the recent opening of ten houses on 24th October 2014 at Cuchulainn Heights, Carlingford.

Minute No. 35/14

Operations, Infrastructure & Marine Progress Report

Mr. Gerry Kelly, Senior Engineer presented the Report for the month of October and addressed the members queries. A number of issues were raised including;

The issue of the new taxi bays in Dundalk. The members called for this matter to be kept under review and the decision to eliminate the bays be considered if they are not used by taxi service providers.

A query in regard to the road gritting rostering and procedures was addressed, Mr. Kelly outlined clearly to the members that the system had been revised to improve the efficiency of the service. An opportunity to do so had been presented following the merging of the three local authorities. Mr. Kelly outlined how three lorries can now complete the work that had previously been done by seven lorries. He indicated

that the total distance travelled by trucks providing gritting services in the past had been 650 kilometres per run, with the new improved version with the same areas of road being gritted resulted in 150 kilometres less of travel for the vehicles involved. In the past lorries were working on an average of 60% gritting time, with the new arrangement this has increased to 74%, with one route in excess of 80%. Mr. Kelly pointed out that all regional roads in the county are being gritted which is unusual when compared nationally. Details of the gritting routes are available on the Councils website. Mr. Kelly confirmed that the service is an excellent service that has been provided to date and will continue to be at that standard.

In response to queries in regard to salt stocks, Mr. Kelly confirmed that there were 1800 tonne of salt in stock in the county, and that national stocks had now been improved to meet what could be considered very severe weather.

Minute No. 36/14

Motion:

Proposed by: Cllr. M. Doyle
Seconded by: Cllr. J. McGahon

"That this committee/council agree that sufficient funding should be made available in next year's budget and beyond for works needed to clear the rotting seaweed and algae from the beaches at Blackrock, and to commission a report to look at ways of dealing with this problem in the long term."

Reply:

The deposition of seaweed and algae on the beaches in Blackrock is a naturally occurring process which depends on sea temperature and wind direction. The chief seaweed identified was Ectopurus and Sea lettuce. The cost of removal of this material is substantial and it is not financially viable to remove it on an ongoing basis. The same algae and seaweed impacts on a number of beaches along the Louth coast. However, some funding should be provided to enable the beaches at Blackrock to be cleaned at critical times of the season.

The Director of Service, in response to a number of members comments in regard to the issue of decaying seaweed and algae on the beach, confirmed that a report had been compiled by the Councils own scientist and this had been confirmed by the EPA who found that this matter is in relation to seaweed and algae and is not as a result of a discharge from a waste water treatment plant. He agreed to forward the report to the members.

Minute No. 37/14

Motion:

Proposed by: Cllr J. McGahon

Seconded by Cllr: M. Doyle

"That Louth County Council place protective railings and bollards at the footpath outside Scoil Phadraig Naofa, Kilcurry, in order to ensure greater safety for school children on what already is a very busy road."

Reply:

The situation at Scoil Phadraig Naofa, Kilcurry will be examined and the school authorities consulted on the proposal and a report prepared.

The Senior Engineer advised the members that there was a 50/50 Scheme in place in the past and this had been accessed by such groups to improve safety in the structure around schools. There was a discussion on the matter where a number of contributors outlined that parents and guardians parking so close to the school are part of the problem and there is a need for this to be addressed by schools, and that the installation of infrastructure is not necessarily the answer.

Minute No. 38/14

Motion:

Proposed by: Cllr C. Keelan

Seconded by Cllr: M. Butler

"That this Council install traffic lights or other traffic calming measures in the vicinity of the junction of Castletown Cross/Mill Road/Mount Avenue due to the high traffic volumes in this area, the counter-flow of the traffic, and the proximity of nearby schools"

Reply:

A survey will be carried out and a report prepared on this matter.

Amendment:

Proposed by: Cllr. E. Corrigan

Seconded by: Cllr. T. Sharkey

"That the matter of the motion be deferred until a current planning application is decided upon"

The Director of Service cautioned the members in regard to discussing any detail of an issue where there was a live planning application.

A roll call vote was taken, and the result was as follows:

For: Cllrs. E. Corrigan, J. Green, J. Loughran, K. Meenan, T. Sharkey **(5)**

Against: Cllrs. D. Breathnach, M. Butler, M. Dearey, M. Doyle, C. Keelan, J. McGahon, P. Savage, M. Yore **(8)**

Abstain: none (0)

Absent: none (0)

The amendment failed and the Cathaoirleach confirmed the motion carried.

Minute No. 39/14

Motion:

Proposed by: Cllr C. Keelan

Seconded by Cllr: J. Green

"Recognising the expenditure and effort of this local authority in tackling dumping on the Lower Racecourse Road, that this Council erect and install a gate with pedestrian access immediately south of the last two houses on the Road"

Reply:

The relevant landowners need to be identified and consulted on this proposal, before any action can be taken.

Minute No. 40/14

Notice of Question

The following question and reply was noted by the members.

Cllr. Maria Doyle

"What measures are being undertaken by Louth County Council to prepare for possible flooding this winter, which caused major difficulties last year, most notably in Blackrock?"

Reply:

Louth County Council has contingency measures in place to deal with winter flooding as per usual. Repairs have been carried out on defences that were damaged in 2013. Equipment is in place to close off openings in the walls at Blackrock but it is not currently possible to prevent over topping of the walls which caused the flooding in 2013. Blackrock is one of the areas for further assessment under the CFRAM study and this will determine what capital works, if any, are to be carried out.

Minute No. 41/14

Dundalk Football Club

The Cathaoirleach proposed a vote of congratulations to Dundalk Football Club and their Manager, Mr. Stephen Kenny on their recent success in the F.A.I. League. The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the matter would be raised at the C.P.G. meeting in

regard to the hosting of a Civic Reception for the team, and he would keep in mind members views that the matter should be dealt with by the Municipal District.

Minute No. 42/14

Suspension of Standing Orders

The Cathaoirleach advised the members that he had two requests for the suspension of Standing Orders and he proposed to take that business now.

The initial matter was proposed by Cllr. Dearey and seconded by Cllr. Doyle, that the business of the meeting be suspended to facilitate the members to discuss the matter of the oil leak in Carlingford Lough last week. There followed a discussion on the matter and the Director of Services, Mr. Frank Pentony responded with some information to the members regarding same.

Tribute was paid to Mr. Sean Callaghan from the Enforcement Section who had responded to this matter and who had worked tirelessly to ensure that the matter was addressed appropriately in Co. Louth.

Members expressed concern that there were not formal protocols in place for all eventualities and asked that the matter be kept under review. The Director of Service confirmed that this was not a major emergency, and therefore the Major Emergency Protocol did not kick in, but there were notifications from authority to authority, and this matter is and will be continually reviewed.

Minute No. 43/14

Proposed by: Cllr T. Sharkey

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Green

“That the members consider and congratulate and applaud the organisers of the anti Irish Water protest held in Dundalk on Saturday 1st November”.

There followed a discussion on the matter where members expressed their views in relation to the protest, and congratulated and applauded those who had organised and attended the event.

Minute No. 44/14

Members were advised that the date of the next meeting was Tuesday 2nd December, 2014 and the last date for receipt of Motions or Questions was Tuesday 18th November, 2014.

There being no other business the meeting concluded.

The Minutes were confirmed at a meeting of Council held on:-

Date: _____

Cathaoirleach: _____

Meetings Administrator: _____