

Minutes of the Athlone Area Committee Meeting held in the Civic Centre, Athlone on Tuesday 15th November 2011 at 4.30pm

In attendance: Cllr Gabrielle McFadden, Chairman
Cllr Tom Allen
Cllr Mark Cooney
Cllr Frankie Keena
Cllr Kevin Boxer Moran
Cllr Joe Whelan

Barry Kehoe, Director of Services
Hugh O'Reilly, Senior Executive Officer
Alan Kelly SEE, Area Engineer
Anne McNamara, Assistant Staff Officer

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Minutes of the Athlone Area Meeting:

On the proposal of Cllr Whelan, seconded by Cllr Allen, the Minutes of the Athlone Area Meeting held on 19th September 2011 were adopted.

Matters Arising:

In response to Cllr Cooney's query on progress on the Glasson, Ballykeeran, Coosan Sewerage Scheme, Hugh O'Reilly advised that a dispute has arisen between the Council and the Contractor, but a Conciliation Hearing is scheduled for later in the coming week. It was agreed that the outcome of the Hearing be circulated to the Members. Cllr Moran requested that the public be kept informed through the website.

Reinstatement of Gráinne Óg statue:

Catherine Kelly advised the Members that the Insurance Company had agreed to pay €55,000 to reinstate the statue, but in a populated area. It is currently being redesigned to suit an urban/pedestrian environment. She listed 4 location options in the Moate Town area. The Members expressed the view that it should be located in the proposed Midland Amenity Park, preferably in the water area. Catherine Kelly said that the artist will have to be comfortable with this and also the Council's insurance company. All felt that the people of Moate should have a say in its location and Catherine agreed to invite people's views on the website and in the library. She would revert back to them.

Portlick Forest Park:

The Director informed the Members that the proposed amenities were in Special Areas of Conservation and therefore subject to Directives from the Department. A

screening for Appropriate Assessment was currently being undertaken and the Members will be kept informed of progress.

Smarter Travel Initiative:

Hugh O'Reilly informed the Members that a €30,000 grant had been approved to fund the long-awaited bus shelter in Moate.

Questions:

Cllr. Gab McFadden:

1. Would this Council repair the footpaths in Hillcourt paying particular attention to those outside No.s 25 to 28?

This footpath is maintained by Athlone Town Council and will be examined with a view to putting it forward for funding in the 2012 Athlone Town Council Roads funding.

Cllr Frankie Keena:

1. When will work start on the installation of traffic signals on the off ramps of the relief road?

This work is likely to commence in early January 2012.

2. What is the status of the Castledaly Cemetery extension project?

The works required to build the access road and to provide the fence around the extension to the rear are currently being costed with a view to carrying them out in the current year, subject to budgetary limitations.

3. Can this Council examine & repair the road exiting Baylin village towards Mount Temple to address the dangerous sections where it has sunk?

This road will be examined with a view to installing warning signage until 2012, when it will be considered in the context of the 2012 roads funding.

Notices of Motion:

1. **Cllr. Gabrielle McFadden**

That this council would widen the Newtowncarbery Road and erect speed limit signs.

400 metres of the northern end of this road is maintained by Athlone Town Council and the remainder is within Roscommon Co Council's jurisdiction.

The widening of this road would involve substantial cost and such a scheme would need to be pursued in tandem with a widening scheme by Roscommon Co Council. The speed limit on the section within Athlone Town Council's administrative area is 50 kph and a repeater sign could be installed.

2. Cllr. Gabrielle McFadden

That this council be given update on the Derelict sites at the N6 Roundabout.

There are two Derelict Sites on the old N6 beyond the Creggan roundabout, both of which are in single ownership. At the start of this year the Council served a Section 8(2) Notice under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 informing the owner it was the Council's intention to place these properties on the Derelict Sites Register. The Council received no communication from the owner following the serving of these Notices. In May of this year both properties were placed on the Derelict Sites Register. The owner was served with a Section 8(7) Notice informing him that these properties were now on the register. The Council will now issue a Notice under Section 11 of the act requiring specific works to be undertaken and if this Notice is not complied with, the matter will be referred to the courts.

3. Cllr. Gabrielle McFadden

That this Council look at the signage in the Castledaly/Ballinahown area, paying particular attention to the "Ballinahown village" sign, as they have won 2 bronze medals in the Tidy Towns Competition; also a sign for Moate in Ballinahown, a sign for Castledaly at Farnagh and a sign for Killomeenaghon Cemetery.

These signs will be examined. However, it is NRA policy to restrict signage on National Routes and any such signage at Ballinahown require NRA approval. There is an existing directional sign for Moate at the junction of the L1405 (Pike Cross) with the N62 approx 1 Km from Ballinahown. Signage for Castledaly at Farnagh will be considered in the context of the proposed redesignation of the R444. Signage for Killomeenagh Cemetery will be examined.

4. Cllr. Frankie Keena

That this Council write to Iarnrod Eireann requesting them to add an extra carriage on the 6.40am train to Dublin, particularly on a Monday morning and also on the return trains on a Friday evening.

Such a letter can issue.

All supported the Motion and felt that it was unfair and unsafe to have to stand all the way to Dublin, after paying the full fare. It was agreed to write the letter.

5. **Cllr. Frankie Keena**

That this Council update the members on the status of the proposed inner relief road from St. Vincent's Care Centre to the Crescent.

The Council is engaged in ongoing discussions with CIE in relation to the acquisition of the lands required for the construction of this road. Following the acquisition of the required lands, the Council will engage with the Department of Transport regarding financial support to complete the construction of this road link.

6. **Cllr. Frankie Keena**

That this Council give a full report on the condition of the soil in the old Hammond Lane & Chevron sites on Magazine Road and if contaminated to outline the actions / timeframes that are being undertaken to address same.

Environment Section is in ongoing correspondence with both Hammond Lane and Chevron. Both parties have submitted reports on the soil conditions with proposed bio remedial measures. These were agreed with our Scientific Officer and are being implemented and monitored.

A more detailed progress report can be furnished to a later Area Meeting if required.

Cllr Cooney asked that the Report include information on the old Town Dump at Goldenisland. Hugh O'Reilly informed him that there are Regulations governing Legacy Landfills and the Council is working with the EPA regarding this legacy landfill and 13 other similar landfills in the County.

7. **Cllr. Frankie Keena**

That this Council write to the Department of Social Protection to request that the receipt of rent allowance is conditional on the recipient not engaging in anti social behaviour.

These enquiries can be made.

It was agreed to write to the Department of Social Protection and to circulate the Motion to other Local Authorities. It was also agreed to write to the HSE to find out what role they play, if any, in the Rent Allowance Scheme.

8. **Cllr. Kevin Moran**

That this Council look at providing a second lane for traffic coming from the Baylin/Moydrum area to turn left for Garrycastle.

This junction has been assessed as part of the Athlone Relief Road junction upgrade works and dedicated left turn and right turn lanes for traffic exiting this junction are included in the scheme. Traffic flow at the junction will be controlled by traffic signals.

9. **Cllr. Kevin Moran**

That this Council look to provide more public lighting in the Creggan area.

There is currently no budget assigned for the provision of additional public lighting.

Cllr Moran requested the Council to consider providing a budget for lighting here as it is a well populated area with no lighting at all. He asked if it could be done even over a few years and the other Members supported this.

10. Cllr. Kevin Moran

That this Council discuss the criteria for digging wells in rural areas. Does one have to apply for planning permission, is there a grant available and do the Council encourage people to dig wells where Group Schemes exist?

Sinking of a well for domestic water supply is listed as exempted development unless the Planning Authority has applied a planning condition which specifies that the development should be connected to a public water supply.

Grants are available for the provision of a new well (subject to conditions) or the improvement of an existing well to serve a domestic dwelling, if the existing supply is insufficient in terms of quantity or it fails to meet the water quality standards of the Drinking Water Regulations. However, a well grant will not be paid if the property can be served from a piped water supply (public or group scheme).

Transmitter station at Moydrum:

Hugh O'Reilly agreed to circulate letters received from RTE and two Departments regarding the possibility of creating a museum at Moydrum station. None of the responses were favourable.

Garrycastle Bridge:

The Members noted a letter from the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport acknowledging the invitation to view the Bridge. A response to follow later.

Schedule of meetings for 2012:

The following schedule of meetings was agreed for 2012:

Tuesdays, January 17th, March 13th, May 15th, July 17th, September 11th and November 13th 2012.

CHAIRMAN

DATE