

MINUTES OF THE APRIL MEETING OF THE CASTLECOMER MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, JOHN STREET, KILKENNY ON TUESDAY 23RD APRIL AT 9.30 AM

In the chair: Cllr Michael McCarthy

Present: Cllrs John Brennan, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Pat Fitzpatrick, Patrick Millea and Maurice Shortall

In attendance: Philippe Beubry, Senior Executive Engineer, Nancy Byrne, Municipal District Staff Officer, Mary Mulholland, Director of Services and Steve Coverdale, Broadband Officer.

Apologies: Michael Delahunty, Meetings Administrator

Vote of Sympathy

The members extended their sympathy to the family of the late Joe Comerford, Castlecomer on his sad and untimely death: to his wife Julie, daughter Jane, sons Jimmy, John and Derek, brothers and sisters, extended family and a large circle of friends. Members spoke of his enormous economic contribution to the town of Castlecomer including just two months ago, the opening of the magnificent Avalon House Hotel. Members spoke of his generosity of both time and resources, his wit and his legacy of kind deeds to numerous families in distress and clubs and organisations.

It was agreed that a press release would be issued on behalf of the Municipal District of Castlecomer members.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of :-

(a) March meeting of the Municipal District of Castlecomer

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr John Brennan and agreed.

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations:

(a) Provision of Broadband.

Steve Coverdale, Broadband Officer presented a report on Castlecomer Broadband as circulated at the meeting. The report outlined the following:

- Clarification that an independent examination completed by consultants had confirmed that minimum broadband speeds do not exist in the areas marked Dark Blue on the map circulated at the meeting as had been suggested within the NBP definitions.
- Details of the areas covered under OpenEir 300k Rural FTTH and NBP.
- The current status of broadband infrastructure, both fixed line broadband and mobile broadband.
- Details of download and upload broadband speeds currently available to 3 sample businesses in the town.
- Alternatives to fixed line fiber broadband.
- 3 possible solutions outlined:
 - Fiber Broadband – extension of OpenEir 300k Rural FTTH
 - Telecoms Mast – erection of a telecoms mast with line of sight to other masts to provide fixed wireless broadband.
 - Telecoms Mast – Erection of a telecoms mast with fiber opting backhaul to provide fixed wireless broadband.

Mary Mulholland welcomed clarification provided by independent consultants. Ms Mulholland confirmed that OpenEir were due to send their infrastructure upgrade plan specifically for Castlecomer on 29th March and despite follow up from both Michael Delahunty and Steve

Coverdale this report remains outstanding. Ms Mulholland also confirmed that she will seek a meeting with Eir officials and Minister Bruton at their earliest convenience.

Contributions were received from the members as follows:-

- Steve Coverdale was thanked for the comprehensive report provided.
- A request that representatives from the Synergy Group would be invited to attend the meeting with Eir officials and Minister Bruton.
- That Eir officials and the Minister be provided with the relevant questions in advance of this meeting.
- Co location on masts would be investigated.
- 'Broadband' would remain on the agenda until a solution is found.

3. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council for transaction at such meeting

None

4. Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting.
Items submitted by the members

(a) Cllr John Brennan

(i) Update on pedestrian bridge in Castlecomer.

Mary Mulholland referred to the update provided by Tim Butler, Director of Services and confirmed that the members will receive a further update as soon as additional information becomes available.

(ii) Safety measures outside Moneenroe National School.

Cllr John Brennan and Cllr Maurice Shortall thanked Philippe Beubry for works completed to date but requested that in light of the increased number of students and staff attending the school in recent years and the subsequent increase in traffic, improved safety measures outside the school would be investigated. Improved parking facilities, the provision of a lollipop person and salting were requested. Philippe Beubry confirmed that Moneenroe National School is located on the P3 salting route. Mr Beubry advised members that resources are not available to provide a lollipop person and reminded members of the precedent this would set for the area.

Following extensive discussion it was agreed that a letter would issue to the principal of Moneenroe National School requesting that he convene a meeting with the relevant parties comprising representatives from the Department of Education, An Garda Siochana, Moneenroe National School and Philippe Beubry to discuss safety measures outside the school. It was also agreed that Philippe Beubry and Mary Mulholland would visit the location in the interim to assess possible solutions.

(iii) Progress report on Broadband delivery for Castlecomer.

Dealt with under 2(a) above.

(iv) Village Renewal funding.

- CLÁR Scheme

Mary Mulholland provided details of projects included under the 2019 CLÁR Scheme and also outlined details of a new category included under the scheme entitled - 'Community Well Being'. It was agreed that a list of the areas eligible for CLÁR funding would be published. Cllr Maurice Shortall requested that Lisnafunchin National School be considered for inclusion under the 2020 CLÁR Scheme. Philippe Beubry was commended for works completed to date.

(v) Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2019

Mary Mulholland confirmed that the North of the county is poorly represented in the 2019 Town and Village Renewal scheme applications. Ms Mulholland advised that projects must be ready to go before they will be submitted to the Department and also clarified that labour / land will be considered from applicants as match funding.

(vi) Rural Regeneration Funding

Mary Mulholland confirmed that this funding stream is suited to larger towns such as Castlecomer. Ms Mulholland confirmed that it was their intention to work with the Synergy Group etc in order to identify potential projects and to prepare a comprehensive plan for Castlecomer.

(vii) Village Plans / Local Area Plans

Cllr John Brennan sought clarification as to whether plans prepared for villages were tied into the County Development Plan. Mary Mulholland clarified that general policies only are included. It was suggested that Denis Malone or Nicolaas Louw would be invited to a meeting of the Castlecomer Municipal District to provide details of the process involved.

Mary Mulholland and Michael Delahunty were thanked for their works completed to date with Communities throughout Kilkenny.

(b) Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh

(I) Danger at junction of Rathdowney Road and Canal Road, Johnstown.

Philippe Beubry confirmed that he had discussed this issue with John Shortall, General Services Supervisor for the area and neither he nor John Shortall is aware of any danger at this junction. It was agreed that Philippe Beubry would investigate the location again.

(ii) Cul de sac at Rathpatrick, Crosspatrick.

Philippe Beubry confirmed that this location is included for overlay in the 2020 Road Works Programme.

(iii) Cutting back or topping of trees at Woodview, Freshford.

Cllr Michael McCarthy confirmed that this location is receiving ongoing surveillance by Claire Goodwin. Philippe Beubry to discuss this issue with Claire Goodwin.

(iv) Pedestrian crossing on Kilkenny Street, Freshford in the interest of safety.

Cllr Michael McCarthy confirmed that this issue has been investigated and a location has been identified for the provision of a pedestrian crossing.

(v) Consideration of a double yellow line on the non residential side of Kilkenny Street, Freshford to prevent accidents.

Philippe Beubry confirmed that this road is included for overlay under the 2019 Road Works Programme and the necessary road markings will be provided thereafter.

(vi) Branch library for Freshford.

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh requested that Mary Mulholland commence proceedings for the provision of a library in Freshford.

(vii) Footpath for Freshford Road and Canal Road out of Johnstown.

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh asked that the provision of a footpath for Freshford Road and Canal Road, Johnstown be considered for inclusion in the next Road Works Programme.

(viii) Traffic control measures to prevent speeding on Rathdowney Road out of Johnstown.

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh requested that 'Slow Down' signs be provided at the location identified.

(ix) Water flowing on the Spa Road : gullies need to be opened.

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh requested that gullies on the Spa Road past 'Sandymount' house be opened.

(x) Broken footpaths in Johnstown Graveyard.

Philippe Beubry confirmed that broken footpaths at this location will be included for attention under the next tranche of funding.

(c) Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick

(i) Castlecomer Footpaths Improvement Plan.

Cllr Fitzpatrick requested that an assessment of footpaths be undertaken in the area. Philippe Beubry informed the members that he had included the reconstruction of two sections of footpath on Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer in a recent application for funding from TII under the B12 Programme.

(ii) Update on Clashwilliam Bridge.

Philippe Beubry confirmed that he along with the General Services Supervisor will investigate the issues identified.

(d) Cllr Maurice Shortall

(i) Dowling's Cross, Coon.

Cllr Maurice Shortall requested that Philippe Beubry revert to the local residents with the preliminary designs as soon as they are available. Philippe Beubry confirmed that preliminary designs would be circulated at the Municipal District meeting as soon as they are available.

(ii) Kilcollan to Lisnafunchin Road.

Philippe Beubry clarified that it may be necessary to skip a section of the newly overlaid road during the surface dressing operation as a result of an issue with continuous muck on the road.

(iii) Bridge Rehabilitation.

Philippe Beubry confirmed that Coolcullen Bridge is to be considered under the 2020 Bridge Rehabilitation Programme.

(iv) Moneenroe National School.

Item dealt with under 4 (a) (ii) above.

5. Notices of Motion

None

6. Correspondence

None

7. Matters arising from minutes

None

8. Any other business

(a) May Meeting of the Municipal District of Castlecomer

It was agreed that the May meeting would be held at 2.15pm on the 20th of May and would deal only with business prescribed by Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District.

(b) Sweeper for Johnstown and Urlingford

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh sought clarification as to whether the streets in Johnstown and Urlingford were swept as frequently as Ballyragget. Philippe Beubry confirmed that this was

the situation and advised that the rota for the suction sweeper is prepared by the Machinery Yard and that there is no capacity available to increase its usage.

(c) Weed spraying – Castlecomer

Cllr Maurice Shortall enquired the status of weed spraying in Castlecomer and was advised by Philippe Beubry that spraying has been completed.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____