

Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Dundalk held in the Town Hall, Dundalk, on Tuesday, 2nd February 2016 at 5.15 pm.

In attendance:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. M. Doyle

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

Officials: Frank Pentony, Director of Services
Joe McGuinness, Director of Services
Mary Murtagh, Meetings Administrator
Pat Finn, Senior Engineer
Gerry Kelly, Senior Engineer

Apologies: Cllr J. McGahon

Minute No. 18/16

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12th January, 201 were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. M. Butler and seconded by Cllr. J. Loughran.

Minute No. 19/16

Matters Arising

Minute 15/16- an update was requested on the plebiscite in relation to the taking charge of Belfield Mews and Fort Terrace. It was agreed that P. Finn, Senior Engineer would revert with an update.

Minute 9/16- amended to reflect the fact that flooding issues at Mounthamilton was discussed - Proposed by Cllr. M. Doyle seconded by Cllr. M. Yore and agreed.

Minute 10/16- Request to Senior Engineer to prioritise and timeframe the report on to Knockbridge to Martins Cross safety measures.

Minute 12/16- Work is underway in compiling the required report which will be completed as soon as possible.

N53 Surveys- P. Finn, Senior Engineer will forward details as soon as possible.

Confirmed that J. McGuinness, Director of Services is still the contact for Members in relation to Housing issues until the vacant Senior Executive Officer post is filled.

Minute No. 20/16

Louth Tidy Towns Together Presentations

Members noted the request circulated with the Agenda. On the proposal of Cllr. P. Savage seconded by Cllr. M. Dearey it was agreed to permit representatives of Louth Tidy Towns together to make a presentation at the March Meeting of the Municipal District.

Minute No. 21/16

Housing and Communities Progress Report

Mr. J. McGuinness, Director of Services presented the Housing and Communities Progress Report dated 25th January 2016. During discussion on the Report Mr. J McGuinness addressed the following issues:

- Clarification on what year is being used for allocation of housing with conflicting reports about 2007 and 2008. The Director of Services will examine the matter and revert to all members with clarification.
- Members requested further information on the advertisement for Expressions of Interest for Housing Provision. The Director of Services advised that the Plan provides for 500 units under the leasing model and the purpose of the advertisement was to identify long term leasing options that might become available over the next three years.
- F. Pentony, Director of Services confirmed that the local authority doesn't have the legal powers to issue Municipal Bonds and that National Legislation would be required to give effect to any such proposal.
- Unavailability of HAP accommodation options together with landlords selling properties currently in the private rented sector is contributing to the housing accommodation crisis in the County:
- The need for an official waiting list for transfers- the Director advised that each case is dealt with individually, a review of transfer requests has been undertaken and that a Review of the Allocation scheme would be required to deal with the issue going forward including the potential for a swap system.
- Building Control issue at College Manor- the Director of Services advised that the former Dundalk Urban District Council leased twenty units from the Developer and the normal inspection template was used. A much more invasive inspection process was carried out in relation to potential purchases which indicated that intervention was required to address issues but this is a matter for the Voluntary Housing Body.

- Woodland Park- J. McGuinness, Director of Services advised that, as far as the local authority is concerned the original agreement with the Traveller Representatives still stands and no further meetings have been held to date.

Minute No. 22/16

Infrastructure, Operations and Marine Progress Report

Members discussed the Report as circulated with the Agenda and the following matters were addressed:

- Continued problems with sewage seeping into rear gardens at Meadow View. Storm pump not operating effectively. Residents being advised by Irish Water that is a matter for the Local Authority. G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that it was a matter for Irish Water but that he would investigate further with Water Services Department with a view to removing any ambiguity.
- F. Pentony, Director of Services confirmed that there would be extensive consultation on the Clanbrassil Street Project but the Project must conform overall to the “concept” that has been approved as part of the application process. The Project will require Part 8 Planning and it is hoped to appoint a consultant in the current year.
- Colaiste Cuchulainn- CPO has been confirmed, Louth County Council will be project Manager and legal issues are currently being advanced. Members expressed concern that construction costs may have risen since the original budget was agreed.
- The Senior Engineer will revert on the issue of realignment of Road Markings at The Demesne which he had understood to be complete.
- Members noted that the Municipal District had three changes of Area Engineer in the last eighteen months with John O’Hagan now confirmed as replacing Paddy Birch. Noted that an updated staff list had not been issued to members. F. Pentony, Director of Services advised that staff transfers were still taking place which leaves it difficult to finalise a list. On the proposal of Cllr. T. Sharkey seconded by Cllr. C. Keelan it was agreed to give the Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District the authority to contact the Chief Executive to express dissatisfaction at the absence of a current staff list.
- Flooding affecting the functioning of septic tanks in rural areas and the need for an analysis of old combined systems. G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that maintenance of septic tanks was a matter for individual households and noted that Irish Water had concerns about separating foul and storm water.

- Tertiary Roads not included in Roadworks Programme despite the need for remediation works.
- Lack of Outdoor staff having detrimental effect on routine maintenance work such as gully cleaning.
- List of Grant Allocations, announced after the Agenda had issued, was circulated to members at this meeting for information.

Minute No. 23/16

Draft Local Economic and Community Plan

Aibhlin McCrann and Cliona Ryan from Communique International joined the meeting to deal with issues related to the Draft Plan which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. At the outset the members were advised that the requirement of the Municipal District is to consider the Draft Plan with regard to its consistency with the County Development Plan and any Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, Regional Guidelines as well as the respective Community and Economic Goals being consistent with each other. It was confirmed to Members that the Draft Plan is consistent with the County Development Plan, the Drogheda and Environs Plan, the Dundalk and Environs Plan, the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines.

- The need to identify clearly where employment is going to be created rather than aspirational targets. Suggestions to use Connect Ireland as Best Practice and try to make contact with Louth business people abroad to see if there is any scope for attracting business to the Country
- The need for the inclusion of more numeric targets including target numbers of students in DkIT.
- Plan provides a good vision for the county despite challenges in implementing objectives.
- Economic Development must be Sustainable - collaboration on an inter agency basis together with the LEO Office will retain clarity of purpose in achieving economic targets.
- Community Plan lofty but achievable provided funding is made available to implement objectives.
- Plan will be monitored by NOAC and as a Statutory Plan must be delivered.

- The Plan will be reviewed after two years to measure it's success and it was noted that the Community Stakeholders have to revert with timeframes for the Plan.
- On the Proposal of Cllr. D. Breathnach seconded by Cllr. M Doyle the Community Plan was approved.
- On the Proposal of Cllr. M. Doyle seconded by Cllr. M. Butler the Economic Plan was approved.

Minute No. 24/16

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. M. Dearey
Seconded by: Cllr. M. Butler
And Resolved

"That this Municipal District invite the OPW to make a presentation on the Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study - Phase 3 - North East Coast, with particular reference to the future flooding threat to Dundalk from tidal inundation"

REPLY:

This is a matter for the members

Minute No. 25/16

Notice of Motion

Proposed by: Cllr. M. Dearey
Seconded by: Cllr. M. Butler
And Resolved

"That the members of this Municipal District recommend to the Chief Executive and the Board of An Tain Arts Centre, that the ban on political meetings in Dundalk Town Hall (An Tain Arts Centre) by registered Political Parties be lifted"

Reply:

The building is under lease to An Tain Arts Centre, therefore it is a matter for them to decide how the building is used.

As members of the Board of An Táin Arts Centre Cllr. M Yore and Cllr. C. Keelan abstained from the discussion/ decision.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

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

Date: _____

Cathaoirleach: _____

Meetings Administrator: _____