

Edenderry Area Committee

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF EDENDERRY AREA COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4th of December 2013,
IN THE TOWN HALL, EDENDERRY AT 3.30 p.m.**

Present: *Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick; Cllr Noel Bourke; Cllr John Foley; Cllr Liam Quinn; Cllr Fergus Mc Donnell;*

In attendance:

Mr. Damien Grennan, Area Engineer; Mr. Dermot Mahon, SEO Housing; Ms. Therese O'Meara, A/Town Clerk; Mr. Declan Conlon, Area Manager

Apologies: *Cllr Finian O'Neill, Cllr Nichola Hogan; Cllr Ger Plunkett*

Prior to the start of the meeting the Cathaoirleach and members wished Pat Gallagher, County Manager the very best of luck in his new position as County Manager with Westmeath County Council.

1. Confirmation of minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Noel Bourke and seconded by Cllr. Liam Quinn, the minutes of the Area Meeting held on the 4th of September 2013 were adopted.

2. Progress Report – Housing

Dermot Mahon, SEO Housing gave the Housing presentation. Dermot advised that there were now 529 people on the housing preferences list, an increase from 475 in May 2013. The highest demand for housing is still in Edenderry.

In his presentation Dermot included the allocations in the area for the past year this included the allocation type i.e. leasing, ras or local authority. There are currently 404 houses in Edenderry with 16 vacant. One of which requires major refurbishment. Funding has been made available for works to be carried out on the other 15 vacant houses. Dermot included information in relation to these vacant houses including why the houses became vacant and how long it was vacant for.

He then gave information in relation to the Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018. He also advised that some housing units may become available via Nama in Portarlinton. In relation to a query on same, Dermot advised that the Council will not take on these units until issues like responsibility for damage is agreed in advance with Nama. The members were also advised that a plan will be drawn up for a potential of 6-8 units in Daingean. In relation to Housing Grants Dermot advised that 80 grants were completed this year compared to 60 last year. In relation to a query on properties becoming available in unfinished estates, Dermot advised that discussions are ongoing with the developers.

Local Government (Planning & Development) Regulations 2001 (Part VIII) – provision of 5 no houses at School Lane, Edenderry. This proposal was not adopted by the members as they have concerns in relation to the type of house. It was felt that they would not be in keeping with the existing houses in the area.

In relation to questions on the standard of pre lets, Dermot advised that OCC can't stand over improvements made to houses by tenants and advised that houses must be to a certain standard before we can make them available to the public.

The members were advised that a new policy for pre let will be brought to Offaly County Council meeting via the SPC. In relation to Data protection Dermot explained that at assessment stage applicants are asked to sign a form in relation to the disclosure of their personal information.

3. Progress Report – Water Services

Tom Shanahan, Senior Engineer Water Services & Environment gave the Water Services presentation. He advised that from the 1st of January 2014 water services will be funded by Irish Water with a budget set by them. All major decisions will lie with Irish water. There will be service level agreements between Irish water and the local authority in accordance with an agreed Annual Service Plan. It is proposed that these service level agreements will be for an initial period of 12 years with interim reviews. It is hoped that the Local Government Bill 2013 will be approved before Christmas. There are a series of protocols to define the interaction between Irish Water and the Local authorities have been developed and water services staff are undertaking intensive training in Irish Water Systems at present.

Tom advised that from our point of view it will be business as usual in 2014 and that services will be delivered in consultation with Irish Water from there onwards.

In relation to capital schemes from 2014, Irish Water will fund all Water Services Capital Projects. Projects currently in progress will be completed but commencement of new projects will be at the discretion of Irish Water. It is envisaged that greater emphasis will be placed on completing low cost small scale projects that will expedite improvements to schemes.

Group Water Schemes (private) will still be the responsibility of the Local Authority. These will continue to be funded by the Department of the Environment for a limited period until Irish Water is self financing.

4. Progress Report – Roads

Damien Grennan, SEE/Area Engineer gave the road presentation. Damien advised that the roads programme is complete. He included funding for 5 locations where work was carried out under the community involvement in roadworks scheme in his presentation together with road which we allocated emergency funding during the year. He advised that works at Killane will be complete in a number of weeks and the road will be open in time for Christmas. He thanked the locals affected by this work for their patience. The members complimented the staff for the work carried out during the roads programme and from works carried out with additional funding.

Queries were raised in relation to ongoing works in the square. Damien advised that a curiosity crossing is being installed from the footpath to the front of the Town Hall towards All Links. He explained that traffic should give priority to pedestrians using this crossing. Funding for same has been provided by the Lions Club, OLDC & OCC disability funding. In relation to queries on the reduction in car parking spaces, Damien advised that there are 5 spaces in total – 2 of which were in fact triangle shaped spaces – 2 were in the paid parking area and 3 in the free parking spaces. He advised that there are ample spaces available in the square.

There were queries from Edenderry Town Councillors in relation to lime in water who were advised that tests are done regularly. There were queries also in relation to poles to the side of narrow disable parking spaces and two remaining stumps of tree in the graveyard in Edenderry. Damien advised that these issues will be looked at.

The Cathaoirleach wished everyone a Happy Christmas.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Date: _____