

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR
HELD IN BIRR CIVIC OFFICES, WILMER ROAD, BIRR AT 4.30 P.M. ON
MONDAY 8TH APRIL, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs J Carroll, P Ormond, J Leahy,
J Clendennen, S Maher and E Dooley

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. Frank Heslin, DOS, Mr John Mitchell
A/SEE, Ms D Molloy, Meetings Administrator,
Ms Rose O’Keeffe, Mr John Cunningham,
Housing Services OCC, Ms Jean Ryan, Mr Willie
Ryan, Roads OCC and Ms Marian Pilkington.

Vote of Sympathy

A Vote of Sympathy was extended to Cllr Eamonn Dooley on the death of his sister Theresa Molloy, Ferbane RIP

Adoption of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 11th March, 2019

On the proposal of Cllr. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. Leahy the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Birr held on 11th March, 2019 were adopted.

Housing Estate Management Funding

Ms Rose O’Keeffe, Housing Services presented the Birr Proposed Estate Project for 2019 outlining 19 estates within Birr MD where money could be spent on estate enhancement. The Members enquired if one more estate at Gallen View, Ferbane could be included for works and this was agreed. The Members praised the work that had been carried out in other estates in 2018 and said the residents were very happy with it. On the proposal of Cllr Leahy and seconded by Cllr Dooley the proposed Estate Project for 2019 was adopted.

Housing Services Progress Report

Mr John Cunningham A/SEE presented the Housing Services Progress Report to the Members. The Members welcomed the programme and raised the following:

- Concerns in relation to the HAP Scheme and the way it is being operated by landlords.
- Congratulated the work carried out on void properties but asked that derelict properties in towns and villages be looked at to see if they could be used for housing, Mr Cunningham advised that properties have been identified but not very many are suitable for purpose.
- Lack of out of hours homeless service in the county, and outlined that at present there are two people sleeping rough in Birr, Mr Cunningham acknowledged same.
- Welcomed the Syrian families that have relocated to Birr but raised concerns over the way their housing need was dealt with. The meeting was advised that Birr 20:20 were hosting a meeting in the next couple of days to advise on the introduction of the families to the town.
- Concerned by lack of housing available on the private rental market, enquired if it would be possible to apply a rent freeze in the county. Mr Cunningham advised that a rent freeze is a national issue and cannot be decided locally.

- Welcomed the provision of houses through direct construction and enquired if there were any more of these projects in the pipeline for coming years to try and meet demand. Mr Cunningham advised that there are more projects in the pipeline and that the council are looking at acquiring additional lands.
- How are housing acquisitions working, are we getting first choice at houses or are we on the open market, Mr Cunningham advised that we do not get first choice on properties and that we do not compete with other buyers, he further advised that AHB are buying up distressed properties in the area, and that a lot of the properties that are available for purchase are not suitable for the Council.
- Concern in relation to large volume of maintenance requests and are the tenants looking after their houses, should a levy be placed on rents for maintenance of the property, Mr Cunningham advised that a new tenant is now required to pay a deposit on a property and that inspections are also being carried out.
- Rebuilding Ireland Mortgage Scheme, what is the take up like, and also the Repair to Lease Scheme, Mr Cunningham advised that there is not a large take up on either scheme.
- Are there any proposals for Affordable Housing in the pipeline, Mr Cunningham advised that there are none at present.
- DPG Scheme how long is it taking for an application to be completed, Mr Cunningham advised that great progress has been made with this scheme.
- Enquired if a playground or amenity area could be looked at while building the new housing units in Belmont, Mr Cunningham agreed that a playground application could be looked at for Belmont.

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LED Retrofit Project Eastern Region Presentation

Ms Jean Ryan and Mr Willie Ryan on Roads Section OCC gave a presentation to the Members in relation to LED Retrofit Project and also a general update in relation to public lighting. The Members welcomed the project and all the works being carried out on upgrades, and cost savings that are being made but raised some concerns in relation to needing additional lights at certain junctions.

Schedule of Municipal District Works

The Schedule of Municipal District Works for 2019 was circulated to the Members and same was agreed and noted, and on the proposal of Cllr Leahy and seconded by Cllr Maher it was approved.

Any Other Business

The Members requested that a letter be sent to Inland Waterways in relation to the number of empty barges that are moored at Shannonharbour, as they are causing congestion, and ask if they can be removed.

The Meeting then concluded.

SIGNED: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH

MEETINGS ADMINSTRATOR

DATE:

