

**MINUTES OF MAY MONTHLY MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF
BIRR HELD REMOTELY ON THURSDAY 21st MAY, 2020 IN BIRR CIVIC
OFFICES, WILMER ROAD, BIRR AT 4.30 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs E Dooley, P Ormond, J Carroll
J Clendennen, C Claffey and J Leahy

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Ann Dillon A/Director of Services, Mr John
Mitchell SEE, Ms Mary Hussey SE Environment
and Water Services OCC and Ms D Molloy,
Meetings Administrator.

Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held in Committee on 23rd April, 2020.

On the proposal of Cllr Leahy and seconded by Cllr Carroll the Minutes of the Meeting in Committee of Birr MD held on 23rd April, 2020 were adopted.

Adoption of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 23rd April, 2020.

On the proposal of Cllr Ormond and seconded by Cllr Claffey the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Birr MD held on 23rd April, 2020 were adopted.

Water and Environment Services Progress Report

Ms Mary Hussey SE Water and Environment Services presented the current report to the Members. The Members thanked her for her report and raised the following:

- The Members enquired about the progress being made in relation to the flooding at Shannonharbour, they advised that relocation for the residents involved is not an option. Ms Hussey advised that discussions are ongoing with the OPR in relation to same. The Members further enquired if there was any timeframe for when works might commence.
- The Members welcomed the flood defences in Portovolla but highlighted the ongoing problem with sewers in the estate. Ms Hussey advised that there was a problem with stormflow water and that they were in contact with Irish Water in relation to same.
- The Members acknowledged that the bottle banks were being used a lot at the moment and that when they are full people are still leaving their empties behind them. They enquired if an audio message could be played to alert the public if the bins are full to take your bottles home or risk a fine. They advised that complaints had been received from the residents of Parkrise Housing Estate which is across from the bottle banks in relation to the rubbish being left there. Ms Hussey said they could look at the use of this in conjunction with the cctv. They also raised the issue of dumping blackspots and enquired if a social media campaign or adverts could be placed in newspapers asking the public to be vigilant and report any activity they see to the local authority.
- The Members enquired if the civic amenity sites had seen greater use during lockdown and were advised that they had seen much greater activity and had been promoted very vigorously on social media.
- Welcomed the works on Birr Water Scheme and enquired if it would be operated privately or by Irish Water and OCC, acknowledged that the water services in Birr were always very well looked after by the Caretakers

- Enquired if more public bins could be provided as people were disposing of gloves and masks on the street and this is a public health issue. Ms Hussey advised that public bins can lead to more dumping but that she would discuss the matter with the SEE. The Members raised the issue of dog fouling continuing to be a major problem and what can be done to raise awareness and educate people on same. Ms Hussey advised that bins and bags have been provided in some areas and this could again be discussed with the SEE.
- Welcomed all the Capital investment and enquired if the bridge structures and condition of roads were being surveyed in light of the damage caused to them by the flooding, Ms Hussey advised that the SE in Roads was in discussions with the SEE in relation to same.
- The Members enquired as to what is the position with GWS that still have not been taken over by Irish Water, Ms Hussey advised that talks were ongoing with Irish Water in relation to this.
- Enquired in relation to the works proposed at Kilreaghan Cemetary, Ferbane, does any of this work relate to improvements to the roadway or parking or is this work that could be undertaken by the Councils own staff. Ms Hussey advised that she would discuss this with the SEE and revert back.

Schedule of Municipal District Works

The Schedule of Municipal District Works for 2020 was presented to the Members. The Members noted the contents but were advised that same could not be adopted until the June meeting as a quorum would be required. It was agreed to place it as an item on the agenda for the June meeting for adoption.

Covid 19 Update

Ms Ann Dillon A/DOS addressed the meeting and advised that since the last meeting some restrictions had been lifted and that OCC staff were now able to commence construction projects and road works on a phased basis while all the time acting on best public health advice, and that site visits for planning permissions were ongoing. Ms Dillon further advised that Library Services are set to resume to the public from June 8th but as of yet it was difficult to envisage what format this would take. All other services are continuing remotely and plans were being considered for the safe return to the workplace and opening to the public. She advised that a restart grant for rateable businesses would be launched the following day and that this would be administered by LEO in OCC and would be open until the end of August.

The Members thanked the DOS for her update and raised the following:

- Acknowledged the services still being carried out by staff in these difficult times and praised them for their efforts.
- Enquired if it was possible for planning permissions to be looked at on a priority basis e.g. farmers needing to build sheds to house stock but the DOS advised that planning permissions are subject to statutory dates so it would not be possible to prioritise one sector over another.
- The Members expressed some concern in relation to the restart grants being made available, and were advised that the grants are based on the rates bill for a premises and not the payment of the bill. It was further advised that OLDC are also providing some funding for businesses to try and help with the costs of reopening while providing social distancing.

District Engineers Report.

Mr John Mitchell, SEE presented a report to the Members and advised that as restrictions had been somewhat eased since May 18th our outdoor staff are now back at work giving careful consideration to Health and Safety and public health guidelines it is hoped that the surface dressing programme could commence the following week. The Members thanked him for his report and raised the following:

- Welcomed the Town and Village Renewal works in Kinnitty but asked that disruption could be kept to a minimum, and also what is the situation in relation to the underground ducting can we make sure that service providers are made aware that they have to use it for undergrounding. Important to communicate details of works and disruptions to the locality in advance of works commencing.
- Is it possible to reassess all public lighting in the county in an effort to convert to LED? It is also a good opportunity to look at public lighting blackspots to identify same, some lights missing in Crinkle after the works and other areas.
- Enquired about potholes in St Helens Court in Banagher, Mr Mitchell advised that if this estate is not in the charge of the council then it is the responsibility of the developer to repair it. Welcomed the resurfacing works and work carried out at the pedestrian crossing and the post office in Banagher.
- The Members welcomed the commencement of the surface dressing programme and enquired about the number of applications received for the LIS. Mr Mitchell advised that there were 15 new applications in the Birr MD area. The Members enquired when the CIS schemes were likely to commence.
- Enquired when the work was likely to commence on Green St in Birr, could this be carried out as soon as possible while there is reduced activity in the area? Mr Mitchell advised that he was in discussions with interested parties in relation to same.
- The Members enquired about the funding received for Birr Destination Town and had any progress been made with the project. Ms Dillon advised that an internal steering group had been set up and had already met in relation to this. She advised that she would update the Members on the progress at the June meeting.

Any Other Business

The Cathaoirleach advised that the Just Transition report was to be presented to the Cabinet the following day and pending the findings of the report it might be necessary to convene a meeting to discuss same.

It was agreed by resolution of the Members to hold the Annual Meeting of Birr MD on the 18th June, 2020 as the original date of 8th June was too close to this meeting. This was proposed by Cllr Dooley and seconded by Cllr Carroll.

The Meeting then concluded.

SIGNED: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH

MEETINGS ADMINSTRATOR

DATE: