

## **Minutes of the July Meeting of the Municipal District of Callan-Thomastown**

**Date: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2025 at 3.30 p.m.**

**Venue: Online via MS Teams**

<b>Chair:</b>	Cllr Joe Lyons
<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Brian Cleere, Cllr Michael Doyle, Cllr Joe Sheridan, Cllr Deirdre Cullen.
<b>In attendance:</b>	Josephine Coyne, Library; Director of Services; Mr Padraig Slye, Assistant Engineer; Ms Anne Marie Shortall, Meetings Administrator; Ms Breda Carroll, Assistant Staff Officer; Sian Moloughney, Kilkenny People Journalist.
<b>Apologies:</b>	Cllr Stephanie Doheny, Mr Declan Murphy, Ms Fiona Deegan, Ms Carmel Brett.

Cllr Joe Lyons opened the meeting and expressed sympathies to the family of the man that lost his life in the tragic accident at Kennyswell Road in Kilkenny this week and to the Roads staff.

Cllr Lyons offered congratulations to all involved in the official opening of Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum.

### **1) Confirmation of Minutes (Chair Cllr Joe Lyons).**

The minutes of the June annual meeting, held 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were adopted, proposed by Cllr Deirdre Cullen and seconded by Cllr Brian Cleere.

The minutes of the June ordinary meeting, held 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were adopted, proposed by Cllr Deirdre Cullen and seconded Cllr Brian Cleere.

### **2) Consideration of Reports and Recommendations**

#### **(a) Library Development Plan 2025 – 2029 (Josephine Coyne).**

Josephine Coyne presented the Library Development Plan for the next five years, including the following points:

- Investment in all branches is planned for the period 2025 – 2029.
- There has been an increase in all services provided post-COVID. Online and digital services are at the forefront.
- There are 5 strategic objectives in place for the next 5 years: continue to improve user experience, community connectivity and cultural engagement, partnership and collaboration, knowledge and innovation, literacy and learning, sustainability and adaptability.
- A Gold Star has been awarded recently for the Mayfair Library.
- Library staff are an integral part of the success of the library service across the county and many thanks to them for their continued efforts.
- The Library Service intends to remain innovative and adaptive and invest wisely.

**Cllr Joe Lyons** commended the inclusivity and digital advances, as well as the maintenance of local libraries. He queried the timeline for the Callan Library to the Friary Complex.

**Cllr Deirdre Cullen** commended the exceptional presentation delivered by Josephine Coyne, as well as all staff in the Library Services and highlighted the library is a social outlet as well as a learning tool. Cllr Cullen commented on the 42% increase in library membership post COVID and noted that the book spend should be increased going forward. Cllr Cullen also commented on the high usage of the Mayfair Library by young people and described it as an excellent resource and gift for county Kilkenny people.

**(b) Roads Update Report.**

**Padraig Slye** advised that the 2025 roadworks programme is now well underway. He advised on the following road works:

- Restoration/improvement works were carried out in June at Langton's Lane, The Stripe, Jerpoint Hill, Moneen, Garranbahy and Coppenagh.
- Further work is planned for July at The Stripe, Haggard Road in Callan and Ballyhale.
- Surface dressing will commence week beginning 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025 in Thomastown, Callan South and Callan North.
- Drainage works at Hugginstown have now been completed.
- The Stoneyford to Ennisnag footpath has now been completed.
- Low-cost safety works are ongoing for Mount Loftus, Ballyogan and Ahenny. Procurement is ongoing for low-cost safety works in Ballyhale.
- There is a planned road closure on the Ferrymountgarrett Bridge for site investigation week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

**Cllr Joe Lyons** expressed his thanks for all road works done across the county. He queried the planned installation of a pedestrian crossing at Haggard's Green, Callan. Padraig Slye advised that the pedestrian crossing is likely to be included in a bigger Callan project in 2026.

**Cllr Brian Cleere** asked if there would be pedestrian access at Ferrymountgarrett Bridge during the road closure. Padraig Slye advised that the road will be fully closed with no pedestrian access for the duration of the works.

Cllr Cleere also queried when the work on the footpaths at Castle Avenue will be commencing as there are several elderly people living at this location. Padraig Slye does not have any further information on this, but he will discuss the matter with Declan Murphy.

**Cllr Joe Sheridan** questioned the works planned for Ballyhale and the fact that the Roads Department are liaising with landowners and if this will change the scope of works. Padraig Slye advised that ditches/hedges will need to be removed, and it is necessary to inform and liaise with landowners in advance of this, but it will not change the scope of the works. Cllr Joe Sheridan complimented the Ennisnag to Stoneyford footpath works.

**Cllr Joe Lyons** highlighted the lack of water services in Bennettsbridge/Danesfort, with water being cut off without notice. He noted that the local school recently spent €7,000 to supply their own water due to health and safety concerns. He commented that the water situation is appalling but he is aware that it is an Uisce Eireann issue and not Kilkenny County Council's fault.

**Cllr Deirdre Cullen** also commented on the water outages and advised that she has made complaints regarding the lack of notices going out to the public on water outages and disruption. She noted that there has been up to 30 hours of no water in Danesfort recently and the water was black when it returned. She highlighted Nore Valley Farm as a local business with 150 guests per night and no water for cleaning/showering/animals. Cllr Cleere queried how this local business is to survive with ongoing water disruptions and noted that the current service is shocking. Cllr Cleere suggested bringing the matter to Uisce Eireann as a Municipal District to request improved communication regarding water outages and disruption, to highlight inconsistencies and to seek clarification and further information. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Joe Lyons. Cllr Lyons suggested that standby pumps need investment to alleviate the problem. Anne Marie Shortall said a letter would be sent to Uisce Eireann on the matter, and she will communicate with the Water Services department at Kilkenny County Council to seek clarification on coordination and communication with Uisce Eireann. Cllr Cullen acknowledged Kilkenny County Council's work regarding water services and noted that Uisce Eireann is the primary issue here.

**(c) Rural Development Update (Anne Marie Shortall).**

**Anne Marie Shortall** provided information on the Kings River project.

**Cllr Lyons** also commented on the King's River and when the works would commence in July. Anne Marie Shortall advised that the tender process has now been finalised and some further information has been sought. An ecologist has been appointed, and an onsite meeting is planned. The works will be progressed as soon as possible. The procurement process caused some delays.

Ms. Shortall advised that the Local Enhancement Programme applications have been approved by the Department and those successful will have been notified in writing. Anne Marie informed the members of National Play Day, which will take place in Kilkenny Castle Park from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> July, organised by the Community Section.

**3) Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District members for transaction of such meeting.**

There were no items for discussion.

**4) Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting.**

There were no items for discussion.

**5) Notices of Motion.**

There were no items for discussion.

**6) Correspondence.**

There were no items for discussion.

**7) Any other business.**

**Cllr Brian Cleere** offered congratulations to the Blacks and Whites U-16 camogie club who won the National Féile in Wexford for the first time in the club's history.

**Cllr Joe Lyons** offered congratulations to Callan United on winning the 2025 FAI Women's Under-17 Cup last weekend. The members wished best of luck to the Kilkenny Senior Hurlers in the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship Semi-Final on Sunday next against Tipperary.

The next MD meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 at 3.30 p.m. in Thomastown.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Chairperson:  \_\_\_\_\_