

Minutes of the March Meeting of the Municipal District of Callan-Thomastown

Date: Wednesday 5th March, 2025 at 3.00p.m.

Venue: Remote access via MS Teams.

Chair: Cllr Deirdre Cullen
Present Cllr Brian Cleere, Cllr Stephanie Doheny, Cllr Michael Doyle, Cllr Joe Lyons, Cllr Joe Sheridan.
In attendance: Fiona Deegan, Director of Services; Declan Murphy, Area Engineer; Anne Marie Shortall, Meetings Administrator; Paul Byrne, Executive Engineer; Carmel Brett, Staff Officer.

Prior to commencement of the meeting Cllr Cullen, on behalf of herself and her fellow elected members, extended condolences to the wife and family of Mr. Ger O'Shea, former GSS in the Callan North area of the Municipal District, on his recent passing.

It was proposed by Cllr Cullen, seconded by Cllr Lyons and agreed to forward a card of sympathy from the Callan-Thomastown Municipal District.

A minutes' silence was observed.

1) Confirmation of Minutes

(b) Minutes of the Municipal District meeting of 5th February, 2025.

The minutes of the Municipal District meeting held 5th February, 2025 were adopted, proposed by Cllr S Doheny and seconded by Cllr J Lyons.

2) Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

(a) Speed Limit Review Pre-draft Consultation (Paul Byrne)

Mr Paul Byrne, Executive Engineer KCC Road Design, gave the members an update on the National Speed Limit Review, saying changes are being implemented in three stages with Stage 1 reduction of rural roads speed limits to 60km/h completed on 7th February and Stage 2 addressing Urban Speed Limits currently underway.

Paul explained that the urban speed limit will reduce from 50km/h to 30km/h in urban areas based on CSO urban boundaries and bye laws review will be required following the urban speed limit change, with certain areas remaining in Bye Laws such as schools outside urban areas and small settlements.

The process is currently at Pre-Draft consultation Phase and awaiting TII announcement of commencement of workshops.

Draft Bye Laws will be then be made following any representations and the making of a schedule of amendments.

Public consultation will follow, with Bye Laws to be adopted by the elected members prior to implementation.

The members thanked Paul Byrne for his presentation and raised the following items:

- Type of settlements which constitute an urban area will be determined by CSO boundaries
- Speed limits in some rural smaller settlements could increase from 30km/h to 50km/h

(b) Roadworks Programme 2025 (Declan Murphy)

Mr Declan Murphy gave a presentation to the elected members on the proposed 2025 Roadworks Programme, outlining the breakdown of funding for Restoration Improvement, Restoration Maintenance, Discretionary Grant, Drainage, Routine Maintenance of Regional and Local Roads, Community Involvement Scheme, Bridge Rehabilitation, Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Works, National Road N76 Bypass Active Travel & Safe Schools, and Local MD Fund for 2025.

Local Improvement Scheme, Low Cost Safety Scheme and National Road Maintenance (excluding TII Schemes) budgets not yet confirmed.

Based on current list and budget there will be three projects offered under the Community Involvement in roadworks Scheme.

The various road locations proposed under the various schemes were identified with corresponding budgets.

Cllr Cullen thanked Declan for his prior consultation on the programme and members raised the following items:

Works on N76 bye pass at Callan are scheduled to go to Tender in Q2 2025 with contractors on site Q3 2025, works to include road resurfacing, better line markings at junctions and installation of a 3-metre wide shared footway & cycleway;

It was agreed to investigate what process could be used to amend the selection criteria for prioritisation of applications for the Community Involvement Scheme with a view to progressing a larger volume of projects annually.

The Roadworks Programme 2024 was adopted, proposed by Cllr Joe Lyons and seconded by Cllr Joe Sheridan.

(c) Monthly Roads Update (Declan Murphy)

Mr D. Murphy, Area Engineer, updated the members on the following roads related matters, outlining projects completed and planned:

- Restoration Improvement works to commence 10th March, locations listed;
- Safe route to schools' project in Graiguenamanagh is continuing, with line marking, ramps and virtual ramps completed;
- ORIS works continuing on Stoneyford to Ennisnag footpath;
- Community Recognition Funded remedial works to commence on walls between Ballyhale & Knocktopher mid-March with Section 38 process for traffic calming works open for public consultation until 4pm Friday 10th.

The members thanked Mr. Murphy for his update and raised the following items:

- It was clarified that Coláiste Abhainn Rí intend to submit a planning permission application which will include plans to install pedestrian crossings at Flaggy Lane and Haggard Road, Callan

(d) Monthly Rural Development Update (Anne Marie Shortall)

As a follow-up from the February Municipal District meeting, Ms Anne Marie Shortall advised members she had circulated a presentation previously given to the members by Mr Tim Butler, Director of Services, on water and waste water capacity in Kilkenny City and County, an extract from the Housing Delivery Action Plan showing a table detailing availability of water and wastewater by area in County Kilkenny, and a copy of the update on Flood Relief Schemes given to the Municipal District members in December 2024.

A report was also given to the members on the third public consultation event on the flood relief scheme in Graiguenamanagh which took place on 23rd January 2025.

Regarding the Town & Village Renewal funded works to the Kings River in Callan, Anne Marie said Kilgallen Consultants have been appointed and their surveys and investigations are on schedule to allow in-river works during the allowed period July/August 2025.

Anne Marie said it is proposed to advertise the CCFCs scheme mid-March, and the Local Enhancement Programme is now closed and applications are being assessed.

The members thanked Ms Shortall for her update and raised the following items:

- Shortfall of funding for pumping station works in the Abbey Meadows carpark – when tender costs are received these will be relayed to the OPW with a request for additional funding;

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

It was proposed by Cllr Cullen, seconded by Cllr Sheridan and agreed that a letter should issue from this Municipal District to the Minister expressing disappointment that works for the Water & Wastewater Scheme in Bennettsbridge will not commence until 2029 and emphasising how important it is that these works should commence prior to then.

Cllr Lyons asked that the feasibility of constructing an outdoor swimming pool near the Kings River in Callan be investigated.

This concluded the business of the meeting

Chairperson: 

