

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CASTLECOMER MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL ON MONDAY 20TH
FEBRUARY 2017 AT 11.00AM**

Chair: Cllr P Fitzpatrick

Cllrs: J Brennan, M H Cavanagh, McCarthy, P Millea and M Shortall.

Officials: M Delahunty, S Walton, N Byrne, P Beuby, A M Walsh, M Mullally and M Newport

Cllr P Fitzpatrick opened the meeting by welcoming S Walton to the position of Director of Services for the Castlecomer Municipal District and wishing him well in future endeavors. Cllr P Fitzpatrick also asked that his thanks be recorded to Mary Mulholland for her contribution made and her willingness to engage and support the members during her time as Director of Services for the Castlecomer Municipal District.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of :-

(a) January Meeting of the Castlecomer Municipal District held on 16th January 2017.

The minutes were proposed by Cllr M McCarthy, seconded by Cllr J Brennan and agreed:- "That the minutes of the January Meeting of the Castlecomer Municipal District held on 16th January 2016 as circulated with the agenda be and are hereby approved."

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

(a) Housing report

M Mullally referred to Housing Report circulated with the agenda for today's meeting.

M Mullally provided a detailed and comprehensive presentation which covered the following:

- Details of Capital Programme including direct provision and acquisitions
- Housing Needs Assessment – 2016 last of three year Housing Needs Assessment and will be replaced by an Annual Assessment.
- National Differential Rents Framework – Council need to address some of the anomalies in the current rent scheme.
- Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016 – 35 application received in 2016 and 10 offers made. Department reviewing scheme and feedback sought.
- Disability Strategy – Draft disability strategy is now submitted to the Housing Agency for inclusion in National Disability Strategy
- Tenant Handbook – handbook in place over 10 years and is currently being reviewed, housing SPC involved.

- Housing Demand and Supply – shift in demand will dictate how we design going forward. 2016 saw reduction in approved applicants on Social Housing Support waiting list.
- Leasing - Increased take up of this scheme expected in light of current market rents.
- Capital Assistance Scheme – CAS is great opportunity to provide additional accommodation for special category of need.
- Private Housing Grants – Scheme still active, additional allocation taken last quarter.
- Inspections of Private Rented Accommodation – Backlog exists which is down to resource issue.
- Housing Loans – Renewed pack has been prepared and will be circulated to members. 84 annuity loan applications received in 2016, 32 approved. Local Authority is a lender of last resort.
- Homeless Services – up to date figures of people in emergency accommodation provided.
- Community and Estate Management – work completed by Ronan Ryan was acknowledged.

Contributions were received from the members in relation to the following:-

- Positive news and progress achieved was acknowledged.
- Reduction in Housing list acknowledged.
- Issue of people living in substandard accommodation raised.
- Small percentage of Annuity Loans approved.
- Update on 2017 allocation from the Department
- Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme – clarification sought to include comments of members and officials.
- Turn Key Developments – issues around closing dates and advertising of the various developments.
- The relevance of the Housing Report delivered at Municipal level was acknowledged and progress report was requested for the autumn.

(b) Update on Housing Developments.

AM Walsh circulated report to the members and provided detailed and comprehensive presentation which covered the following:

- Number of housing developments in the Castlecomer Municipal District
- Number of housing developments taken in charge and number remaining to be taken in charge.
- Comprehensive update on taking in charges which are in progress.
- Expects a minimum of 5 developments to be taken in charge in 2017.

Contributions were received from the members in relation to the following:-

- AM Walsh was complimented for patience & hard work and excellent progress achieved.

- Residents / Council's responsibility once estate taken in charge
- Overhanging trees at Tougher Crescent – issue to be referred to Parks Department.
- Glen Vale – what communication is in place with residents association.
- Haven Court – approach road in poor condition and some public lighting not working.

(c) Review of Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018

M Newport referred to Review of Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018 report circulated with the agenda for today's meeting and provided a detailed and comprehensive presentation which covered the following:

- Legislative back round to the review.
- Actions taken as part of the consultative process
- Assessment of Housing Needs and projected needs undertaken for lifetime of Programme
- Details of accommodation delivered in 2016 outlined.
- Two significant achievements of the Traveller Accommodation Programme outlined which involved redevelopment of St Catherine's Wetlands and purchase and allocation of house for elderly couple previously on roadside.
- Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

Contributions were received from the members in relation to the following:

- M Newport was thanked for presentation provided, progress achieved and her patience and resolve acknowledged.

3. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council for transaction at such meeting.

No items were raised

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

Items submitted by members:-

Cllr M H Cavanagh

(a) Road repairs at Waterland, Crosspatrick

P Beubry to discuss completion of maintenance works recently commenced with Overseer

(b) Update on Mine Closure at Galmoy.

M Delahunty read report submitted by B Mernagh, Senior Engineer, Water Services.

It was agreed S Walton would consult with various Departments involved and provide updated report to the members. It was also agreed that this item would be included on agenda for March meeting.

Cllr M Shortall

(a) Living Towns Pilot Programme

Cllr M Shortall requested that consideration be given to assisting property owners convert disused commercial premises for residential use. Cllr Shortall acknowledged the need for regulation, however, asked that the volume of regulation be examined with a view to encouraging and assisting regeneration and redevelopment in our towns and villages.

Contributions were received from the members in relation to the following:

- Need to keep towns and villages vibrant.
- No evidence on the ground of rural development initiatives by the Department.
- Merit in proposal and worth pursuing.
- Repair to lease initiative piloted by Waterford and Carlow County Council.
- Comparison between Urban and Village Renewal and Repair to Lease initiative sought.

5. Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick received 7th February 2017

"That Castlecomer Municipal District investigates the possible erection of a pedestrian bridge to allow pedestrians walk safely from Castlecomer Town over the river Deen to the Discovery Park and beyond".

Contributions were received from the members in respect of:

- Urgent need to accommodate pedestrians at this location.
- Current situation identified as an accident waiting to happen.
- Cllr P Fitzpatrick advised that the landowner involved is willing to engage with Kilkenny County Council.
- Cllr M Shortall highlighted that works highlighted in Notice of Motion are included in Local Area Plan for some time.
- Substantial nature of application which would be involved was acknowledged.
- Consideration is given to bringing other agencies on board including Failte Ireland raised.
- P Beubry to examine interim safety measures.
- Agreed feasibility study funded from General Municipal Allocation be completed, S Walton estimated cost in the region of €1,500.

6. Correspondence

No items were raised.

7. Matters arising from minutes

Traffic Count for the Square, Castlecomer and Need for off street parking in Castlecomer

Cllr M Shortall enquired whether an update was available in respect of Traffic Count at the Square, Castlecomer. Cllr J Brennan raised issue in respect of need for off street parking in Castlecomer. It was agreed both items would be included on the agenda for the March meeting.

Trees on Kilkenny Road, Freshford

Update provided by D Murphy was acknowledged with thanks.

8. Any other business

One Stop Shop

Cllr M H Cavanagh raised issue of need for One Stop Shop within the Council to provide information on all grants available etc.

Maintenance Works

Cllr M Shortall complimented staff of the Castlecomer Area Office for works undertaken on the approach road to Castlecomer near the Discovery Park

March Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Castlecomer Municipal District would take place at 10.30am on 20th of March and agenda will include Schedule of Municipal Works.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____