

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CASTLECOMER HELD VIA MS TEAMS ON MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2022 AT 11.00AM**

**In the chair:** Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick

**Present:** Cllrs John Brennan, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Michael Delaney, Denis Hynes and Michael McCarthy

**In attendance:** Mr Philippe Beubry, Ms Nancy Byrne, Mr Michael Leahy and Mr Steve Coverdale

**Apologies:** Mr Martin Prendiville

**Vote of Sympathy**

The members joined with the Cathaoirleach in paying tribute to Mr Billy Kinsella who sadly lost his life on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022 during the course of his employment with Wexford County Council. Members acknowledged the work completed by both Mr Philippe Beubry and Mr Tim Butler to ensure staff safety during recent storms and also highlighted the need for greater patience amongst the general public during severe weather. It was agreed that a Vote of Sympathy would be extended to Wexford County Council.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of:**

**(a) January Ordinary Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh seconded by Cllr Denis Hynes and agreed.

**2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations:**

**(a) Broadband**

Mr Steve Coverdale presented an update on Broadband to the members and advised that he will endeavour to update this report monthly. The presentation provided an update on the Regional Exchange in Kilkenny City and Local Exchanges in Thomastown, Johnstown and Castlecomer. An overview of the work ongoing by NBI was presented. An update on current issues in both Castlecomer and Urlingford were provided as follows: -

Mr Coverdale confirmed that Cellnex have identified areas in Castlecomer for possible mast locations for wireless broadband and are waiting for frequency tests for suitability to be carried out which it is hoped will be completed by February 2022.

Mr Coverdale confirmed that he has been in contact with the Urlingford Business Group about ongoing issues which have been referred to OpenEir for investigation and registered with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) for follow up. OpenEir have confirmed premises in the Togher Road Area are too far from cabinet for fibre to the cabinet (FTTC) and will be added to OpenEir Ireland Fibre Network (IFN) Scheme which Mr Coverdale advised could take a number of years. Mr Coverdale confirmed that Cellnex were granted a S254 licence for telecoms pole in September 2021 and are waiting for an expression of interest from operators. Mr Coverdale also advised that Cellnex are looking at the potential of a larger site probably adjacent to the M8 during 2022. A list of abbreviations / definitions associated with Broadband were circulated to members along with Blue Area Maps at November 2021 for both Castlecomer and Urlingford.

Contributions were received from the members as follows:

- Members thanked Mr Steve Coverdale for the update provided and acknowledged the huge volume of work involved and the slow nature of any progress.

- Members acknowledged the resourceful and able teams in place in both Johnstown and Urlingford and thanked Mr Steve Coverdale for his work with both teams.
- Members welcomed the identification of a site in Castlecomer for the provision of infrastructure.

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

None

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

None

5. **Notices of Motion**

**1 (22) Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick**

It was proposed by Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr Michael McCarthy and agreed:

*"That Kilkenny County Council and TII would as a matter of urgency address the road safety concerns in Ballyragget on the N77 between Glenvale and Castle Gardens".*

Cllrs Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael McCarthy, John Brennan, Denis Hynes and Mary Hilda Cavanagh spoke on this Motion.

**2 (22) Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick**

It was proposed by Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed:

*"That Kilkenny County Council would as part of the plan to address the safety concerns at the entrance to Station Avenue, Ballyragget would also include safety measures at the National School".*

Cllrs Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael McCarthy, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, John Brennan and Denis Hynes spoke on this Motion.

6. **Correspondence**

(a) **EirGrid Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Project Community Forum - Nomination of elected representative to sit on the Community Forum**

It was proposed by Cllr Denis Hynes, seconded by Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick as representative from the Castlecomer MD to sit on the EirGrid Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Project Community Forum.

7. **Matters arising from minutes**

(a) **Goul Drainage Committee**

Mr Michael Leahy confirmed that a letter had issued to the Department seeking the re-establishment of the Goul Drainage Committee and also to Tipperary and Laois County Council seeking their support for the re-establishment of the Committee.

(b) **Private Septic Tanks**

Mr Michael Leahy confirmed that a letter had issued to the Department seeking a substantial increase in grant funding for the upgrade of private septic tanks.

8. **Any other business**

(a) **Agree date for Workshop to discuss Draft Road Works Programme 2022**

It was agreed that a Workshop to discuss the Draft Road Works Programme 2022 would be held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> of March at 11am and be dealt with in committee.

**(b) Protocol for attending Meetings of the Municipal District**

Mr Michael Leahy confirmed new equipment is due to be provided in the Council Chamber which would facilitate attendees joining meetings remotely if required, however, this equipment will not be in place for the March MD meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed that the March MD meeting would be conducted on MS Teams and anyone wishing to join the meeting on MS Teams from the Council Chamber may do so.

**(c) Grangefertagh and Clonmantagh Churches**

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh requested that an update on Grangefertagh and Clonmantagh Churches be provided at the March MD meeting.

**(d) LCDC Funding**

Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick acknowledged significant LCDC funding announced last week.

**(e) Official opening of the new Castlecomer Footbridge**

Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick acknowledged the official opening of the new Castlecomer Footbridge held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and thanked those who attended the event and also Ms Catherine Cooney for her work to organise the event.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Chairperson:

Pat Fitzpatrick

Date:

21/03/2022.

