

**Minutes of the Piltown Municipal District Meeting held on
Wednesday, 2nd February, 2022 at 10.00am at the Rhu Glenn Hotel**

Present: Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Cathaoirleach
Cllrs. F. Doherty, E. Aylward, G. Frisby and T. Breathnach

In attendance: S. McKeown, Director of Services, S. Cullen, District Engineer, F. Stafford, A/Senior Engineer, Ú. Kealy, Admin Officer, A. Hyland, Exec. Engineer and O. Bannon, S.O.

Apologies: M. Arthurs, Meetings Administrator

1. Minutes of Ordinary Statutory Meeting held 1st December, 2021

Proposed by Cllr. G. Frisby, seconded by Cllr. F. Doherty and agreed

Matters Arising

Road Markings N25 – Cllr. Doherty asked that it be noted in the minutes that she had requested at the January Piltown MD Meeting that the junction of the N25 with L7522 at Ballinclare be reviewed with regard to reinstatement of road markings and provision of a deceleration/filter lane. She noted the number of accidents and fatalities at this location and said this needed to be looked at as a matter of urgency.

Ferrybank Shopping Centre – in response to Cllr. Frisby, S. McKeown advised that there is no further update to report on this matter since the last meeting.

Barrow Bridge – S. Cullen advised that Irish Rail have confirmed that the Rosslare to Waterford rail line is private property and no pedestrian access was or is available to the public. It was noted that while the line is maintained and carries occasional traffic, a recent review of bridge operations and associated risk assessment by Irish Rail and the National Transport Authority, in consultation with Wexford County Council, concluded that priority should be given to shipping traffic accessing New Ross port and the River Barrow and that the operation of the bridge be modified to remain open unless rail traffic requires it to be closed. To address risks associated with trespassing, gates were erected to preclude pedestrian access. It was noted that no date has currently been decided for opening the bridge. Cllr. Frisby noted that locals who had been using the bridge for many years were not made aware of this process. S. Cullen confirmed that the Waterford to Rosslare rail line is included in the strategic rail review underway at present.

N24/N25 Road Schemes – S. McKeown advised members that correspondence has been issued to the Minister for Transport as agreed in relation to N24/N25 Road Schemes, response is awaited.

Search and Rescue Service – S. McKeown confirmed that the Department of Transport have since confirmed in media releases that the tender documents for the service have been amended to include four bases at Dublin, Shannon, Sligo and Waterford, which is good news for the South East. Cllr. Dunphy welcomed the decision and thanked all members, officials and press for the support on this matter.

Meeting with Gardaí – Cllr. Aylward asked for update in relation to possible meeting with An Garda Síochána, noting the changes to districts since the last meeting with Gardaí. Cllr. Dunphy hoped that meetings of the Local Policing Partnership Committee could also resume. Cllr. Breathnach suggested that work begin to review the current Piltown MD Local Policing Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-2023. It was noted that a copy of the current Plan has been forwarded to Superintendent Colin Furlong. **Action MA**

Joint Meetings – S. McKeown confirmed that M. Arthurs has been in contact with Waterford to arrange, but as yet no date has been agreed for a joint meeting. It was noted a joint meeting with Carrick-on-Suir MD will follow this meeting at 12noon. **Action MA**

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

(a) Update South East Greenway

Cllr. Dunphy welcomed Frank Stafford, A/Senior Engineer and Dermot Donovan, Roadplan to the meeting. He invited D. Donovan to begin his presentation in relation to the proposed Greenway links to Glenmore and Slieverue.

D. Donovan began by stating that the objectives of the linkages to Glenmore and Slieverue is to drive economic activity in these villages through tourism, to provide facilities for the community to access the Greenway, providing amenities and walkways for wellbeing and health and also to move to a more sustainable means of transport to encourage people to walk and cycle as part of their daily travel. He said the route characteristics should also be family friendly overall and must be scenic, safe and away from heavy traffic, direct and as short as possible and comfortable for both walkers and cyclists.

Progress to-date was outlined with regard to the development and assessment of routes, discussions with landowners on the various route options examined and it is now intended to proceed to an informal, non-statutory public consultation with the final decision on the preferred option in each case

being made based on a combination of the assessment of routes and feedback from the public consultation.

D. Donovan went through each of the route options in detail for both Glenmore and Slieverue, outlining the advantages and disadvantages, impacts and constraints and noting the emerging preferred routes following the detailed assessments. He outlined the process of the public consultation, which will include physical display of the routes and route assessments with the intension of having an evening consultation in both Glenmore and Slieverue. A display over a longer period in the local area office will be arranged and details will also be available on the Council's website, providing an email address for submissions and feedback from the public. It was noted that this consultation will commence in late February or early March, subject to Covid guidelines.

Cllr. Dunphy thanked D. Donovan for his detailed presentation and asked if a copy of same could be circulated to members. This was agreed.

S. McKeown said it was important to note that the Kilkenny Leader Partnership have co-funded, with KCC, the work in relation to the route assessments and the comprehensive works undertaken to-date by Roadplan. He also noted discussions at Department of Transport level and the Code of Practice that has now been agreed with farming organisations nationally, which provides guidance where there are no publicly owned lands available for the development of greenways, to help work through agreements with landowners. He thanked D. Donovan and Roadplan for their work to-date in discussions with landowners in relation to the route options for the Glenmore and Slieverue links.

Cllr. Frisby thanked D. Donovan and all his team for their work to-date, agreeing with views on the emerging preferred route option for Slieverue via Luffany and Kilmurry, which he felt would be the most favourable and would also address the ongoing pedestrian access issue created with the construction of the N25 bypass, which gave rise to this access issue with no facility in place to traverse the road into the village. He hoped that the necessary funding required could be secured to provide a pedestrian bridge which will breathe life into the village in terms of business and its economic benefits. All the members were in support of Cllr. Frisby and the need to address the ongoing access issue for Slieverue village and provision of a pedestrian bridge.

In response to Cllr. Aylward, S. McKeown confirmed that depending on the route option selected, it will proceed through Part 8 planning to the Local Authority for decision or by way of Part 10 to An Bord Pleanála.

Cllr. Doherty thanked D. Donovan for his comprehensive presentation and noted options for Glenmore, thanking all landowners for their positive engagement and she encouraged the local community to engage fully with the public consultation process, which will give an appreciation of the advantages and opportunities it will present for both villages.

In response to Cllr. Doherty, F. Stafford confirmed that this will be an informal public consultation, giving people an opportunity to make submissions at this stage over a number of weeks. He stated that the formal public consultation will be undertaken during the Part 8 or Part 10 process, depending on the option chosen and will comply with the statutory requirements at that stage.

F. Stafford confirmed to Cllr. Breathnach that the Ferrybank Library could be used as a venue to display documentation and he would consult with the Greenway team in relation to making the information available on the Greenway website also. He also confirmed that staff will be available at the public consultation evenings to answer any questions the public may have and to outline pros and cons for each of the options, so that the public can make an informed decision.

In answer to Cllr. Breathnach, as to what factors determine whether the process will go through Part 8 or Part 10, D. Donovan confirmed that the main consideration will be the impact on SAC (Special Areas of Conservation) and the need for a CPO. It was noted that if environmental screening shows that the proposed route does not have undue impact on SAC, then it will go through Part 8, through the Local Authority for approval, however if the impact on SAC is significant then the process for consent will be through Part 10 to An Bord Pleanála.

Cllr. Dunphy thanked D. Donovan and F. Stafford for the presentation and they withdrew from the meeting.

(b) Taking in Charge Update Report

Úna Kealy and Alan Hyland were present for this item. Úna Kealy outlined the current status, noting there are 31 taking in charge applications currently on hand across the County. It was noted that the target for 2022 is to take in charge 12 of these estates. She stated that there are 6 estates on the list for

taking in charge in the Piltown MD and it is proposed to take 3 of these estates in charge for 2022, namely: Filbuckstown in Mooncoin, Arbroumount and Abbey Gate in Ferrybank.

The following was noted:-

- Filbuckstown, Mooncoin – no bond in place, works will be completed through the Roadworks Programme over a phased period.
- Arbroumount, Ferrybank – no bond in place, a schedule of works and estimated cost will be prepared for same.
- Abbey Gate, Ferrybank – the developer is engaging well, bond in place.

In relation to the remaining TIC applications in the Piltown MD, the following was noted:-

- Greenoaks, Ferrybank – the developer is engaging with the local authority.
- Farmlea, Ferrybank and Leaca Ard, Ferrybank will progress in due course.

Cllr. Frisby asked that if the opportunity arose that consideration be given to taking Greenoaks in charge in the current year. This was noted.

In response to Cllr. Breathnach, as to what determines the target for the year, Ú. Kealy advised that this is dependent on developer engagement, whether a bond is in place and the scale of works to be carried out, staff resources and timeframe for completion of same.

The members welcomed progress and thanked Ú. Kealy and her predecessors, A.M. Walsh and A. Fitzpatrick for their efforts in this regard.

Cllr. Dunphy thanked Ú. Kealy and A. Hyland and they withdrew from the meeting.

(c) Update Monthly Roadworks

S. Cullen circulated report and outlined works being progressed and completed over the period since the last meeting.

The following items were raised and discussed:-

Cllr. Aylward noted that gates were open at Poulanassy Waterfall giving access for parking and expressed concern from a safety point of view. S. Cullen confirmed that KCC and the Contractor are aware of this and are monitoring same.

Mill road footpath update – S. Cullen confirmed funding announced for active travel was under general headings on a County basis and that schemes are prioritised in terms of how far they have been developed. He confirmed that Mill Road is a priority for the Piltown MD and will shortly have some information regarding funding available.

In response to Cllr. Doherty in relation to the New Ross Bypass, S. Cullen confirmed that there are a number of snags identified which are being worked through, but delays have occurred due to Covid and other matters but that work is continuing to resolve same. SC to confirm the duration of the defects period at the next meeting.

Cllr. Breathnach enquired about active travel and climate change allocations and if applications are made for specific projects or if projects are developed when allocations are received. S. Cullen advised that this would depend on the nature of the scheme and how clearly it can be defined in advance of an application being made for funding. It was noted that applications are made under various headings on a Countywide basis. S. McKeown confirmed that the KCC Active Travel Team sought funding for projects to the value of €5.5m and the allocation received for 2022 was €3.5m for the County.

Cllr. Aylward asked if sufficient funding would be available under active travel measures for a pedestrian bridge at Mill Road, instead of the traffic light system proposed. S. Cullen confirmed that this option had been looked at and costed, however he stated that the current proposed arrangements fit with the active travel criteria and would be most likely to succeed in terms of funding. He stated that any issues of concern locally will be addressed during the public consultation process.

Cllrs. Doherty and Dunphy also raised queries with the proposed arrangement for Mill Road, S. Cullen confirmed that alternatives had been explored however visibility on the bridge is limited which does not allow for yield controlled movement of traffic. Cllr. Aylward raised concern on how traffic lights will operate during school times, S. Cullen stated that the phasing of the pedestrian lights would take account of peak flows associated with school drop off and collection times.

Cllr. Breathnach noted the difficulty in sourcing of funding recently and took the opportunity to thank S. Cullen for successfully securing funds, including under active travel, climate change and the anti-dumping initiative.

(d) Update Road Projects

S. Cullen confirmed that a letter had been issued to TII raising concerns with regard to no funding being allocated for the N24 and N25 Road Schemes, to which response was awaited. He confirmed that a meeting with TII had been arranged for this afternoon, at which this matter will be raised.

S. Cullen confirmed that the N24 Tower Road Improvement Scheme was still on track for construction to begin end of Q2 or early Q3 and that planning proposals for N24 Carrick Road Scheme will be published towards the end of Q1 2022.

Cllr. Dunphy stated that the N24 and N25 Schemes were both crucial for the area and acknowledged that a letter has been written to Minister Eamon Ryan highlighting a number of issues, including continued safety risks, uncertainty for people in relation to planning and development, impact on the economy and employment. He noted the meeting scheduled today with TII to discuss this matter, he hoped for a positive outcome and asked that the members be updated.

Cllr. Dunphy confirmed that a meeting via MS Teams has also been arranged for Monday 7th February with the Oireachtas Members and Elected Members of Municipal Districts along both the N24 and N25 routes.

Cllr. Doherty stated that a meeting of the First Citizens Forum had taken place last Friday at which this matter was also raised. She confirmed to Cllr. Dunphy the members of the forum, comprising of the Chairperson of each local authority in the South East region, Kilkenny, Carlow, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford and also each Council CEO and Oireachtas members for each of these Counties. It was noted that the Forum was set up in 2021 and focused on the major issues affecting the region, such as the TUSE, Rescue 117, Rosslare/Belview Ports and wind energy and so on.

Cllr. Breathnach noted the importance of working collectively as a region, on this matter and so many other issues of common concern. He confirmed that he proposed to put forward a notice of motion for the Plenary meeting in the names of the Piltown MD members with regard to the setting up of a regional forum for the South East, with the Regional Assembly. This was agreed.

3. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Order or Resolution of the Municipal District Members for transaction at such meetings

None.

4. Notice of Motion

None.

5. Correspondence

S. Cullen advised there were no updates regarding correspondence issued.

6. AOB:

Cllr. Doherty:-

- S. Cullen confirmed that M. Murphy would attend the March meeting to give an update regarding the Speed Limit Review.
- reminder to landowners with regard to hedge cutting and their responsibility to maintain roadside hedges, which must be complete by end of February.
- issue with traffic speed entering roundabout at Glenmore, call for measures to address this. S. Cullen confirmed that this roundabout was constructed in accordance with specifications and standards and that speeding is a matter for enforcement.

Cllr. Frisby

- Call for renewal of road markings at Slieverue and along the N25 between Slieverue and Glenmore. Cllr. Frisby agreed to submit details of specific locations to S. Cullen.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: 
Cathaoirleach

Dated: 2/3/2022