



**Minutes of Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting
Held in County Hall, Dooradoyle,
on 13th September, 2005 – 11.30.a.m.**

Present In the Chair : Councillor D. Naughton.

Members Present : Councillors J. Griffin, T. Neville, J. Sheahan, K. Sheahan.

Officials Present : P. O'Connor, Asst. Co. Manager, B. Martin SEE., G. Liston, E.E.,
T. Breen, S.O., T. Tarpey, S.E., J. Kennedy, S.E.E., M. Griffin, A.O.

Adoption of the Minutes of the Special Area Committee Meeting and Area Committee Meeting of the 22nd August, 2005. :

Matters Arising :

Members questioned if the Senior Engineer, Environment had included the amendment from Rathkeale Members – agreed at the 17th August Area Committee Meeting - for the “Disposal of E.S.B. Sub-Station at Gortadroma” for the full Council Meeting. Members again re-affirmed the amendment with the agreed wording to read as follows :

"It is the recommendation of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee that the land disposal to the E.S.B. for an electricity generation sub-station be in the form of a long-term lease for the duration of the gas supply only".

This amendment was proposed by Councillor D. Naughton, seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, with Councillors T. Neville, J. Sheahan, and K. Sheahan supporting.

P. O'Connor, Asst. Co. Manager confirmed to Members that the agreed wording as detailed, could be added to the Item on the Agenda for full Council as a recommendation/resolution of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee.

Councillor D. Naughton queried the life-span of the proposed electricity generation plant, and was insistant that assurances be given to Members by the Senior Engineer, that the life-span of the generation plant would not/could not be extended through waste incineration at Gortadroma.

T. Tarpey, S.E., informed Members that a lease type arrangement for the sub-station, as requested by the Rathkeale Members, would be acceptable to the E.S.B. He stated the projected life-span of the gas generation plant to be approximately ten years, this time scale being subject to annual landfill intake. Mr. Tarpey also informed Members, the proposed plant for electricity generation at Gortadroma would use gas only, and could not be utilised/modified to generate electricity from incineration of landfill materials.

Councillor K. Sheahan spoke on the annual problem of illegally parked caravans at Borrigone, Askeaton, that has resulted in local residents, especially the elderly, experiencing both fear and harrassment. He stated the Council's official response to be inadequate, and expressed his concern that complaints to staff from members of the public were not always dealt with appropriate sensitivity. He suggested the Council's Traveller Control Officer be requested to utilise the powers available to him, in prevention of illegal traveller parking at Borrigone.

Councillor Sheahan proposed the Traveller Control Officer liaise with local communities/residents through official contact or letter. The proposal was seconded by Councillor D. Naughton, with Councillors Griffin, Neville and J. Sheahan supporting the proposal.

Councillor J. Griffin stated that Rathkeale had always been co-operative in the provision of facilities for the traveller community, and spoke of the numerous complaints received from residents regarding the “transient site” located on the public roadway to the rear of Roches Road. The travellers at this location were native to Wexford with no Limerick connections. Councillor Griffin suggested that if the laws relating to illegal parking of caravans could not be applied in Rathkeale, they could not be enforced elsewhere. Councillor Griffin agreed to discuss/work with the Senior Executive Engineer, Rathkeale to resolve the illegal parking to the rear of Roches Road.

P. O’Connor, Asst. County Manager, informed Members that legal proceedings were pending in regard to the constitutional rights of the Traveller Community, and their right to travel. Issues also arose if the law available for dealing with illegally parked caravans were applied. The issues included provision of casual/transient halting sites and management of such sites, by local authorities.

The Minutes of the Special Area Committee Meeting and Area Committee Meeting of the 22nd August, 2005, were adopted. Proposed by Councillor J. Griffin, and seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan.

To note proposals under the Community, Sport & Culture Grant Scheme – Development Fund :

M. Griffin, A.O., outlined to Members the proposed allocations and qualifying criteria under the Community, Sport and Culture Grant Scheme for the Rathkeale Electoral Area (€175,000).

Councillor J. Sheahan questioned if submissions received from the different groupings who had received a “nil” allocation for 2005, be automatically considered/included for grant funding in 2006. Councillor Sheahan was also concerned at the “negative impact” on the voluntary groupings when informed that while eligible/approved for funding were receiving “nil”.

Councillor K. Sheahan expressed his dissatisfaction with the proposed allocations brought before Members. He expressed his annoyance at the paucity of the proposed grant towards the Resource Centre development by the Loughill Development Association, and stunned that Cappagh G.A.A. Club could be granted nil. Councillor Sheahan stated he was unable to support the proposals brought before Members, and would withdraw from the Meeting in protest, if an amendment to the proposals were not agreed. He stated the Loughill Development Association required assistance from the Council in the sum of €80,000, and a grant commitment from Officials that a further €50,000 would be allocated under the 2006 Grant Scheme would be acceptable. Councillor Sheahan requested the support of the Rathkeale Councillors.

Councillor J. Griffin objected to the use of a “nil” allocation to bodies that would be eligible for funding, and suggested that if such bodies were eligible for funding, a token sum of €2,000 be allocated in recognition of the voluntary nature of the work/commitment of persons in the various bodies. Councillor J. Griffin also recommended that a “token figure” of €10,000 be made available to Cappagh G.A.A. Club, with Croagh/Kilfinny Development Association to receive €40,000 under the proposed grant scheme.

M. Griffin, A.O., was agreeable to the recommendations of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Members, and undertook to circulate the revised draft. He also informed Members, the Loughill Development Group would be considered for additional funding in 2006, if a further submission were submitted.

Development Fund – Amended Rathkeale Area Road Proposals 2005 :

Councillor J. Griffin queried the Council’s ownership rights over the Squares in both Rathkeale and Ballingarry in regard to undertaking improvement works. He recommended the ownership issue be clarified through the Council’s Law Agent’s prior to the commencement of any works.

Councillor T. Neville was anxious the ownership rights be resolved to facilitate upgrading of both Squares, the Squares being the focal point in both towns. He was anxious that yellow flashing lights/crossings be provided at the Primary School, Ballingarry, and Secondary School, Rathkeale.

Councillor J. Griffin stated the Council were in negotiations to purchase a section of the Rathkeale Square, and if concluded, the remaining owners if canvassed may have no objection to the Council undertaking improvements.

Councillor J. Sheahan suggested amber lights/crossing be prioritised at schools outside speed limit areas.

Councillor K. Sheahan proposed the listing of amber lights, when prepared, be brought before the Area Electoral Committee for consideration.

Councillor D. Naughton requested the L6001 at Ballycanauna, Ballysteen be considered for improvement works due to it's poor condition – this roadway having the same status as the main Pallaskenry to Ballysteen road. Councillor Naughton was allocating portion of his discretionary funding towards the works, and was anxious to receive the support of the Rathkeale Members. A pier at the end of this roadway had been storm damaged in the 1960's, and suggested restoration works to the pier be considered for funding.

Councillor K. Sheahan stated the proposed improvement works for Killeery Pier would not be funded from discretionary monies, this being a county-wide community amenity facility, as were the other piers on the Estuary – the pier on this road falling within the amenity category. Councillor Sheahan recommended the roadway be remedied using road funding.

G. Liston, E.E. informed Members, that some additional roads discretionary funding was available from which the Ballycanauna roadway could be done – all Members were agreed with this suggestion.

B. Martin, S.E.E., informed Members the ownership rights issue of the Squares would be investigated, and that additional footpath works would be substituted in Ballingarry, footpath improvement works in Holycross, Rathkeale, and upgrading of public lighting at Enniscoush. Officials had met with the E.S.B., and submissions were awaited for street lighting at both Enniscoush and Shanagolden. When the ownership issues were clarified both Squares could be re-submitted for Development Funding in 2006. It was Mr. Martin's understanding that a programme/policy for installation of flashing lights/crossings for schools was being prepared, and would be presented to Members at the October/November Committee Meeting.

Flooding in Foynes :

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., briefed Members on a recent test case by a Dublin local authority to gain access to lands under the Planning Act, with the Courts Service determining that local authorities had no powers of entry to lands under the Planning Act. The Council on the basis of the Court decision, were reverting to use of the Public Health Ireland Act, 1878, in order to gain access to the lands, and undertake the flood relief drainage works – it was anticipated notices would be served in late October.

Councillor K. Sheahan informed Members the Water Services S.E.E. had always made himself available to meet with the different Foynes Groupings, and complimented his wisdom in awaiting the outcome of the Dublin case. Councillor Sheahan stated that while progress was slow, the Council were committed in their resolve to address the flooding/drainage issues in Foynes.

Councillor D. Naughton spoke of difficulties for Foynes residents in obtaining insurance cover for their homes, and requested the residents be kept informed by the Council of developments.

Progress Report on Foynes, Shanagolden, Askeaton Sewerage Schemes :

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., informed Members that a submission had forwarded to the Department in late May, 2005, in relation to the capital cost of project construction - five towns - and consultant fee proposal, with no response received to date. Mr. Kennedy stated that a meeting had been scheduled with the Department for the week commencing 19th September.

Councillor K. Sheahan requested that Members be updated on the outcome/developments from the Meeting between Council Officials and the Department, at the November Area Committee Meeting.

Proposals for Safety Measures at Killeary Pier :

Councillor D. Naughton was anxious the improvement works be undertaken in the current year, and suggested the Area Committee Members request the support of the local Oireachteas Members to lobby the Department of Marine for grant funding.

Councillor K. Sheahan had witnessed, during the summer period, between fifty-sixty people using the amenity facilities at both Killeary and Glin Piers, that included fishermen/bathers/visitors/tourists, and was an amenity facility utilised by persons with no Rathkeale Electoral Area connections.

B. Martin, S.E.E., stated that written responses had been received from the different Agencies and Emergency Services, regarding the proposed introduction of Safety Improvements at Killeary Pier. No response had been received from the Department of the Marine, but Mr. Martin had been given a verbal agreement to the suggested improvements by a Senior Department Official, with a written response/confirmation to follow. The proposed safety improvement works to the full pier perimeter would be €27,000, and there were no planning issues in respect of the works. Mr. Martin confirmed a submission would be made to the Department of Marine for grant funding in respect of the improvement works. Copies of this submission would be forwarded to the Area Members and local Oireachteas Members as requested.

P. O'Connor, Asst. Co. Manager, recommended that the grant application be made to the Department, and that if an assurance for funding was forthcoming, commitments to fund the balance would be considered.

Gortadroma Landfill :

T. Tarpey, S.E., informed Members there were no operational problems at Gortadroma during the month of August. 1,800 tons of landfill material had been received in August, 2005, with 4,500 tons received in August 2004. It was anticipated that 40,000 tons of landfill material would be received during 2005, with the estimated figure for 2005 being 60,000 tons.

Councillor D. Naughton questioned if the landfill facility was operating economically, if consideration were given to the reducing tonnages/reduced income, and queried if a plan were in place for closure of the landfill facility should it become uneconomic. Councillor Naughton requested that all facts and figures relating to the landfill facility operations, cell space available, projected life-span, income and outgoings from January 2005 to date, be available to Members for the October Committee Meeting.

Councillor J. Griffin requested a breakdown of income and operating costs, and an assessment of the impact of reduced income on operation costs. Councillor Griffin also requested that Members be furnished with details outlining the total Regional Landfill Capacity.

Councillor K. Sheahan stated it was his understanding that the landfill facility was now losing money, and referred to a Motion/policy decision - prior to disposal of the Refuse Service - that both the collection and waste disposal services be independently self-financing.

T. Tarpey, E.E., reported the Compulsory Purchase Order process, in relation to existing landfill extensions to the facility, to be ongoing. It was anticipated there would be a shortfall in national landfill capacity within two years, due to closure of the main landfill facility servicing Dublin.

A.O.B. :

Official Opening of Glin Library :

Members were informed the Cathaoirleach would be available for the Official Opening of Glin Library on the 4th, 10th and 25th October, 2005.

Members were agreed that former Rathkeale Electoral Area Members, West Limerick T.D.'s and Senators be invited to the Official Opening. The Chairman, Councillor D. Naughton proposed a Special Area Committee Meeting be arranged for the Official Opening, with the October Area Committee Meeting to follow, on Thursday, 20th October. All Members were agreed to this proposal. It was also agreed by Members that the Rathkeale Electoral Area Chairman would perform the Official Library Opening on the day.

Councillor J. Griffin proposed that the New Rathkeale Electoral Area Headquarters be named the "Sean Finn Memorial Hall" in recognition of Sean Finn who was a native of Main Street, Rathkeale. The proposal was seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan, with Councillors D. Naughton, T. Neville, and J. Sheahan supporting. It was further agreed by all Members, that the Rathkeale Electoral Area Chairman will perform the Official Opening of the New Rathkeale Headquarters and Library, when completed.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____Chairman.

Dated this **24th** day of **OCTOBER, 2005**.

Secretary.