



**Minutes of Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting  
Held in County Hall, Dooradoyle,  
on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2006 – 11.00.a.m.**

- Present In the Chair :** Councillor D. Naughton.
- Members Present :** Councillors J. Griffin, T. Neville, J. Sheahan, K. Sheahan.
- Officials Present :** B. Martin S.E.E., G. Liston, E.E., K. McMahon, E.E., T. Breen, S.O., M. Ryan, S.E.O., S. Hayes, A.O., D. Brennan, S.E., S. Hayes, A.O., G. Doherty, S.E.E.
- Apologies :** G. Behan, D.O.S., M. Griffin, A.O., T. Tarpey, S.E., J. Kennedy, S.E.E.
- Deputation :** N. Prenderville, T. Doyle-McMahon, G. Fennell.

**Minutes of Special Area Committee Meeting held on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2006, and Area Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2006 :**

The Minutes of the Special Area Committee Meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2006, and Area Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2006, were adopted. Proposed by Councillor K. Sheahan, and seconded by Councillor T. Neville.

**Items Arising :**

***Deel Bridge, Lower Main Street/Church Street :***

Councillor J. Griffin spoke of being lobbied by different groupings in Rathkeale in relation to pedestrian safety at the Town Bridge at Church Street. Councillor Griffin stated he had personally witnessed the tail sections of large commercial vehicles sweeping sections of the pedestrian walkway on the bridge. He informed Officials, the Board of Works had constructed additional abutments to the bridge, during previous structural improvement works. Councillor Griffin suggested Officials examine the mentioned abutments, with a view to erection of a new pedestrian walkway suspended from the side of the bridge, similar to that in Athea Village, and refer back to the Area Committee with a design/plan and recommendations. Funding sources to undertake the proposed works could be identified at this point.

Councillor Griffin referred to the river slipway adjacent to the bridge, that is littered with rubble and rubbish, broken signage, bridge walls overgrown, the eye of the bridge completely clogged, and the necessity to open existing drainage pipes to the river for surface water run-off. He stated there is a secondary access to the Council's treatment plant from this location, and requested the support of the Area Committee to resolve all the matters raised.

Councillor K. Sheahan confirmed his support that the works as outlined by Councillor Griffin, be undertaken. Councillor Sheahan was insistent the Council's own Engineers survey and cost the proposed works, and stated his opposition/resistance to the engagement of private consultants.

B. Martin, S.E.E., committed to meet with Environment Department Officials to undertake an initial clean up of the mentioned litter and vegetation, and would also meet with Councillor Griffin on-site to address the other issues raised. He informed Members the erection of a suspended pedestrian bridge, as proposed, would necessitate engaging a Structural Engineer for a Preliminary Report.

Councillor D. Naughton, recommended Officials inspect and examine the proposed works, and respond with a report to Members, at the June Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

### ***Council Lands at the Port Road, Foynes :***

M. Ryan, S.E.O., confirmed representatives from Foynes F.C. had met with Council Management with a view to purchasing/obtaining suitable lands for a playing pitch in Foynes. Following a recent site investigation of the Council lands at the Port Road, by the Rathkeale Area Housing/Water Services Engineer - copy of report circulated to Members - the ground conditions of the lands being deemed unsuitable for recreational use. Ms. Ryan informed Members a further Meeting would be arranged with the Foynes F.C. representatives to identify an alternative site. It was imperative at this point, the lands on the Port Road, Foynes, be included with the assets disposal listing, for funding of capital works including the Rathkeale Area Headquarters and Library.

Councillor K. Sheahan stated a verbal agreement had been given on behalf of the Council that an Engineer on behalf of the Club, and a Council Engineer would jointly inspect the lands at the Port Road. He confirmed this commitment should be honored, and would arrange such a meeting within seven to ten days. He noted various grants are available to assist clubs with infrastructure/improvement works, if the necessary lands are in place. Councillor Sheahan also queried if undertakings had been given to residents in the neighboring housing estate, that there would be no commercial type developments on the Port Road lands.

M. Ryan, S.E.O. in response to Councillor J. Sheahan confirmed the Council lands at the Port Road were zoned for industrial/ residential usage. Ms. Ryan was unaware of any undertaking given by any Official to residents, in relation to the type of development that would be permitted on the Port Road.

Councillor D. Naughton proposed the two engineers meet on-site as agreed, with the S.E.O., Capital Projects to proceed with the land disposal following this meeting, without further reference to the Electoral Area Committee. Councillor J. Sheahan, with Councillors Griffin, Neville, and K. Sheahan supporting seconded the proposal.

### **Deputation : Rathkeale Community Arts Group.**

Councillor D. Naughton welcomed the Rathkeale Community Arts Group to the Area Committee Meeting, and briefly outlined procedure to be followed in accordance with Standing Orders.

N. Prenderville, Rathkeale Community Arts Group, circulated the Group's submission to the elected Members. Ms. Prenderville outlined details from the submission proposals for usage of the proposed new Community/Multi-Purpose Room in the Carnegie Library Building. These proposals included use of the Room as a People's Gallery – catering for Art, Craft, Photographic, and Film/Video Exhibitions. It was considered the Gallery would also cater for Council based projects such as the Artist-in-Schools programme, Road Safety Poster/Art from Waste Competitions, and also provide a centre for promotion of Literature, and Music. Ms. Prenderville spoke of the strong arts culture indigenous to Rathkeale town, and the numerous personages of both national and international standing with origins/associations with the town. Other projects considered suitable for hosting in the Centre included the Young Scientist Exhibition, Youth Enterprise Competition, Gardening Club Exhibitions, and a West Limerick Cultural Trail linking the town and villages of West Limerick.

Councillor J. Griffin welcomed the Rathkeale Arts Group to the Meeting and paid tribute to the deputation's Members, speaking of their enormous contribution to the Arts and Culture of Rathkeale Town and District. Councillor Griffin referred to the immense artistic talent in the area, and stated his total support for the Rathkeale Community Arts Group.

Councillor K. Sheahan complimented the Rathkeale Community Arts Group on their submission, and queried if the Traveller Community were incorporated within the Arts Grouping, and if so, this involvement should be noted and added to the submission.

N. Prenderville confirmed the Rathkeale Community Art Group worked with the Riverside Workshop in organising Drama workshops etc. A film had also been recently completed by the Riverside Workshop.

Councillors T. Neville, and J. Sheahan also complimented the Rathkeale Community Arts Group on their presentation to the Electoral Area Committee, and would be supportive of the recommendations. Councillor Neville spoke of the need to fully equip the Community/Multi-Purpose Room with the appropriate audio/visual and lighting to facilitate display exhibitions, and use by drama group, this being a once-off opportunity to get things right, to the benefit of West Limerick.

Councillor D. Naughton again complimented the deputation on the professionalism of their presentation and confirmed the issues/ideas/content of the submission would be discussed further by the Electoral Area Committee, with a response/brief to forward to the Rathkeale Community Arts Group from the Committee Secretary.

B. Martin, S.E.E., informed Members no meetings or discussions had taken place in-house as to the operation/supervision of the proposed Community/Multi-purpose Room if booked by non-Council Groups or bodies, but was anxious the space be operated under the supervision of the Area Office, and would be opposed to any transfer of ownership or lease type arrangement. Mr. Martin suggested the need for further discussion with the Area Committee prior to the building coming on-line.

G. Liston, E.E., confirmed the Ardagh Drama Group was struggling as an entity, due in to the lack of a base to facilitate rehearsals and performances. The Ardagh Drama Committee viewed the proposed facilities as a potential opportunity to regenerate and refresh the Group, and would work with the local Community Arts Committee.

Councillor Griffin stated ownership would not be an issue in relation to the proposed new Arts/Cultural Centre. He stated the importance of ensuring the new facilities would be used to maximum effect, with a precedent for use of public buildings already set in Rathkeale, through public usage of the former Courthouse for meetings. Councillor Griffin spoke of the potential for the Carnegie Building to be the cultural hub of arts and culture for West Limerick, and voiced his opposition to any impediment for the usage of the proposed facilities. He also stressed the importance that the local Community Centre not lose out through the provision of the additional facilities.

Councillor K. Sheahan described the provision of the Multi-Purpose Room for cultural promotion and events, as an opportunity “not-to-be-missed” for Rathkeale Town. Councillor Sheahan proposed the Rathkeale Community Arts Group submission, and general usage of the rooms, be listed as an item for discussion by Members at the June Electoral Area Committee Meeting, and merited referral thereafter to the Arts and Culture Strategic Policy Committee, for discussion.

Councillor D. Naughton seconded the proposal, agreeing the need for greater discussion by the Area Committee on the submissions. Councillors Griffin, Neville, and J. Sheahan expressed their agreement to the proposal.

Councillor D. Naughton withdrew from the Meeting at this point, with Councillor T. Neville taking the Chair, and obtained the agreement of the remaining Members that the Meeting would conclude by 1.30.p.m.

### **Road Development Fund Proposals 2006 :**

The Road Development Fund Proposals for 2006 were agreed. Proposed by Councillor J. Griffin, and seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan, with Councillors Naughton, Neville and J. Sheahan supporting.

Councillor T. Neville requested clarification on the locations of the proposed public lighting at Croagh Village.

B. Martin, S.E.E., informed Councillor Neville a request had been received from the Croagh/Kilfinny Development Association to attend a Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting as a deputation, to outline their proposals on safety/public lighting issues for Croagh. It was proposed to await the outcome from the Meeting, prior to the preparation of public lighting proposals for Croagh.

Councillor K. Sheahan queried if a public lighting layout plan had been prepared to service the Askeaton Swimming Pool development.

B. Martin, S.E.E., stated substantial road and public lighting works would be required to service the Askeaton Swimming Pool Development project, and it was proposed to fund these works in two phases under the Road Development Fund in 2006/2007. Public lighting proposals would be requested from the E.S.B., during 2006.

### **Proposed Rathkeale Burial Ground Operational Guidelines :**

B. Martin, S.E.E., circulated a report to Members outlining proposals for St. Joseph's Graveyard, Rathkeale, to address, and cater for the needs of the Rathkeale Community. Mr. Martin informed Members the erection and height of headstones in the graveyard had gone uncontrolled through the years, with concerns expressed in relation safety and the long-term stability of some structures. The proposals were an attempt to put in place a proper management system for the graveyard, which would cater for the community as a whole. The recommendations included the opening of a "lawn cemetery" to the right hand side of the graveyard entrance, where headstones would be limited to one point two metres (1.2m), and kerbing not permitted. The section to the left of the entrance – coloured blue on the layout plan – would permit headstones to a height of one point two metres (1.2m) and kerbing. The area coloured yellow on the plan would permit headstones to a height of seven feet and kerbing. If the policy was agreed headstone erectors would be advised on the policy.

Councillor K. Sheahan stated his agreement at what was being proposed, but was concerned as to how the proposals would be policed if agreed.

Councillor J. Griffin informed Members there were three graveyards in Rathkeale, the older graveyards incorporating vaults, and large Celtic crosses that were in excess of seven feet. Councillor Griffin spoke on the sensitivities that can arise in dealing with such issues, and advised Officials to "tread" warily, and to choose language carefully, in what would be an extremely sensitive matter. He suggested Officials confer with the local Community Groupings/Rathkeale Town Forum as part of the consultation process on the proposed policy.

Councillor T. Neville spoke of the sensitive nature in dealing with such policy proposals, and the necessity for Officials to enter into full and proper consultation with the local community.

D. Brennan, S.E., welcomed the comments from Members, and accepted the need to respect and be aware of the sensitivities of the local community. He informed Members the Council were committed to entering a consultation process with the community, and would report back to the Area Committee following these Meetings. Mr. Brennan informed Members the Health and Safety Authority were examining local authority operations, and there were major potential safety issues arising from the larger headstones in graveyards. Local authorities were obliged to put in place proper procedure and policy in such instances, and failure to do so would leave the Council exposed. There was also an obligation on the part of the monument erectors to put in place safe structures. He confirmed to Members, the standard Council policy for headstone height to be four foot six inches.

### **Progress Report on Installation of C.C.T.V. and Clean-Up to rear of Roches Road, Rathkeale :**

Councillor J. Griffin queried if Officials were aware of a section of the G.A.A. lands being sold for development purposes, and if this were the case, the need to improve the general condition of the

roadway. Councillor Griffin referred to the improvements and reduction in littering at the Council's Recycling Centre at New Line since the installation of the c.c.t.v., and anticipated the same results/ benefits would accrue to the rear of Roches Road on their installation of the additional c.c.t.v.'s. He was anxious that any planning issues be resolved before erection of the c.c.t.v.'s.

G. Doherty, S.E.E., informed Members discussions for the erection of the cameras had taken place with the G.A.A. Club, and it was anticipated these cameras would be installed in the coming weeks.

### **Extension of Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme :**

D. Brennan S.E., confirmed road re-instatement works on the scheme, by the contractor, were ongoing with approximately two kilometers completed. It was expected the remaining five hundred metre section of the pipe-line would be completed during May. A Public Information Day had been scheduled for Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> April in the Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme Plant. Mr. Brennan confirmed to Members, the High Court ruling required that the Bleach Lough Water Retention Committee be furnished with a seven day notice of the Council's intention to engage the Shannon Estuary Water Scheme supply in Kildimo/Pallaskenry area.

Councillor K. Sheahan requested that Officials keep Members fully briefed any developments.

### **Foynes/Shanagolden/Askeaton Sewerage Scheme :**

S. Hayes, A.O., stated a further submission had been made to the Department on the 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2006, and it was anticipated the fee proposals would be accepted by the Department.

Councillor J. Griffin questioned if an application had been made for a Foreshore License/Lease, it being his view a lease arrangement was a better option over a fixed term.

### **Proposed Flooding Relief Measures at Foynes :**

D. Brennan, S.E., informed Members there had been no further progress in relation to the proposed flooding relief measures at Foynes, and it was now considered time to test the wayleave, utilising the Council's own staff for the works.

Councillor K. Sheahan opinioned that Officials, had been left with no option at this point but to proceed with the drainage works - following fruitless discussions with the landowner over a number of years . Councillor Sheahan proposed the Council formally proceed and test the wayleave, with the full support of Members. The proposal was seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, with Councillors Neville and J. Sheahan supporting.

### **To discuss N.R.A. Correspondence to Members :**

Councillor J. Griffin requested that Members be provided in writing, where and when the National Roads Authority had been empowered in law to determine speed limits and traffic control measures, and clarify when these powers had been removed from the Council.

D. Brennan, S.E., agreed to furnish and circulate to Members the information requested by Councillor Griffin.

Councillor T. Neville referred to the expressed willingness of the elected Members to travel to the National Roads Authority headquarters to meet and discuss items of concern, and considered the recent correspondence from the N.R.A. to be shoddy treatment of the elected Members, across all Parties.

### **Gortadroma Landfill :**

G. Doherty, S.E.E., informed Members the contractor was currently “capping” landfill Cells 12 and 13, with four odor complaints received in April. Annual testing of twenty-eight boreholes adjacent to the site had been completed, with eighteen testing for coliforms, two unfit for consumption, and eight clear. The purpose of the boreholes was to monitor the condition of the landfill site. Mr. Doherty confirmed the contractor for the gas generated electricity plant had been appointed, with an anticipated operational date for the plant in September, 2006. There had been one incident of the site, where a bulldozer had caught fire.

Councillor J. Griffin complimented Mr. Doherty on the concise, articulate, and informative brief of landfill operations during April, to Members.

### **Question submitted by Councillor K. Sheahan :**

*I will ask at the next ordinary Meeting of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee that the Community and Enterprise Section, advise the elected Members on the specification of the proposed Fixed Equipment Playgrounds – i.e. locations, size/area, material costs, equipment costs, site layout plans, fencing/security, and the proposed operational guidelines.*

The reply from the Director of Services, Community and Enterprise, was circulated to Members and outlined the criteria agreed by the Council, based on demographic and disadvantage profiles of the various towns, and the agreed funding allocations. Officials had commenced working with local interest groups to decide the nature and extent of the local contribution, equipment location, the type and size of materials and equipment.

Councillor J. Sheahan requested Members be advised if there were legal implications to be addressed in relation to fund-raising locally, for funding of the local community contribution part of the Playground Scheme, on Council/public lands.

B. Martin, S.E.E., informed Members it was his understanding, that the local contribution percentage of agreed funding under the Playground Scheme, was to be raised within the Communities.

It was Councillor J. Griffin’s understanding the local contribution under the Fixed Equipment Playground Scheme would be from a Council General Fund – local communities could not be expected to finance what would be Council equipment on Council/public lands.

Councillor K. Sheahan suggested the issues raised should be clarified for Members at the May Committee Meeting in Loghill.

### **Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor K. Sheahan :**

*I will move at the next ordinary Meeting of the Rathkeale Electoral Area that the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee invite the West Limerick Resource Group to the May Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting to brief the elected Members on funding/grant aiding of projects in the West Limerick Area.*

The notice of Motion was formally proposed by Councillor K. Sheahan, and seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, with Councillors Neville and J. Sheahan supporting the Motion.

**A.O.B.**

***May/June Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting Dates :***

Members agreed the next Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting would be held on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2006, in the Loughill Heritage Centre, Loughill, at 11.30.a.m.

It was further agreed that the June Area Committee Meeting, will be held on Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2006, in County Hall, Dooradoyle, at 11.00.a.m.

Members agreed that the Croagh/Kilfinny Development Association be invited, as a deputation, to attend the June Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting in County Hall, Dooradoyle.

Councillor K. Sheahan requested the Director of Services, and Administrative Officer, Community and Enterprise, be invited to attend the Area Committee Meeting at Loughill.

That concluded the business of the Meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of MAY, 2006.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary.