



## **Minutes of Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting Held in the Fire Station, Rathkeale, on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 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., T. Breen, S.O., T. Tarpey, S.E.  
G. Behan, D.O.S., Community and Enterprise, M. Griffin, A.O.,  
J. Kennedy, S.E.E.

### **Minutes of Area Committee Meeting held on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 :**

The Minutes of the Area Committee Meeting held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2006, were adopted. Proposed by Councillor J. Griffin, and seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan.

*Matter Arising from Special Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2006 in the Rathkeale House Hotel, Rathkeale :*

Councillor K. Sheahan referred to the proposed listing of assets for disposal to fund capital projects, discussed at the 8<sup>th</sup> March Special Committee Meeting, that included lands at Foynes. Councillor Sheahan stated his agreement and support for the disposal of assets to fund the new Rathkeale Headquarters and Library, but had become aware the Council were in sale negotiations for the listed lands at Foynes, with a local voluntary club.

Councillor D. Naughton stated the land sale negotiations with Foynes F.C. should proceed to their conclusion, it being inappropriate for the Council to renege on commitments to date.

Councillor Sheahan proposed the relevant Council Officials be informed, it is the recommendation of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee that the mentioned lands at Foynes not be disposed of, prior to conclusion of negotiations with Foynes F.C. Councillor D. Naughton seconded the proposal, with Councillors J. Griffin, T. Neville, and J. Sheahan supporting the proposal.

### **Proposed Area Roads Programme 2006 :**

B. Martin, S.E.E., informed Members the budget allocation for the 2006 Rathkeale Area Roads Programme reflected an approximate 13% increase over the 2005 allocation.

Councillor J. Griffin requested a number of roads be examined and considered for improvement. These roads included a section from the 5 Cross Roads towards Kilfinny ; surface water flooding/general road condition, Link road towards Killea ; poor condition, Dark Road towards Danaher's Cross ; removal of grass margins/problems with dumping, and Enniscoush ; removal of grass margin.

G. Liston, E.E., informed Councillor Griffin a one-mile section of the Five Cross Road towards Kilfinny had been included in the 2006 Roads Programme, with a further one-mile section to be included in the 2007 Roads Programme - surface water flooding issues would be examined and addressed as part of these works. The Killea link road had not been included in the 2006 Programme, but would be considered for reconstruction and surface dressing under a future programme. Mr. Liston accepted there was a problem of illegal dumping on the Dark Road, and the Environmental Enforcement Officer would be contacted. He spoke of there being ongoing problems with road grass margins being "pulled" onto roadways in the County, and was due to the size of modern agricultural machinery.

Councillor K. Sheahan referred to the condition of the roadway adjacent to the swimming pool at Askeaton.

G. Liston, E.E., informed Councillor Sheahan the St. Mary's Terrace roadway would be re-instated following installation of services by the developer.

The 2006 Rathkeale Area Roads Programme was adopted. Proposed by Councillor J. Griffin, and seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan, with Councillors D. Naughton, T. Neville, and J. Sheahan supporting.

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

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., informed Members the Bleach Lough Water Retention Committee had given undertakings to the High Court, not to interfere/obstruct the pipe-laying works being undertaken by the contractor. The Council had agreed to give the Water Retention Committee seven days prior written notice of its intention to bring on-line the Shannon Estuary Water Supply, to facilitate the Retention Committee's possible application for a Judicial Review.

Councillor J. Griffin requested confirmation as to whether the Bleach Lough Water Supply could be brought on-line, if required, and if it were possible to operate both the Shannon Estuary and Bleach Lough supplies in tandem.

Councillor D. Naughton queried if the Deel river system could provide adequate water supplies, on foot of increasing demand, at times of low/summer water levels, and if plans were in place for upgrading of pipes in the Pallaskenry/ Kildimo area. Councillor Naughton was of the understanding the Aughinish Alumina plant are using approximately 3.5 million gallons of water per day, with the maximum treatment capacity for the Shannon Estuary plant being 4.0 million gallons per day. He spoke of the original water treatment contract signed with the Aughinish Alumina Group in 1978/1979 committing to a 2.0 million gallon per day supply to the plant at production cost. Councillor Naughton suggested the charges for the additional water supply of approximately 1.5 million gallons per day to the plant be renegotiated. He also spoke on the lack of investment/management of the Deel river system. Councillor D. Naughton proposed that Members be fully briefed on the river flow level details, and the Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme contract details for the April Committee Meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan and supported by Councillors Griffin, Neville, and J. Sheahan.

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., stated it was necessary for the Kildimo/Pallaskenry catchment area to be brought on-line for the Shannon Estuary Water Supply, in order to generate sufficient water turnover in the pipelines to service the Group Schemes in the area with a potable supply. He confirmed the Pallaskenry water supply network was not currently listed for an upgrading works programme. Mr. Kennedy informed Members that abstraction from the River Deel for the Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme is governed by the need to keep a certain amount of flow in the river rather than an upper limit on volume taken out. From previous studies it is estimated that approx. 6 million gallons per day at maximum could be extracted from the river at any time to ensure adequate compensation flow remained in the river. The figures outlined are developed from historical data accumulated over many years and which are now based on records of gauging stations which are recorded by the EPA from a number of stations along the Deel.

Councillor J. Griffin expressed disappointment that up-to-date river levels for the Deel were not available to Members, and recommended the Hydrometric Section of the Board of Works, be requested to furnish copies of flow/level records, or a summary from their meters in the River Deel catchment area, over a twelve month period. He requested this information be available to Members at the April Area Committee Meeting. Councillor Griffin was critical at the lack of investment in the Deel River system despite the large financial income generated through water extraction over the years. He requested Members be furnished with a map of the River Deel, detailing points of importance and points of extraction/disposal from its source to exit at the estuary. Councillor Griffin requested Members also be briefed on the

proposed plans for upgrading of the Shannon Estuary Water Treatment Plant, and suggested the Shannon Basin Management Committee be engaged to produce a full River System Management Plan, with recommendations to address issues such as aeration, impounding, water levels on the entire river system etc.

Councillor K. Sheahan spoke of the need to put in place a reservoir to facilitate water extraction to the Shannon Estuary Plant at times of low water on the River Deel – such a proposal was contained in the original design with the reservoir to be located at Poulaweala Creek, but was abandoned due to project difficulty and limited financial resources. Councillor Sheahan supported the sentiments expressed by Councillors Griffin and Naughton, regarding the necessity to put in place an investment programme for the River Deel River system, to ensure proper management of a valuable natural resource. Councillor Sheahan requested Officials confirm at the April Committee Meeting, that Aughinish Alumina Limited – as part of the original water supply contract – retained the right of veto in the provision water supply from the Shannon Estuary Supply Scheme to commercial users. Councillor K. Sheahan proposed the “right of veto” clause in the original contract, when confirmed, be removed. The proposal was seconded by Councillor D. Naughton, and supported by Councillors Griffin, Neville, and J. Sheahan.

Councillor J. Sheahan, stated the Council’s campaign to outline the facts regarding the high water quality produced from the Shannon Estuary Water Treatment Plant had not worked, and requested the publicity material be re-examined and improved. He supported Councillor J. Griffin’s view, that copies of water level records from the Board of Works meters on the River Deel, dating back to 1962, should be requested and furnished to Members. Councillor Sheahan also requested confirmation of proposals to extend the Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme, following upgrading works of the Foynes reservoir, to service the area towards Glin.

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

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., informed Members the Glin and Athea Sewerage Schemes were also included with the Foynes, Shanagolden and Askeaton grouping. A fee proposal from Consultants to complete Preliminary Report for the group had been forwarded to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and when approved the schemes would be likely to be constructed as a bundle. The costs associated with any future extension to these schemes would have to be borne by developers. Mr. Kennedy stated estimated costings for the Schemes would be available on receipt of the Preliminary Report.

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

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., informed Members discussions were ongoing with the landowner regarding access to undertake the proposed drainage works, and following further discussions, would update Members at the April Area Committee Meeting.

#### **Gortadroma Landfill :**

Councillor K. Sheahan confirmed there were ongoing complaints in relation to odors originating from the landfill site, and spoke of promises made by Officials this problem would be remedied by mid-March. It was Councillor Sheahan’s understanding the “capping” works had not been done.

T. Tarpey, S.E., stated waste intake to date in 2006, at the landfill site had averaged 9,000 – 10,000 tons per month, with the projected annual intake being 65,000 to 70,000 tons. Some re-grading/levelling works on the landfill site had been undertaken in March, that may have resulted in some odor. He confirmed that Council Officials would be meeting with the contractor during the first week of April regarding construction of the electricity generation plant.

Councillor J. Griffin questioned if a water cooling system would be a requirement for the new power plant. Mr. Tarpey, in response, confirmed he would enquire and brief the Member at the April Committee Meeting.

**To consider Proposals for Playground Facilities in the Rathkeale Electoral Area (Development Contribution Fund) – D.O.S., Community and Enterprise/A.O. Community and Enterprise :**

G. Behan, D.O.S., Community & Enterprise, circulated Members with the Rathkeale Electoral Area listing of Playground recommendations for 2006 - 2008, and briefed Members on the Local Play Policy adopted by the Council in 2005. Mr. Behan outlined the priorities/guidelines for the provision of fixed equipment playgrounds in the County, these priorities/guidelines having been agreed by the Community and Development Strategic Policy Committee. The circulated recommendation was based on data collected from Census records between 1991 – 2002, with consideration given to town and village populations, child populations, and national socio-economic need data.

Councillor D. Naughton queried if the indigenous traveller population was a contributing factor in arriving at the Deprivation Score for Rathkeale Town. He also questioned if additional/alternative department funding could be sourced for provision of a playground in Rathkeale Town, on the basis of its special needs.

Councillor J. Griffin questioned if the allocations for the Rathkeale and Askeaton Playgrounds included provision for land purchase, or was solely for equipment. Councillor Griffin stated his resistance to any reduction in the proposed allocation for Rathkeale Town, referring to the independent statistics provided, that identified the town as being a disadvantaged area.

Councillor K. Sheahan reminded Members of a democratic decision taken by the Area Committee in August, 2005, in relation to the provision of playground facilities for Askeaton, and queried if the Members were now changing this decision. Councillor Sheahan informed Members they were not obliged to accept the recommendation from Officials, and that it was the remit of Councillors to make policy – not a Strategic Policy Committee. Councillor Sheahan stated the €40,000 allocation for the Askeaton Playground to be inadequate, and suggested a compromise be considered, whereby the total funding be divided, allotting €70,000 to both Rathkeale and Askeaton, with Members to lobby, and source additional funding for both projects.

Councillor D. Naughton was agreed with the sentiments expressed by Councillor Sheahan, and stressed the need to identify additional sources of funding for the Playground Projects. He stated it was not possible to fundraise locally in Askeaton to subvent the proposed allocation, as all avenues of sponsorship had been exhausted to put in place the Swimming Pool project that would be of benefit to the entire county.

Councillor J. Sheahan queried if there were consequences should the proposals be rejected, and if the proposals before Members, was an allocation specifically for 2006, with further playground funding to become available in 2007. Councillor Sheahan stated the need for playground facilities at Glin, and noted Glin was next in line for any subsequent children's playground funding. He informed Members the playground facilities in Ballybunion had cost €75,000.

Councillor T. Neville suggested Members were obliged to abide with the Playground recommendations/ advice of the Council's senior officials, these recommendations based on the best scientific data available - this data compiled from the census, encompassed areas such as ; socio-economic need, and population – both adult and child. Councillor Neville stated his support for any proposal that would provide an additional funding allocation for the Askeaton Playground, and requested officials to identify all potential funding sources as a priority.

G. Behan, D.O.S., stated the proposals brought before Members were in line with the recommendations of the Strategic Policy Committee, with any amendments suggested having a knock-on effect in the other Electoral Areas. He informed Members additional funding may become available, but was dependent on Development Fund contributions. Mr. Behan confirmed an allocation of €60,000 had been received in 2005 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and would enquire if similar funding was forthcoming in 2006 – on receipt of a response from the Department, the Rathkeale

Area Members would be advised. Allocated playground funding could be “topped-up” through private sponsorship. He also confirmed all playground equipment purchased would be to the highest quality standards, and subjected to routine monitoring and checking. It was anticipated that all proposed/ agreed Children’s Playgrounds would be located on public lands, in order to maximise the playground equipment spend.

M. Griffin, A.O., Community and Enterprise, confirmed three other Electoral Areas had accepted the Playground proposals, as recommended. Mr. Griffin confirmed all playgrounds would be fully insured and serviced. He also indicated the West Limerick Resource Group may be a source for additional “top-up” funding for the Askeaton Playground, the Ballyhoura Resource Group having allocated some resources to the development of the Childrens Playground in Charleville.

The following motions were proposed and seconded :-

- (i) “That Askeaton Town receive the same Playground funding as Rathkeale”
- (ii) “That the Playground recommendations, as presented, be accepted by the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Members”

The outcome from a vote by Members on both motions, resulted in the second Motion “that the Playground recommendations, as presented, be accepted by the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Members”, being carried.

**Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan :**

*I will move at the next ordinary Meeting of the Rathkeale Electoral Area that Limerick County Council take in charge the road spur from the Ballyhahill/Glin road leading to Corbry Estate.*

Councillor J. Sheahan stated the mentioned roadway serviced both the Corbry Housing Estate, and Industrial Estate, and was in need of maintenance/re-surfacing.

G. Liston, E.E., confirmed the roadway to be in the ownership of the Shannon Development Company, and was in need of maintenance/re-surfacing.

Councillor K. Sheahan suggested the local Community Council and Corbry Estate residents make official written requests to the Council’s Roads, Section, for the roadway to be taken-in-charge.

Councillor J. Griffin supported the Motion for the roadway to be taken-in-charge, and requested Officials take the necessary action to ensure the road serving the Council’s own Housing development is to standard.

Councillor D. Naughton requested the Committee Secretary, on behalf of the Area Committee, to advise the Roads Section to initiate the process for the taking-in-charge of the roadway servicing the Corbry Estate

**A.O.B.**

April/May Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meetings :

Members agreed the April Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting will take place on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2006, at County Hall, Dooradoyle, at 10.30.a.m.

The May Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2006, in the Resource Centre, Loghill, at 11.30.a.m.

That concluded the business of the Meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_Chairman.

Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day of APRIL, 2006.

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Secretary.