



**Minutes of Special Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting
Held in the Rathkeale House Hotel,
Lower Main Street, Rathkeale,
on Tuesday 5th September, 2006 – 10.30.a.m.**

- Present In the Chair :** Councillor J. Sheahan.
- Members Present :** Councillors J. Griffin, T. Neville, K. Sheahan.
- Officials Present :** J. Feane, Director of Services, B. Martin S.E.E., G. Liston, E.E., T. Breen, S.O., S. Hayes, A.O.
- Deputation :** M. F. Roche, S. Hogan, S. Roche, M. Casey, A. O'Connell, M. Roche.
- Apologies :** Councillor D. Naughton.

Election of Meeting Chairperson :

Councillor J. Sheahan was proposed by Councillor K. Sheahan, and seconded by Councillor J. Griffin.

Deputation from St. Joseph's Graveyard Committee :

Councillor J. Sheahan welcomed on behalf of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee, the Members of the St. Joseph's Graveyard Committee to the Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting, and outlined procedure for the attendance of deputations to such Meetings in accordance with Standing Orders. Councillor Sheahan then invited the deputation to make their presentation.

St. Joseph's Graveyard Committee

Ms. S. Roche spoke on the general condition of the St. Joseph's Burial Ground, and requested the Council to enforce its existing policy in relation to the erection of headstones. The Committee also requested improvement works be undertaken that included, removal of surface water lodging at the entrance gates, grass maintenance, all pathways to be kept clear – removal of concrete/marble slabs, a new roadside boundary wall to incorporate public lighting, and provision of a water supply. Ms. Roche invited both elected Members and Officials to visit the burial ground with the Committee.

Mr. S. Hogan stated it was not unreasonable for the Graveyard Committee to request a dignified place of rest for deceased family members, in a properly maintained burial ground.

Councillor J. Sheahan thanked the Graveyard Committee for their presentation to the Area Committee Members, and confirmed the Committee Secretary would correspond further on the issues raised. The Graveyard Committee then withdrew.

Councillor J. Griffin recommended the issues raised by the Graveyard Committee, be costed by Officials and discussed further as an item at the October Area Committee Meeting. Subject to the agreement of Members, a submission would be made for a Special Estimates allocation to fund the proposed works.

Councillor K. Sheahan confirmed his support for the proposals as outlined by Councillor J. Griffin. He queried if the Graveyard Committee undertook voluntary maintenance works in St. Joseph's Burial Ground, and spoke of the various voluntary groups in the Askeaton locality, that maintained burial grounds in Askeaton, Kilcornan, Castletown, with the Askeaton Friary/Abbey maintained by the local Community FAS. Councillor Sheahan was anxious the Council's Grant Scheme for burial grounds be the subject of further discussion by Members, with a view to improved funding and a broadening of the scope

for improvement work under the Scheme. Councillor Sheahan requested that Members be briefed/circulated with the contract agreement clarifying the legal standing/responsibilities in relation to the Council's ownership of Nantinan Church and Burial Ground.

Councillor Griffin spoke of the necessity to prioritise and address, burial ground improvement and maintenance issues in Council owned burial grounds, and then look towards improved assistance for the numerous burial grounds not in the Council's ownership.

B. Martin, S.E.E., informed Members the improvement works as outlined would be costed and available for the October Area Committee Meeting. Legal advice indicated that Council policy, in relation to the erection of headstones at the St. Joseph's Burial Ground, would be unenforceable due to past practices. It was necessary to introduce new policy that would cater for both the settled and traveller communities in Rathkeale, and most importantly, is enforceable. Current Council policy permitted headstones to a height of 4'6", and Celtic Cross to a height of 7'0". It was proposed that the new policy specific to St. Joseph's Burial Ground would permit a Celtic Cross or Monument to a maximum height of 7'0", with all headstones in excess of 4'6" requiring certification from a Consulting Engineer for structural, and health and safety standards compliance.

Councillor T. Neville requested Officials to cost and undertake the burial ground improvement works as outlined by the Graveyard Committee as quickly as possible. Councillor Neville spoke of the failure by the Council through the years, to enforce its own headstone policy at St. Joseph's Burial Ground, and due to this failure, the Council were now under obligation to recompense the local community through upgrading/improvement works to the burial ground. He queried if new policy were agreed at local Area Level, was it necessary for this agreement to be confirmed by full Council.

Councillor J. Griffin suggested that Officials revert to Members with the revised draft headstone policy proposals for the Rathkeale Burial Ground. Councillor Griffin recommended a water connection/extension should be sought from the Cappagh Group Scheme, this Scheme having been extended to within a short distance from the burial ground.

S. Hayes, A.O., Water Services, confirmed that legal advice/recommendation was to regulate within the existing policy framework.

That concluded the business of the Meeting.

Signed: _____ Chairman.

Dated this 11th day of DECEMBER, 2006.

Secretary.