



**Minutes of Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting
Held in the S.P.C. Meeting Room, County Hall,
Dooradoyle Road, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick
on Monday 24th September, 2007 – 10.00.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.,
G. Naughton, S.E., D. Brennan, S.E., J. Kennedy, S.E.E.,
C. Tormey, S.O., T. Tarpey, S.E.

Apologies : J. Feane, D.O.S.

Councillor D. Naughton proposed the Area Meeting be adjourned for a period of fifteen minutes, as a mark of respect to the Griffin Family, following the recent bereavement of their brother, Tom. The proposal was seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan, and supported by Councillors T. Neville, and J. Sheahan.

Councillor J. Griffin thanked Members and Officials who had extended their sympathies to the family, and attended the funeral.

Minutes of Area Committee Meeting held on Friday, 29th June, 2007.

The Minutes of the Area Committee Meeting held on Monday, 29th June, 2007, were adopted. Proposed by Councillor K. Sheahan, and seconded by Councillor J. Sheahan.

Councillor J. Sheahan informed Members the National Roads Authority, had the week previous, engaged contractors to remove the existing river-side stone wall to the eastern side of the town, and attempted to replace the wall with a crash barrier. The boundary wall had been originally constructed/improved by the local community and formed part of a river-side walkway that linked to the Town Park. There had been no consultation with local community representatives, nor were Members of the Area Committee advised/briefed regarding the proposed works by Council Officials or the National Roads Authority. Members of the Glin Development Association had approached the works contractor on Wednesday 19th September requesting the barrier installation works to be halted pending discussions with the Council Officials. The contractor complied with this request.

B. Martin, S.E.E., confirmed the Area Office had not been previously advised/made aware of the proposed road barrier works at Glin.

Councillor D. Naughton proposed the Main Roads Section, be requested, in future, to brief Members prior to commencement of any works on National Roads that would impact on local communities, towns or villages in the Rathkeale Electoral Area. The proposal was seconded by Councillor J. Sheahan.

Councillor T. Neville queried if there had been any further developments regarding the proposed Meeting with the National Roads Authority, following the nomination of the Area Chairman as the Rathkeale Members' representative to the deputation.

Councillor D. Naughton, as the nominated Area representative, confirmed he was unaware of any Meeting with the N.R.A. having been scheduled by Officials to date.

Update on the construction of the New Offices Rathkeale.

Councillor D. Naughton proposed this item be dealt with at a Special Area Committee Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 25th September, at 10.40.a.m. in the new Rathkeale Area Offices, with Standing Orders suspended to facilitate the holding of the Meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, and supported by Councillors T. Neville, J. Sheahan, and K. Sheahan.

To confirm the naming of the new Rathkeale Area Council Headquarters as “Áras Sean Finn”.

Councillor D. Naughton proposed this item be dealt with at an Area Committee Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 25th September, at 9.30.a.m. in the new Rathkeale Area Offices, with Standing Orders suspended to facilitate the holding of the Meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, and supported by Councillors T. Neville, J. Sheahan, and K. Sheahan.

To consider the proposed Multi-Annual Road Works Programme 2008 – 2010.

Councillor K. Sheahan, in proposing adoption of the Multi-Annual Road Works Programme 2008 – 2010 informed Members it was normal practice for Members to accept the recommendation of the Area Roads Engineer.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, and supported by Councillors T. Neville, D. Naughton, and J. Sheahan.

Update on Councillors' Public Lighting in the Rathkeale Electoral Area.

Councillor K. Sheahan spoke of the poor service provided by the E.S.B. in the provision of public lighting, and requested Officials to exercise all/any means necessary to improve services. Councillor Sheahan suggested Officials invite E.S.B. representatives, to an Area Meeting in Rathkeale, to address the ducting and public lighting issues of the elected Members.

Councillor D. Naughton queried if adequate funding and manpower was being provided at Area level to fund the ducting requirement for public lighting, specified by the E.S.B.

G. Liston, E.E., informed Members adequate manpower was currently available to undertake ducting works.

Councillor J. Sheahan referred to a recent experience, where a public light had been erected, with ducting provided on the insistence of the E.S.B. Some months later a private three phase supply was provided in the locality by the E.S.B., with overhead cabling that looped across a regional road, and no ducting requirement deemed necessary when undertaking the works themselves.

Councillor J. Griffin stated his agreement to the principal of cable ducting in towns and villages, the associated costs being “once-off”.

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., assured Members a full assessment of the public lighting issues would be undertaken with a view to resolving the issues raised, and would refer back in due course.

B. Martin, S.E.E., briefed Members on approaches made to the E.S.B. to permit overhead lines on public lighting for Croagh Village, due to the substantial costs associated with undergrounding arising from the necessity to engage rock-breaking equipment – this request was refused with undergrounding of the cabling insisted upon.

Disposal of Land at St. Mary’s Park, Rathkeale.

The Disposal of Land at St. Mary’s Park, Rathkeale, was proposed by Councillor K. Sheahan, seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, and supported by Councillors T. Neville, D. Naughton, and J. Sheahan.

Update on progress of Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme Extension.

D. Brennan, S.E., Water Services informed Members a temporary Water Treatment Plant, currently being used at Clareville, Limerick, had been purchased and would be moved to the Shannon Estuary Plant by year-end. This plant currently had a treatment capacity of 500,00 gallons per day, and would be upgraded to 750,000 gallons per day. Consultants had been appointed with a remit of increasing treatment capacity at the Shannon Estuary Plant from 4.0.m gallons per day to 5.8.m gallons per day. Long term proposals include plans to link the Shannon Estuary Scheme at Kilcornan with the Shannon/Adare supply. Mr. Brennan confirmed the extraction figure of 5.8.m gallons per day from the River Deel had been obtained/determined by the Environmental Protection Agency. The current water extraction limit for Bleach Lough was 250,000 gallons per day.

Councillor K. Sheahan stated it was his understanding that maximum permitted water extraction from the River Deel was limited to 4.0.m gallons per day, and requested clarification as to how Officials could increase the extraction limit by 1.8.m gallons per day. Councillor Sheahan expressed concern regarding the capacity of the Deel to provide increased abstraction rates when the river was at summer levels, suggesting the Bleach Lough water supply was a potential resource that should be evaluated. Demands for potable water had increased beyond what had been anticipated during the past twenty years due to substantial development and increased industrial demand in the area.

Councillor D. Naughton questioned if it would be more practical to locate the proposed Water Treatment Plant at Bleach Lough to supplement the Deel river source. Councillor Naughton queried the capacity of the River Deel to support extraction levels of 5.8.m gallons per day without damage to the entire river system during times of low water flow/levels, and stated his opposition to any increased extraction. Councillor Naughton proposed the Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme Extension and associated issues, be retained on future Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting Agendae, as a recurring item, pending full discussion and agreement of the elected Members. The proposal was seconded by Councillor J. Griffin, and supported by Councillors T. Neville, J. Sheahan and K. Sheahan.

Councillor T. Neville asked if Environmental Impact Studies had been undertaken, on a sectional basis to the River Deel, in order to determine the effects on the entire river system, of the increased water extraction proposals.

Councillor J. Griffin spoke on excessive vegetation growth through the upper Deel river system over the past twenty years, as a result of increased nitrate/lower water levels/increased light penetration of the river bed, due to extraction on the lower Deel. Councillor Griffin requested Officials to clarify if the Council’s water supply contract with Aughinish Alumina could be re-negotiated on foot substantially increased demand over what had been originally agreed.

Report on White River Fund detailing total contributions, and a breakdown of expenditure on proposed/completed projects to date.

A Coleman, A.O., Community and Enterprise circulated a financial statement outlining income and expenditure in the White River Fund.

Councillor J. Griffin requested clarification on whether the proposed group water supply scheme was being fully funded from the White River Fund or by a contribution from the fund. Councillor Griffin stressed the necessity for the Group Scheme to be linked to the Shannon Estuary Water supply in order to guarantee quality.

Councillor K. Sheahan expressed disappointment the Shannon Estuary Water Supply had not progressed to connect to the Gortadroma Scheme over the past five years. Councillor Sheahan questioned if any costing had been undertaken on the costs associated with the Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme extension.

Councillor J. Sheahan, spoke of the genuine concerns in the Gortadroma locality regarding water quality due to the proximity of the landfill site. Councillor Sheahan was insistent that water be supplied by the Council through the extension of the Shannon Estuary supply, and the Group Scheme works fully funded by the Council.

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., informed Members it was his understanding that the Gortadroma Group Water Supply Scheme would be linked to the Shannon Estuary Water Supply under a Capital Scheme.

Gortadroma Landfill – recurring item.

T. Tarpey, S.E., informed Members four complaints had been received for the month of July. Intake of landfill material was back to normal, with a small area – in the context of the overall landfill area – being used. Mr. Tarpey confirmed three additional landfill cells were being constructed, with permission for a fourth. Based on current usage landfill intake would be approximately 70/80,000 tons annually. The current license permitted an intake of 130,000 tons per annum. Adequate lands were available at Gortadroma for further landfill extensions in the future, but would be subject to An Bord Pleanála approval/permission. It was anticipated that contracts for the electricity generation plant would be signed before year-end.

Councillor J. Sheahan, in referring to a question by Councillor T. Neville, expressed the view that the free refuse collection service in the existing two kilometer landfill boundary should be extended to three kilometers.

Councillor T. Neville, informed Members it was his intention to raise the extension of the refuse service issue at the next Chamber Meeting, and spoke of the limited impact of the proposed service extension – an additional thirty-three houses qualifying for a free refuse service.

Question submitted by Councillor K. Sheahan :

I will ask at the next Area meeting of Limerick County Council that Members be briefed on the Council's Official Policy for the provision of Speed Ramps.

Item deferred for direct response.

A.O.B.

C. Tormley, S.O., Estate Management, spoke of ongoing difficulties at Marian Place, Glin, and that funding was now available that would assist in resolving a number of the issues. The proposed works – that included fencing - would not require Part 8 planning approval, and it was intended to outline the proposals at a Public Meeting to be held in Glin, on Thursday 27th September, at 7.30.p.m.

Councillor J. Sheahan anticipated that any difficulties arising, would be addressed through the proposed Public Meeting.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Signed: _____Chairman.

Dated this 13th day of NOVEMBER, 2007.

_____Secretary.