



**Minutes of Rathkeale Area Committee Meeting
Held in the Lower Ground Floor Meeting Room,
County Hall, Dooradoyle,
on 26th June, 2006 – 11.00.a.m.**

Present In the Chair : Councillor T. Neville.

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

Officials Present : B. Martin S.E.E., G. Liston, E.E., T. Breen, S.O., D. Troy, S.E.P.,
E. Ryan, N.B.A., T. Hartnett, Asst. Planner, A. Coleman, A.O.,
M. Griffin, A.O., J. Kennedy, S.E.E., G. Naughton, S.E.E.,
D. Sheehy, E.E., S. Nash, E.E.

Apologies : Councillor D. Naughton.

Deputation : C. Hanley, S. Liston, M. Quaid.

Election of Meeting Chairperson :

Councillor T. Neville was proposed by Councillor J. Griffin, and seconded by Councillor J. Sheahan.

Minutes of Area Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th May, 2006 :

The Minutes of the Area Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th May, 2006, were adopted. Proposed by Councillor J. Griffin, and seconded by Councillor K. Sheahan.

Croagh/Kilfinny Development Association Deputation :

Councillor T. Neville welcomed the Croagh/Kilfinny Development Association Members to the Electoral Area Committee Meeting, and outlined Standing Order procedure for the attendance of Deputations at such Meetings.

Ms. M. Quaid circulated a submission from the Development Association to the elected Members, and confirmed the Association was fully representative of all groupings in the Croagh/Kilfinny area. Ms. Quaid stated public lighting was required to service the Camogie and Sports Complex. She confirmed the Association was anxious to retain the rural aspects of the village, but also encourage tourism and progress the development of amenity facilities to maximum potential. Ms. Quaid outlined the various projects undertaken by the Development Association that included the public park area, community centre/sports complex - other amenity developments in Croagh included the G.A.A. and Camogie Club playing areas. Ms. Quaid stated the latest census figures had confirmed a 47% increase in the population of Croagh.

Mr. C. Hanley thanked the Rathkeale Electoral Area Councillors for receiving the Development Association deputation, and acknowledged the tremendous support of the elected Members through the years, in bringing the various projects in the area to fruition. He stated that the new Sports Complex was

central to the village, and spoke of the need for the provision of footpaths, upgrading of the road surface and public lighting, leading to the development.

Councillor J. Griffin proposed the suggested road improvements and footpaths to service the Sports Complex, be included and funded under the Road Works Programme, with the public lighting requirement funded from the Development Fund allocation.

Councillor T. Neville seconded the proposal, with Councillors J. Sheahan and K. Sheahan supporting.

G. Liston, E.E., confirmed the allocation of €30,000 from the Development Fund for provision of public lighting at Croagh Village, and would “take-on-board” the recommendations of the Members.

B. Martin, S.E.E., stated all the issues discussed would be examined, and Officials would revert to Members with plans/proposals.

To note the proposed allocations under the Community, Sport, and Cultural Grant Scheme, 2006 – A.O., Community & Enterprise.

M. Griffin, A.O., circulated copies of the proposed allocations under the Community, Sport, and Cultural Grant Scheme for 2006 to the elected Members, and briefly outlined each proposal.

Councillor J. Griffin suggested any application deemed eligible for grant funding should receive an allocation under the Scheme, with funding not limited to large projects. He requested grant funding under the scheme be made available to St. Mary’s/Sean Finn’s, Rathkeale.

Councillor K. Sheahan expressed disappointment that the Deel Anglers submission, to provide river access for persons with disabilities to fish on the River Deel, at Askeaton, had been refused funding. Councillor Sheahan stated the application to provide fishing facilities for disabled persons was the first of its kind in the County, and was for provision of wheelchair ramps over the river. All voluntary groups had been canvassed in the locality for agreement to the proposals. Agreement to the proposals had also been received from the Council’s Heritage/Conservation and Senior Planning Officials. Councillor Sheahan stated his difficulty in supporting the proposed Grant Scheme, unless funding support for the Deel Anglers submission became available.

Councillor T. Neville stated his support of the view expressed by Members that all valid applications by Voluntary Organisations, under the Community, Sport, and Cultural Grant Scheme, be allocated a nominal sum in recognition of the costs associated with their application.

M. Griffin, A.O., suggested to Councillor K. Sheahan that an alternative-funding source for the Deel Anglers project, may be available under a Disability Grant Scheme. Mr. Griffin undertook to explore this funding source and refer back to Councillor Sheahan. In response to Councillor Griffin, a grant allocation of €5,000 to fund the St. Mary’s/Sean Finn’s was provided. M. Griffin, A.O., confirmed to Councillor J. Sheahan, that the Development Fund breakdown was 80% to Roads and Water Services, with 20% allocated to Community based projects.

To note Extended CLÁR Programme – A.O., Community and Enterprise.

A. Coleman, A.O., Community and Enterprise briefed Members on the details of the extended CLÁR Programme. In response to questioning from Councillor T. Neville, Mr. Coleman confirmed funding was available for “flashing amber” lighting at schools in CLÁR areas - it was his understanding that a full school warning lights works programme for County Limerick was in place for 2006, financed from the Development Fund, with any recoupment issues in relation to CLÁR to be resolved.

To discuss the Draft Rathkeale Local Area Plan – S.E.P., Planning.

D. Troy, S.E.P., stated discussions through workshops etc., of the Draft Rathkeale Town Plan had been organised during the past six months, the dialogue focusing on issues such as physical infrastructure, traffic, illegal parking, public lighting, dereliction, economic investment, and refurbishment/investment in the main Square. Mr. Troy confirmed there were good Community Sports facilities in the town. Zoning proposals included provision of a town park adjacent to the River Deel, a special conservation area, an extension to the northeast town boundary of 2000 for an industrial park. He confirmed projections under the Draft Plan catered for a population increase to 3,500 by 2020.

E. Ryan, N.B.A., confirmed the Draft Plan contained proposals to develop the town centre, and to re-create the streetscape at New Line. Mr. Ryan gave an undertaking to Councillor J. Griffin, that revisions to Site 10 on the circulated Town map to include permissions would be made.

Councillor J. Griffin spoke of the need to put in place a new link road between the Garda Station and New Line roadway. Councillor Griffin requested a town map showing town boundaries be furnished to the elected Members, this map to be supplied with an overlay showing the “fit” of the new plan on these boundaries. Councillor Griffin stated Rathkeale Town to have a legal boundary, and queried if design should be limited to this boundary. He also requested that a larger Plan/drawing be presented to Members that would include the perimeter roads of the Town. Councillor Griffin was supported on these issues by Councillor T. Neville.

Councillor T. Neville questioned if the Council’s Legal Team has advised on the ownership issues pertaining to the Town Square, and if these issues were now resolved.

Proposed Turnkey Housing Development in Askeaton – S.E., Housing.

G. Naughton, S.E., briefed the elected Members on the proposed design and layout for the Turnkey Housing Development in Askeaton. The anticipated completion date was year-end, and agreement to the proposals was requested.

Councillor K. Sheahan proposed the development proceed as outlined. The proposal was seconded by Councillor T. Neville, and supported by Councillors J. Griffin and J. Sheahan.

Councillor K. Sheahan, while welcoming the provision of additional housing units in Askeaton, queried as to how the current site was now deemed suitable for housing. He stated the site had been previously offered to the Council, this offer being refused on the basis that the site was too small, and would not afford front gardens in any type of housing development. Councillor Sheahan stated he had been informed by the Council’s Housing Section at the time, that the type of housing development now being proposed, could not, and would not happen. He requested a response from the appropriate Official on this issue.

Councillor J. Griffin was anxious to see more such housing developments in the Electoral Area as outlined by the Senior Engineer. Councillor Griffin referred to a site at Ballywilliam, Rathkeale, that he was requesting the Council to purchase for provision of Turnkey Housing type development, and would also afford the Council the opportunity to provide subsidised/serviced sites.

Proposed Bus Stop Change at Lower Main Street, Rathkeale – E.E., Rathkeale Roads.

B. Martin, S.E.E., stated it had been approximately two years since the initial meeting with C.I.E. Officials, and outlined the dangers of the present bus-stop location. Agreement had been recently received from C.I.E. to re-locate the bus stop to Lower Main Street, near the Deel Bridge - this location provided greater roadway width that would facilitate un-interrupted traffic flow.

Councillor J. Griffin spoke of the serious risk to public safety of the bus stop located at the Main Street/ New Line junction, and complimented Officials on progress to date. Councillor Griffin requested that bus shelters be provided at the new bus-stop locations.

Progress Report on Installation of C.C.T.V. and Clean Up to rear of Roches Road, Rathkeale – S.E.E., Environment.

D. Sheehy, E.E., informed Members quotations had been sourced for the installation of cameras to the rear of Roches Road – the Council was awaiting permission from the G.A.A. to erect the cameras.

Extension of Shannon Estuary Water Supply Scheme – Update from S.E.E., Water Services.

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., confirmed confrontation in relation to the extension of the Shannon Estuary Water Supply towards Pallaskenry was continuing. Meetings between Council Officials and protestors were ongoing in relation to completion of the pipe-laying works.

B. Martin, S.E.E., confirmed to the elected Members that there had been a number of mechanical problems affecting water extraction from the Bleach Lough supply.

Foynes/Shanagolden/Askeaton Sewerage Scheme – Update from S.E.E., Water Services.

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., confirmed the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government had ratified the approval of the County Manager to appoint consultant for the preparation of a Preliminary Report for the five towns of Askeaton, Athea, Shanagolden, Foynes, and Glin, in recent days. Some preliminary elements of the study had already been completed and the procurement of site investigation and sewer surveys will commence shortly. The Preliminary Report would take between six and nine months to complete.

Proposed Flooding Relief Measures at Foynes – Update – S.E.E. Water Services.

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., informed Members there had been no communication between Officials and the landowner. A works schedule was being prepared, and it was proposed to advise the landowner of the Council's intention to proceed drainage works in line with this schedule.

Councillor J. Griffin stated the Port Authority proposed to put in place a link between the mainland and Foynes Island, - the resulting causeway would create a lagoon with potential for increased water levels. He suggested that Officials make a general enquiry as to the exact nature and "knock-on" effect of these works.

Gortadroma Landfill – recurring item – S.E. Environment.

S. Nash, E.E., informed Members five complaints had been received for the month in relation to fly nuisance, and spraying to prevent this problem was being conducted on a daily basis from Monday to Sunday. 51,000 ton of landfill material had been received to date in 2006. The remaining space/capacity of the cell in use was now limited, and consideration was being given to increasing landfill charges in order to reduce landfill intake. Preliminary works to develop the new cell would commence in August, with the projected costs associated with the new cell development being €8m – €16m. Loan funding would be sought for development of the new cell.

Councillor J. Griffin stated his opposition to the raising of any loan for provision of a new landfill cell at the Gortadroma Landfill facility, until funding for the new Rathkeale Area Headquarters and Library

Service was “copper-fastened”. It was his understanding from Meetings with the Management Team, that the Rathkeale Area Office/Library development could only progress if funding were raised through the disposal of assets - the borrowing option for the development being “capped” at National level. Councillor Griffin requested Officials provide an explanation to the elected Members on the “about-turn” in relation to funding options available to the Authority.

Question submitted by Councillor D. Naughton :

I will ask at the next ordinary Meeting of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee what is the projected volume of water required by Aughinish Alumina Limited to fulfill their current planning – c.h.p. plant and increase in production.

Apologies having been received from Councillor D. Naughton, Members were agreed this question be deferred to the following Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting.

Question submitted by Councillor K. Sheahan :

I will ask at the next ordinary Meeting of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee that Limerick County Council furnish a detailed listing of all unfinished works at Marine Cove, Foynes :-

this listing to identify -

- (i) works outstanding on the part of the Council and projected completion date/s for these works*
- (ii) what actions the Council proposes to take in relation to any unfinished works that are the responsibility of the Contractor.*

J. Kennedy, S.E.E., circulated a written reply to Members, confirming the unfinished works required of the developer at the Marine Cove site had been completed within the previous two weeks. The works necessary to secure the site of the chamber involves the erection of secure fencing, and quotations had been requested from contractors. Depending on the availability of fencing erectors, the works would be expedited as quickly as possible.

Question submitted by Councillor K. Sheahan :

I will ask at the next ordinary Meeting of the Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee what plans Limerick County Council have to repair and upgrade the footpath network at Askeaton.

G. Liston, E.E., informed Councillor Sheahan the footpath network in Askeaton was being examined and assessed, and would refer back to the Member in due course.

Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Griffin :

I will move at the next ordinary Meeting of the Rathkeale Electoral Area that Limerick County Council, through it's Arts Officer, make the necessary arrangements to assist any, or all interested parties, in acquiring the Central Cinema, Lower Main Street, Rathkeale, for the purposes of providing a permanent location for the Performing Arts and other similar Groups in West Limerick.

A copy of the written response to this question was circulated to the Members.

Councillor J. Griffin informed Members the owner of the Central Cinema, Lower Main Street, Rathkeale would dispose of the building on favorable terms, subject to its usage. A preservation order is in place on the front facade of the Cinema. He stated purchase of this property by the Council was an ideal opportunity to put in place a Performing Arts venue for West Limerick. Councillor Griffin stated the

response to the Notice of Motion from the Council was not acceptable, and that he would continue to lobby for the purchase and refurbishment of the Cinema. A secondary benefit to the purchase of the building would be to re-generate this section of the town.

Councillor J. Sheahan confirmed his support for the Notice of Motion and the sentiments expressed by Councillor Griffin. Councillor Sheahan spoke of the potential benefits in promoting a cultural centre in the West Limerick area, and the need for the Council to be positive/forwarding thinking in their approach to such projects.

Councillor's T. Neville, and K. Sheahan supported the Motion.

A.O.B.

Councillor J. Griffin proposed the St. Joseph's Graveyard Committee be invited to a Special Rathkeale Electoral Area Committee Meeting, to voice their concerns in relation to various issues arising at the burial ground. The proposal was seconded by Councillor T. Neville, and supported by Councillors J. Sheahan and K. Sheahan.

Councillor K. Sheahan informed Members, the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, John O'Donoghue, T.D., would be formally laying the foundation stone to the Askeaton Swimming Pool Complex on Monday, 3rd July, and all Area Members and Officials were invited to attend the ceremony. Formal invitations would issue in due course.

That concluded the business of the Meeting.

Signed: _____Chairman.

Dated this 16th day of OCTOBER, 2006.

Secretary.