

## **CORK COUNTY COUNCIL**

Minutes of the June Meeting of Kanturk/Mallow Municipal District held on Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 in the Edel Quinn Hall, Kanturk, Co. Cork.

### **PRESENT:**

In the chair: Timmy Collins

Councillors: Melissa Mullane, Gearóid Murphy, Gerard Murphy and John Paul O'Shea

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Bernard Moynihan

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

L. Donovan, Municipal District Officer, K.M.M.D., M. Hayes, Senior Executive Officer, Municipal District Operations & Rural Development, J. Moloney, Senior Executive Engineer, K.M.M.D., P. O'Sullivan, Executive Engineer, K.M.M.D., B. Dennehy, Executive Engineer, K.M.M.D., S. De Faoite, Senior Executive Officer, Housing, M. Fitzgerald, Senior Staff Officer, Housing and Jennifer Murphy, Staff Officer, K.M.M.D.

### **1. Confirmation of Minutes of the May Meeting held on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in the Council Offices, Annabella, Mallow**

The Minutes of the May Monthly Meeting held on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in the Council Offices, Annabella, Mallow were approved and signed on the proposal of Cllr. Gerard Murphy, seconded by Cllr. J.P. O'Shea.

### **2. Presentation by Séamus De Faoite, Senior Executive Officer, Housing on the Repair & Leasing Scheme**

S. De Faoite, Senior Executive Officer, Housing provided Members with a presentation on the Repair & Leasing Scheme highlighting the following points:

- The Repair & Leasing Scheme is described as a key component of the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness
- The principal objective is to deliver social housing quickly by targeting the remediation of vacant units that require only some limited works, by enticing property owners to do their vacant properties up to provide social housing for a period of 10 years or more
- Maximum cost of repairs allowable is €40,000 and the property must be vacant for at least 12 months and there must be a social housing demand for the property
- Scheme is described as a long-term initiative to provide security of tenure for tenants
- Lease payments are based on current market rental rates in the property location, less 20% to cover vacant periods and administration/management costs
- The scheme is not available for private renting, as Cork County Council shall appoint applicants from the approved housing list
- Scheme is being administered through the Housing Grants Section, Annabella
- Application process outlined to Members
- A claw-back clause will be included in the lease agreement to cover instances where the property is no longer available for lease prior to the expiry date of the lease
- Ongoing maintenance will be carried out by the Local Authority in respect of internal maintenance and repairs
- Advantages for the property owner includes guaranteed rent, upgrade of a property that might otherwise become derelict

- A further scheme, the Buy & Renew Scheme allows Local Authorities to purchase and renew housing units in need of remediation in order to make them available for social housing. This would complement the Repair & Leasing Scheme, but there are no further details available from the Department

The Senior Executive Officer advised Members of the importance of creating awareness of the scheme by way of informing Members, placing radio adverts promoting the benefits of this scheme. Cllr. M. Mullane commended the scheme, but stated that it doesn't replace building houses, while highlighted her concerns regarding housing needs in smaller villages. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea queried if there was an opportunity for Cork County Council to review the market rental rates in a couple of year's time and sought information on the payback of the cost of repairs. The Senior Staff Officer advised Members that the 20% market rental rate was based on the R.T.B. published data which will be reviewed every three to four years. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea spoke of the importance to get that message out to landlords. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea stated that following the government's decision not to impose levies on vacant sites, there was little opportunity to increase available housing stock and spoke of the importance of the Derelict Sites Act in some cases. He also stated that different house types located in rural and isolated areas should be considered. Cllr. Gerard Murphy highlighted his concerns where people may not be aware that houses are available in smaller villages and therefore do not list these villages as a preference for housing. Cllr. Gerard Murphy stated that the overall objective should be to tackle dereliction on our streetscapes to encourage people to live in the centre of towns and villages, describing village renewal as important as the provision of social housing. He highlighted the importance of simplifying the Repair & Leasing Scheme as much as possible to encourage participation. Cllr. Gearóid Murphy also spoke of the need to make the scheme as easy as possible and to ensure adequate communication and awareness of this scheme. The Senior Executive Officer spoke of the need to be careful in terms of bureaucracy as all paperwork concerning the Local Authority, property owner and contractor must be in order to protect all parties. The Senior Staff Officer informed Members that if property owners have queries regarding what they would be paying back, staff in the Council's Housing Grants Office can access a calculator on the Housing Manual website to determine how much the property owners would get from the Council for the monthly lease. Cllr. T. Collins described the scheme as a great opportunity to improve town centres and queried if Cork County Council would purchase vacant properties not availing of the scheme for social housing needs.

The Senior Executive Officer informed Members that there was a 9% vacancy rate nationwide with approximately 183,000 properties recorded as vacant. He asked Members to contact his office if they were aware of vacant properties within towns, villages and rural areas in North Cork which would be suitable for this scheme. Members were informed that twelve applications had been received to date, but that some of these were not suitable under the conditions of the scheme. The Senior Executive Officer advised Members that details and application forms for the Repair & Leasing Scheme are available on the Council website and Council Offices.

### **3. Set the Date for Annual Meeting of Kanturk/Mallow Municipal District**

The Municipal District Officer proposed that the Annual General Meeting of the Kanturk/Mallow Municipal District would be held in the Council Offices, Annabella, Mallow on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 10:00a.m. followed by the Ordinary Meeting of the Kanturk/Mallow Municipal District. Members agreed with the proposal.

#### **4. Economic Development, Enterprise & Tourism Directorate – Update to Members of each Municipal District on the Activity of the Tourism Section to end of May 2017**

Update on the Activity of the Tourism Section to end of May 2017 – Members noted the contents. The Senior Executive Officer advised Members that more directorate issues would be brought before the Municipal District Meeting. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea expressed his disappointment regarding the progress to date in respect of North Cork and noted that there were only four items in the report for the area. He also stated that there was no mention of activities in North Cork, no update on the Beara Breifne Bridge or the North Cork Passport. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea stated that there was to be a policy in respect of motorcamp facilities and highlighted his concerns that North Cork was not benefitting from the increased tourism numbers like other areas. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea spoke of the importance to have someone from the Tourism Section to discuss the issues with Members. The Senior Executive Officer agreed to take this suggestion on board and stated that the Municipal District would seek a meeting with the Tourism Directorate. Cllr. Gerard Murphy advised Members that some development companies have produced tourism documents and spoke of the importance of co-ordination with these groups. The Senior Executive Officer informed Members that the development of Blueways such as Ballyhass was very encouraging. The Municipal District Officer advised Members of progress made in the District such as Mallow Castle and spoke of the development of websites and trail maps. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea expressed his concerns that this progress was in isolation and spoke of the importance of a tourism strategy for the whole area. Cllrs. Gerard Murphy and T. Collins suggested that Cllr. J.P. O'Shea could raise these issues at the next Tourism S.P.C. The Senior Executive Officer spoke of the work done in Mallow through the Municipal District Office and stated that new tourism initiatives would be implemented in towns across the District. The Municipal District Officer supported these comments and advised Members that while Mallow had the largest population and available amenities, she was also very conscious of rural communities.

#### **5. Town & Village Development Fund €62,500 – Dromina Proposal**

The Municipal District Officer advised Members that three villages were being considered, namely Dromina, Milford and Knocknagree. Members heard how Dromina was most in need of investment and it was decided that investing funding in conjunction with Clár would merit most impact. Cllr. Gerard Murphy welcomed the proposal describing both Dromina and Milford as very active communities. He expressed concerns with the National Town and Village Renewal Scheme process with regard to time and budget. The Municipal District Officer clarified that this is not a national scheme, but Cork County Council's own funding and this District's decision. Cllr. Gearóid Murphy welcomed the proposals for Dromina and commended the Council's plans. The Municipal District Officer provided clarification that the architect's impression was of an overall proposal and that the District would be carrying out elements of the overall project that can be achieved in a short timeframe. The Executive Engineer, Newmarket Area stated that traffic calming measures would be a priority. The Municipal District Officer advised Members that the local community had been advised of this proposal and confirmed there was buy-in from the community. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea raised his concerns regarding the realistic implementation of the project and queried if there would be controlled or uncontrolled crossings. The Senior Executive Officer advised Members that these considerations would be taken into account with the Engineers and Architects. The Senior Executive Engineer informed Members that the issue in Dromina was primarily a speeding problem and stated that Cork County Councils own Town and Village Development fund of €62,500 would be examined with regard to what can be achieved for €62,500. The Executive Engineer, Newmarket advised Members that planning may change slightly, dependent on submissions from the local community. Cllr. Gearóid Murphy suggested that greater definition to the road should be prioritised at the bend towards Charleville. The

Municipal District Officer advised Members that a planning report for this project would be put before them shortly.

The proposal for Dromina was approved on the proposal of Cllr. M. Mullane, seconded by Cllr. Gerard Murphy.

#### **6. Section 183 – Disposal of Freehold Interest**

Section 183 – Disposal of Freehold Interest at No. 1 Creggane, Station Road, Buttevant, Co. Cork. The Section 183 was approved on the proposal of Cllr. J.P. O'Shea, seconded by Cllr. Gearóid Murphy.

#### **7. Municipal District Officer's Report**

The Municipal District Officer outlined the contents of the report to Members highlighting the following points:

- Boherbue Town & Village Renewal Grant – the community was shortly going to tender
- Painting Schemes for Percival Street, Kanturk and Main Street, Mallow – going very well in both towns.
- Murder on the Terrace – outdoor theatre event being held at Mallow Castle on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 with a capacity of 400 people
- The Mallow Arts Festival will be held from 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017, schedule of events is being finalised by Mallow Arts Collective who are being assisted by the Arts Officer and a mentor
- South of Ireland Championships Pipe Band Competition will be held in Mallow Castle on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2017 with ten pipe bands participating

Cllr. J.P. O'Shea spoke of the important social and cultural links for towns and villages which can be forged through twinning. The Municipal District Officer described the recent visit in respect of Tinley Park as a huge success and suggested that Corporate Affairs and the Tourism Section be contacted to formalise twinning arrangements. The Senior Executive Officer advised Members of the different focus being taken in respect of the Painting Scheme this year and commended Council Officials who had met with businesses to promote the scheme.

#### **8. Roads Senior Executive Engineer's Reports & Correspondence**

The Senior Executive Engineer presented the KMMD Public Lighting Programme 2017 to Members. Reports on 2015 KMMD Capital Works Programme and 2016 KMMD Capital Works Programme were also circulated for Members' information. Members were advised that the estimated cost for Public Lighting requests to date in the Municipal District would amount to €500,000, while a grant allocation of just €52,400 in 2017 was available with four locations identified for works. The Senior Executive Engineer advised Members that it was hoped to achieve some savings through the procurement process. Cllr. T. Collins suggested that where new footpaths were being constructed, ducting should also be installed to service future public lighting needs. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea queried the varying costs for works in Newmarket and Kiskeam. The Senior Executive Engineer informed Members that costs for the installation of public lighting was reduced dramatically where ducting was already in place. Following Cllr. J.P. O'Shea's request for an update on Liscarroll, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed to follow up with the Public Lighting Engineer.

### 9. Matters arising from the Minutes

Cllr. J.P. O'Shea referred to his motion on estates in Gort na hAbhann, Milford and Park View, Millstreet which was on the previous month's KMMD Meeting Agenda. The Senior Executive Engineer advised Members that the response he had received did not answer the motion's query satisfactorily. He advised Members that he would seek a response from the Planning Department for the next meeting. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea expressed his disappointment and asked that this issue be included as an item on the Agenda for the July Meeting.

### 10. Any Other Business

Cllr. T. Collins raised his concerns regarding a sunken footpath which he described as dangerous outside the Church in Rockchapel and asked if funding could be made available to rectify the issue. Cllr. M. Mullane commended Cork County Council on receiving the sum of €1.5million to retrofit 46 houses in Mallow. Cllr. M. Mullane queried the possibility of moving a disabled person's space from outside the Courthouse in Mallow to a nearby hairdressing salon. The Municipal District Officer advised me that a number of age friendly spaces were currently being considered for Mallow which may be more appropriate. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea spoke of a recent newspaper article regarding illegal dumping in Nadd and spoke of a Notice of Motion coming before the Full Council regarding the Litter Act. He spoke of the need to publicise the names of litter offenders. Cllr. J.P. O'Shea also raised his concerns regarding illegal dumping in the Gortnagraiga area of Mallow and asked that hedging be cut back to discourage dumping.

Signed:

  
CHAIRPERSON

Date: 7/7/2017