



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
held at Bantry Courthouse Meeting Room and MS Teams
at 11.00am on 6th March 2023**

Members Present: Cllrs Declan Hurley, Paul Hayes, Deirdre Kelly, Joe Carroll,
Caroline Cronin, Danny Collins, Karen Coakley, Ross O'Connell

Members on MS Teams: Patrick Gerard Murphy

In attendance: Mac Dara Ó Hicé, S.E.O. W.C.M.D
Jacqueline Mansfield, M.D.O. W.C.M.D
John Ahern S.E.E. Skibbereen
Ruth O'Brien, S.E.E. Bantry
Martina O'Driscoll, Meeting Administrator W.C.M.D.

Cllr. D. Hurley presided.

Statutory Meeting

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

(a) Minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 10th February 2023

Proposed by Cllr. Karen Coakley

Seconded by Cllr. Ross O'Connell

Resolved:

"That the minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 10th February 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach."

MATTERS ARISING

In response to the request for an update on the Audit of Blue Flag Beaches the S.E.O. briefed the members on the draft report on Owenahincha and Inchydoney beaches.

In reply for an update on proposed one-way system at McCurtain Hill, John Ahern S.E.E. advised that the proposal was being reviewed and an update should be available at the next municipal meeting.

Cllr. Joe Carroll advised the members to note that he is unavailable for Municipal meetings on the second Friday of every month due to his attendance at the Southern Assembly meetings.

STATUTORY BUSINESS

Speed Limit Review on National Routes – Draft B

The S.E.E. Ruth O'Brien briefed the members on the proposed changes to the speed limit shown on the maps of which were circulated to the members prior to the meeting. R. O'Brien advised that following the Public Consultation phase in 2022 and extensive liaison with TII the proposed changes to the speed limit byelaws Draft B which were acceptable to the TII in the Bantry MD.

Ruth O'Brien S.E.E. briefed members on the proposed adjustments to the posted speed limit that were circulated to the members before the meeting. Following the Public Consultation phase in 2022 and significant communication with TII, R. O'Brien advised that revisions to the speed limit byelaws Draft B were recommended by TII in the Bantry MD area.

259 Ballylickey to Snave: Accepted by all the Members.

Proposed by Mayor Danny Collins

Seconded by Cllr. Pat Murphy

The Members did want to highlight their discontentment, as they did not want to support the increase from 60kph to 80kph along the Reendisert straight. They also feel that the speed limits will be confusing for drivers, as there is several different speed limits within a short distance.

550 Bantry to Ballylickey: Rejected by all the Members.

Proposed by Mayor Danny Collins

Seconded by Cllr. Pat Murphy

The Members felt that this should be rejected due to the proposed 80kph all the way to Ballylickey, whereas they would have supported a 60 kph to beyond Donemark Bridge and an 80kph to just beyond NLN and Bantry Golf Club.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Cllr. Declan Hurley

"That this Council provide an alternative entrance or improved access for the residents living at the end of the L8681-0 cul-de-sac road at Lakelands Dunmanway".

Report from J. Ahern S.E.E.

"The L8681-0 is a narrow Local tertiary Cul De Sac road measuring 350m in length from its junction with the R586 at Chapel St. and which provides access for a total of 5 dwellings. The specifics of where the alternative entrance is being requested are not clear. Any alternative entrance and/or road widening works will involve third party land acquisitions. No direct source of funding for this type of work exists. It may be worth applying through the Community Involvement scheme to see if funding could be secured but the details of what is actually being requested would need to be clarified in advance."

The members discussed the engineers' response and further clarification was provided by Cllr Hurley as to the exact nature of the issue. The members asked for a report on the solutions available to address the issue. The SEO advised the meeting that without funding it

was hard to progress with any improvement. Where the acquisition of land was required it further complicated delivery of solutions.

Cllr. Caroline Cronin

"I am calling on both Cork County Council and on the Department of Local government to review the pay of firefighters. It is urgent that we address these vital emergency services in rural areas before it literally becomes an emergency".

Cllr. Cronin reported that with recent gorse fires throughout West Cork had highlighted the shortage of part time Cork County Council fire crews in certain stations, as well as the extreme conditions that these crews are forced to work under. On Sunday 26th February through to Monday 27th February the skeleton crew of 7 firefighters based in Schull were forced to work through the night. On Tuesday 28th February the Schull crew was limited to 5 firefighters as they continued to fight gorse fires. These facts highlight that the Schull fire station which covers a huge geographical area from Ballydehob to Mizen Head to Durrus and Dunmanus Bay is overstretched. The crew has been reduced to 7 due to retirements and resignations by relatively young members. The facts are that the part time fire service positions offer unattractive rewards for the risks and the sacrifices made by firefighters being on call.

Report by S.E.O. MacDara O'Hici

"Challenges associated with both the recruitment and retention of retained firefighter personnel is being experienced by many local authorities around the country as is evidenced in the recently published review entitled "Retained Fire Services in Ireland – A Review of Recruitment and Retention and the Future Sustainability of Service Delivery". The publication of this review follows extensive engagement with all relevant stakeholders, together with in-depth research and analysis of the current model for fire service delivery in Ireland and in other jurisdictions. The review sets out recommendations in key strategic areas to ensure a sustainable and effective fire service delivery model into the future. A process for implementation of the recommendations, which includes engagement with the Local Government Management Agency and staff interest groups, has recently commenced through the Retained Fire Services National Oversight and Implementation Group".

The members welcomed Cllr. Cronin's motion and called for her to be submit it to Full Council.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The M.D.O. Jackie Mansfield briefed the members on the March MDO Report and answered their queries on the report.

Members welcomed the recent works at Cunamore Pier and queried if recycling facilities would be made available for the residents of Heir island. The SEO informed the meeting that he would contact the relevant department but the situation of facilities depended on suitable locations being available and sufficient catchment area.

In response to a query in relation to the installation of toe bars and toe rails on piers the S.E.O. advised members that these are standard and best practice requirements wherever there is vehicular access on a pier.

The cleaning of slipways was discussed by the members and the S.E.O. noted that there is a programme in place for this and the council will respond to any reports of slipways needing attention.

The members discussed The Rock Project in Skibbereen and highlighted issues of concern raised by local residents regarding blocking off access routes, public lighting and water drainage issues. It was stated that while the local residents had welcomed the development works at The Rock, they requested a meeting with council representatives to review their items of concern. The S.E.O. noted that a meeting with individual residents would be facilitated.

The members requested a letter to be sent to express their congratulations to Deputy Holly Cairns on becoming leader of the Social Democrats.

Cllr. Ross O'Connell left the meeting at 12.30pm

The members welcomed the arrival of the delegation from Scituate and the students exchange visit which would commence on Friday 10th March 2023.

The members agreed to hold the April municipal meeting in the Skibbereen Chamber in the Library building.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH _____ **DATE** _____