



MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

held at Whiddy Island Community Hall and MS Teams at 11.00am on 2nd June 2023

Members Present:	Cllrs Paul Hayes, Deirdre Kelly, Joe Carroll, Patrick Gerard Murphy, Karen Coakley, Caroline Cronin, Danny Collins
Member on MS Teams:	Cllrs. Declan Hurley
Apologies:	Ross O'Connell
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. Orla Chambers, W.C.M.D.

Cllr. J. Carroll presided.

Suspension of Standing Orders

On the request of Cllr. Danny Collins the members approved the suspension of Standing Orders to discuss the lack of graves available in West Cork.

Cllr. Collins reported to members that he was recently contacted by a member of the public distressed that they were unable to purchase a grave in Schull graveyard for their gravely ill sister. He told members that the Schull resident was offered an alternative location for their grave in the Dunmanway or Lisheen graveyards. Cllr. PG Murphy welcomed the recent extension to the graveyard in Eyeries but reported that there were only 7 graves remaining in the Kilcrohane graveyard. The members expressed their concern at the serious situation emerging with the lack of graves in West Cork and queried why the compulsory purchase order process was not used to resolve this situation. The S.E.O. advised the members that a recent review of Schull graveyard indicated that a further 32 new spaces could be created which would require the removal of one access road. He noted that other council land was being investigated for a new graveyard as extending the current graveyard was not possible due to the high prices being sought which would ultimately have to be passed on to the purchasers of graves. He advised the members that advance booking of graves was not possible where graves were in short supply.

He reported that land was purchased in Castlehaven and Glandore to extend their graveyards and that no suitable land was available at a suitable price to develop a burial ground in the Kilcrohane area but the council would keep looking. A report on capacity was being done at the moment and there may be a prohibition on a CPO being used for land intended for graveyards but he would clarify this and revert to the members.

He noted that Skibbereen had identified a new possible graveyard site and was currently undergoing test holes to ascertain the suitability of the land. The S.E.O. updated the members that the council had produced a model for Columbarium and were identifying suitable burial grounds where plaques could be installed to refer to people who have been buried elsewhere but are from that particular community.

The members queried the maintenance of graveyards and reported that grass in some places was waist high and they requested that contractors attend to graveyards more frequently. The S.E.O. advised that when the tender for contractors goes out for graveyard maintenance that a cutting schedule is included in the tender spec.

In response to a query about the direction that headstones could be faced in the new Glandore graveyard the S.E.O. noted that there was an existing scheme in the current burial ground where all the headstones were to face in the one direction this scheme had applied over the life of the burial ground to date but the same rules would not apply to the development of a new facility when required.

Statutory Meeting

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

(a) Minutes of West Cork Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 5th May 2023

Proposed Cllr Deirdre Kelly

Seconded Cllr Patrick Gerard Murphy

Resolved:

“That the minutes of the ‘In Committee’ Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 5th May 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

(b) Minutes of West Cork Municipal District ‘In Committee’ meeting dated 5th May 2023

Proposed Cllr Paul Hayes

Seconded Cllr Karen Coakley

Resolved:

“That the minutes of the Municipal District ‘In Committee’ (as circulated) of 5th May 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

MATTERS ARISING

The mayor welcomed the relining done on the Casltetownbere road in Glengarriff village.

The request for the water dispensers at Astna Square and Emmet Square to be turned on was noted by the S.E.O.

An update on the tender process for the Clonakilty fire station was requested and the S.E.O. noted that an update will be requested from the Environment Director of Services Mr. Louis Duffy.

The issue of the beach wheelchair at Inchadoney beach not being in use was discussed and a request was made for the senior lifeguard to facilitate the storage of the chair. The S.E.O. noted that there were no issues with the chair being locked in at night and taken out in the morning by the lifeguards if the group involved managed the operation.

2. STATUTORY BUSINESS

Section 183 –Notices

In accordance with the provision of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of the property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 26th May 2023.

(a) Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty, Co Cork

Situation:	Grant of lease of land at Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty, Co Cork
Area:	Area 0.0805 hectares/0.198 acres
Acquired From:	Winif. Jean Bennett
Dispose To:	Foras Pátrúnachta na Scoileanna Ián-Ghaeilge Teoranta
Consideration:	A term of 35 years.

On the proposal of Cllr. Paul Hayes, seconded by Cllr. Karen Coakley, members approved the above disposal and recommended it to full plenary Council for consideration.

3. NOTICES OF MOTION

Proposed by Cllr. Karen Coakley, seconded by Cllr. Joe Carroll

"I call on this Council to update on the progress of the tender for the weigh bridge for Baltimore".

The members discussed the tender process for the new weigh bridge in Baltimore and expressed their frustrations at the delays in progressing the project. The S.E.O. updated the members that the tender went to market and the date for submissions had passed and no tenders were received which means that the council will have to review the options for providing the facility. The S.E.O. advised that once costs were available then funding could be applied for. Once the cost and other details of the facility were finalised this would inform whether or not the development would need planning. The members expressed their concerns that the funding identified by the Dept will not be available if the project delays continue. Cllr Carroll informed the meeting that the funding he was promised for the facility was not from the BALAMI funding which dealt with works required as a result of the UK leaving the EU. the S.E.O. requested that the members send on any correspondence they have from other bodies referred to in relation to the project directly to him.

Cllr. Paul Hayes

(a) "That this council would re-examine possible solutions to resolve the traffic flow issues on North St Skibbereen, including the reintroduction of a one-way system, a traffic light system, or a review of on-street parking".

Report from John Ahern S.E.E.

The issue with the traffic flows on North Street has been the subject of many discussions over many years. A trial one-way system was put in place at members request in the summer of 2021 and it is fair to say that there was not a general overwhelming consensus as to its performance. Whilst many were in favour of its retention, there were other consequences such as back-ups and increased traffic volumes on other streets within the town due to the introduction of a one-way system on North Street as all north and east bound traffic had to travel out Bridge Street and Ilen Street as the only way out of town. There were also consequences, though not insurmountable, for Bus Services and Emergency services and for some delivery vehicles to business premises on North Street.

Section 7.3 of the Skibbereen Traffic and Transportation study which although is now over 10 years old, recommended that North Street could be made one-way following completion of the Gortnaclohy relief road. To quote directly "With the completion of the Gortnaclohy Relief Road, it will be possible to convert North Street to a one-way traffic system from the library car-park to Main Street".

As outlined previously, the introduction of a traffic light system on North Street would not be recommended due to the issue with drivers of vehicles being able to pull in and out of parking spaces and entrances between the lights and not subsequently knowing which direction traffic flows were travelling. Traffic lights would also generate continual & substantial traffic back-ups on Main Street and the general town centre.

There are two minor interventions which may alleviate the substantive issue and are as follows:

- Install new advanced and directional signage on Townsend Street and the junction of Bridge Street and Main Street, directing eastbound traffic for Cork, Clonakilty etc out to the N71 via Bridge Street and Ilen Street. The anticipation would be that this would reduce the traffic volumes travelling North on North Street.
- Review the current parking spaces on North Street and examine the possibility of converting some of these spaces to a Clearway. The anticipation would be that the opportunity for a greater flow of two-way traffic on North Street would result.

The members welcomed John Ahern's report and queried whether traffic lights being installed on North Street could be trailed and they also requested a timeline for the changes proposed. Mr. Ahern noted that some of the changes could be made straight away such as the signage and advised again why a shuttle traffic light system would not work should not be trailed and he would contact the Traffic and Transportation study managers to discuss any other possible options concerning the traffic flow in North Street.

Cllr. Paul Hayes

(b) "That this council writes to the TII seeking an update on requests for improved pedestrian crossings, road resurfacing and markings, roundabouts and junctions along the N71 bypass road in Clonakilty".

Report from John Ahern S.E.E.

John Ahern advised that funding applications had been made to TII in respect of resurfacing of both roundabouts at Fax Bridge and Maxol. He noted that a study would be required to deal with all of the traffic issues outlined.

4. REPORTS & CORRESPONDANCE.

MDO Report.

A member sought reassurance that the toilets at Tragumna beach were opened and ready for use and queried if the maintenance of toilets could be done earlier in the year from January to March so that they are ready in time for the summer season which starts in May most years now. A report on the toilets in Union Hall needing maintenance due to vandalism was noted by the S.E.O.

On behalf of the members the mayor welcomed the news of the reopening of the Dursey cable car and also expressed thanks for the new pontoon in Heir island.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A member queried the report that was done on piers a few years previously and requested an update on what works are still required and which works have been completed. The S.E.O. noted that the report was a live working document but would be circulated to the members.

A query in relation to the new criteria for the Local Improvement Schemes was discussed and an update on whether any reply was received from the letter that was sent to the Department was requested. The member highlighted that the entire waiting list for LIS schemes could be dealt with if funding of 6 million a year was given for 4-5 years. The S.E.O. noted the matter for the Director of Roads to report to the members at the next Roads meeting. Ruth O'Brien advised the members that the new criteria for Local Improvement Schemes applied to all applications that had not commenced yet and that all applicants had been written out to advising them of the new qualifying criteria for Local Improvement Schemes.

The issue of having bins on beaches was discussed by the members and it was highlighted that South Cork were providing 1100ltr bins to popular beaches until September. The S.E.O. advised the members of the 'pack it in – pack it out' policy and noted that in line with this policy that bins would not be put in beaches this year.

An update on the new lifeguard station for Barleycove was requested and the S.E.O. advised that it had been ordered and the delivery date had not been confirmed yet.

The members expressed their thanks to John Ahern S.E.E. for the recent resurfacing and relining works on Market Street and also the Bypass Road in Skibbereen.

An update was sought on the installation of signage for the Flying Boats on Whiddy Island and in response the S.E.O. advised that a project to rationalise signage in Bantry town was being implemented by the Tourism section and this would lead to less rather than more signage in the town and a sign on Whiddy may be more appropriate.

A request from a member for the toilets at Tragumna to be opened all year round as it is a very popular tourist location and also used by the local community regularly was noted by the S.E.O. He advised that alternative ways could be looked at to provide the public toilet facilities for longer timeframes and to see if the budget could go further to allow this, he also stated that the council was exploring more effective methods for cleaning these facilities as the existing method was costly and not very effective in a lot of places.

A member requested for traffic calming to be installed at the Hospital cross junction in Clonakilty.

In reply to a query on whether the residents beside The Rock in Skibbereen had their concerns dealt with the S.E.O. noted that works had commenced there, and he had spoken with residents regarding various issues but where residents were trying to gain advantages for their properties as a result of the works this would be resisted.

The members raised the issue of road resurfacing required at Cork Road in Skibbereen and requested an update and in reply Mr. Ahern noted that the position regarding the installation of the proposed Culvert on Cork Rd at this location should be known in a number of weeks.

The members requested an update on whether extra staff had been employed to deal with the extra workload over the summer months and Mr. Ahern noted that both roads and the Bantry Area office had recently taken on staff. The SEO informed the meeting that unfortunately a lot of the work in toilets and bins over the Summer was being done on overtime and that this was not a sustainable or effective method of delivery and was being examined.

The members agreed to hold the next meeting in the meeting room at the Dunmanway Municipal Pool on Monday 3rd July 2023.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

CATHAORILEACH _____

DATE _____