



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT  
held at Clonakilty Council Chamber and MS Teams at 11.00am  
on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Members Present:** Cllrs. Joe Carroll, Paul Hayes, Deirdre Kelly, Caroline Cronin, Declan Hurley, Danny Collins, Karen Coakley, Patrick Gerard Murphy, Chris Heinhold

**In attendance:** Noreen O'Mahony, 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.  
Raymond Higgins, S.E.A. Architects Dept  
Aisling O' Sullivan, Healthy Age Friendly Homes  
Coordinator

Cllr. J. Carroll presided.

**Statutory Meeting**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

- (a) ***Minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024***  
*Proposed by Cllr. Karen Coakley, Seconded by Cllr. Paul Hayes*

**Resolved:**

"That the minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach."

**MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr. Carroll queried if a meeting with Minister Jack Chambers regarding road funding allocations was due to go ahead later this month. Cllr. Hurley reported that a pre-meeting was due to be organised in the coming weeks and then the Mayor had organised a meeting with the Minister on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

## **REPORTS & CORRESPONDANCE**

### **(a) Presentation on Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme**

Aisling O' Sullivan briefed the members on the presentation and answered the members questions.

Cllr. Carroll expressed his concern that applying for SEAI grants was not an easy process, he outlined that the SEAI will not allow an independent assessor to provide a BER rating for a house, it can only be done by an SEAI assessor which has a 2 year waiting list. He also reported that the one-stop-shop grant option which covers a complete home energy upgrade up to €150,000 but which requires the applicant to pay €70,000-€80,000 funding as part of that scheme. Cllr. Carroll queried whether Aisling O' Sullivan could assist in making the SEAI aware of the difficulties that people experience with the scheme.

Cllr. Hayes requested the contact details of the relevant coordinator in the Cork area. Aisling O'Sullivan advised that she would circulate the contacts details to the members.

Cllr. Hayes queried whether presentations could be given to local community groups, and he also asked if any lobbying could be done to get home help for elderly persons trying to live independently in the community. Aisling O' Sullivan noted she was happy to assist with presentations to community groups if the members wished to pass on any requests. She also advised that lobbying for home help was not available, but the Age Friendly Co-ordinator could feedback challenges being faced on the ground.

Cllr Hurley noted that home help is an area that is really struggling and there needs to be a push to get more help with that service as it was a vital link for older persons to continue living independently in their communities. He asked if Age Friendly Homes could link in with Meals on Wheels groups to share information on the supports available.

Cllr. Coakley queried if a simple information card could be supplied to older people to ask them to link in with the Age Friendly Home coordinators.

The members thanked Aisling O' Sullivan for your presentation and acknowledged the great work that the coordinators are doing on the ground.

### **(b) Presentation on Bantry Library External Conservation Works**

Raymond Higgins briefed the members on the external conservation works on Bantry Library and answered the members questions.

The members welcomed the presentation on the works at Bantry Library and noted that the building was designed by architect Patrick McSweeney, and it was an iconic building with a design that was way before its time.

Cllr. Heinhold noted that the river was an important feature of the building, and he queried if the rubbish could be captured upstream before it gets stuck in the river outside the library. Raymond Higgins advised that his team were aware of the issue and its impact on visitors to the library but noted that the priority at present was the internal works at the library. He advised that if extra funding becomes available then his team would review the issue.

Cllr. P.G. Murphy reported to members that there were bigger plans in place as part of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund to give the area a total revamp. He advised that the area had been earmarked for development to create a Cultural Quarter and that West Cork Music were looking into building next to the library.

The Chair thanked Raymond Higgins for the presentation and acknowledged the great work from the Architects Department.

**(c) MDO Report**

**Municipal District Officer's Report – 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**1. Heritage Grant Scheme 2024**

Cork County Council has announced the opening of the County Cork Heritage Grant Scheme for 2024. The Scheme seeks to recognise the unrivalled heritage of the county and the numerous groups who actively engage with their local heritage, protecting and promoting it for residents and visitors alike. The aim of the scheme is to acknowledge and support Cork County's many heritage groups in undertaking activities that in turn support the actions and objectives of the County Cork Heritage Plan. The scheme is funded by both Cork County Council and the Heritage Council. Last year, 29 groups were awarded funding for a range of excellent proposals including Heritage Week projects, video documentaries, conservation plans for important local heritage buildings, exhibitions, archives, natural heritage projects and a range of heritage publications. Full details of the 'County Cork Heritage Grant Scheme 2024'. Applications can be made online; emailed to [corkheritage@corkcoco.ie](mailto:corkheritage@corkcoco.ie) or delivered to 'County Cork Heritage Grant Scheme 2024', Cork County Council, Floor 3, County Hall, Cork. The closing date for application forms is 17:00 on Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2024. For further information email [corkheritage@corkcoco.ie](mailto:corkheritage@corkcoco.ie) or phone [\(021\) 4276891](tel:0214276891)

**2. Emerging Visual Artist Award**

Cork County Council Arts Office has announced a new award for emerging visual artists. The Emerging Visual Artist Award 2024 will provide an artist with a financial bursary and the opportunity for a solo exhibition at the Cork County Council LHQ Gallery.

The award aims to further an emerging artist's practice at a key stage in their early career. The award will financially support the artist to provide time and funding to create a new body of work and the opportunity to exhibit at Cork County Council's LHQ Gallery.

Applicants should be at the early stage of their career, regardless of age, have created and exhibited an original body of work and who can demonstrate a commitment to developing their career as a professional artist. Eligible artists must currently live in Cork County or be originally from Cork County (as defined by the current county administrative boundary), but now living elsewhere. Successful applicants will receive a solo exhibition at LHQ Gallery in 2025 with a bursary award of €3,000 to support the production of the work. Cork County Council's Arts Office will

also provide professional curatorial support as part of the development process, with the opportunity for the successful applicant to also receive professional mentorship. LHQ Gallery is based in the County Library on Carrigrohane Road. Recent exhibitions at the gallery have included solo shows by Denis O'Connor, Elize de Beer, and Evgeniya Martirosyan. The Gallery shows work by visual artists at all stages of their careers. The LHQ Gallery programme is supported by the Arts Council of Ireland.

For full guidelines and application form please contact [arts@corkcoco.ie](mailto:arts@corkcoco.ie). The deadline for applications is the 3rd of May 2024.

### **3. Community Recognition Fund 2024**

Minister Heather Humphreys TD and Minister Joe O'Brien TD recently announced a funding allocation of €50 million funding under Community Recognition Fund 2024. County Cork is allocated €2,014,691 for projects across 2025 and 2026.

The Community Recognition Fund 2024 aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries. The funding is specifically targeted at projects that are located in communities, towns and villages that are hosting the beneficiaries of Temporary Protection and/or International Protection Applicants. The fund will support the development of facilities that will be used by all members of the community.

#### **Projects that may be funded include:**

- Development or refurbishment of community or cultural facilities including play areas, walkways, parks, community/sensory gardens, allotments, and recreational areas;
- Development or refurbishment of local club and sports facilities;
- Enhancement to school/parish facilities which are open to use by all of the community after school hours;
- Purchase of equipment for local clubs, festivals, community events and organisations
- Transport infrastructure such as community vehicles

Projects to be funded will be capital in nature, deliver medium-long term benefits for the communities in which they are located, and be capable of being delivered over the course of 2025 and 2026. A minimum spend of 50% of the allocation must be incurred in 2025. Eligible projects will receive funding for capital costs, but not for any ongoing operational or running costs. The minimum level of funding for an individual project is €50,000 with a maximum of €500,000 applying.

Further details on the administration of the scheme through Cork County Council will be circulated in the coming weeks. More information can be found [here](#).

### **4. Pride of Place 2024**

The Pride of Place competition is an all Ireland Competition which honours the remarkable contributions of groups dedicated to improving their local neighbourhoods and creating better places to live, work and socialise. All nomination to be returned to Co Hall by April 18<sup>th</sup> - Forms will be circulated to the elected members after this meeting, and detail of outcome of previous years for information purposes.

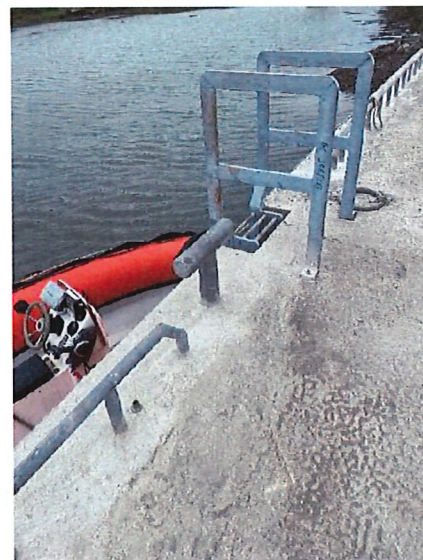
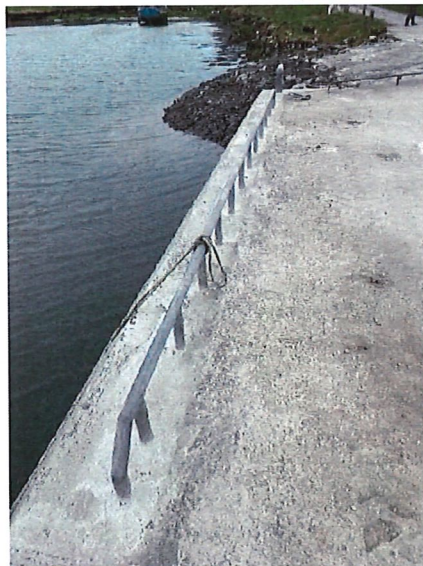
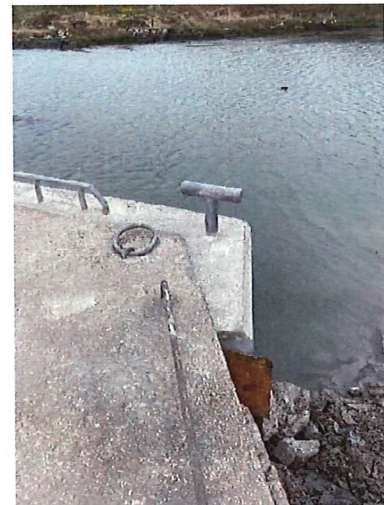


**5. ORIS Measure 1 2024**

Cork County Council is awarded €30,000 funding under Measure One of the 2024 Outdoor Recreation Fund for the replacement of broken timber fencing with a longer lasting recycled plastic product at Schull Walkway leading to a local picnic and recreation beach area along the R592.

**6. Dock Pier, Sherkin**

Works are complete at the Dock Pier Sherkin to include concrete works to face of Pier including steel and pinning to existing rock armour supporting the pier deck. Provision of T bars and toe rails and recessed ladder. The works have significantly improved the overall safety and operations of the Pier.



## 7. RRDF

Cork County Council recently submitted a Rural Regeneration Development Fund application for DRCD for Skibbereen to include the following proposed works;

- a) The Bridge- Public Realm Works to provide a new raised paved area which will function both as a seating area and an area for community and cultural events. The area is designed to provide accessibility for all.
- b) Uileann Arts Centre- Public Realm Works which will enhance town connectivity and pedestrian mobility while also improving the appearance of the area through a consistent design approach. These include new footpaths and crossing points with disability access.
- c) Junction of Ilen Street and Bridge Street- Paving area with age friendly seating and planters.
- d) Bridge Street Footpath- The works will involve undergrounding overhead ESB lines. a complete repaving of the footpath on the northern side of the street to match the recently paved footpath on the southern side. Street lighting will also be upgraded.
- e) North Street- Street enhancement measures at the location shown, repaving, planting and installation of street furniture.
- f) Townshend Street/Mardyke Street/Main Street- Repaving of footpaths to provide consistent paving plan throughout the town and allow a separate road restoration project to proceed where these streets will be resurfaced on completion of this project.
- g) The Rock- The Rock is an outdoor amenity area- Proposed works include fencing works, surface dressing of pathways, street furniture, signage and planting.
- h) Develop wayfinding and signage around the town- Existing signage does not have a consistent design, a new signage scheme will enhance the visitor experience to the town.

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End of MDO Report

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Cllr. Coakley welcomed the RRDF application for funding for Skibbereen. In response the SEO noted that this was an application for funding only and that it would be a very competitive process and funding was not guaranteed.

Cllr. Carroll highlighted the mural of the 'Last Train to Baltimore' which was on the gable end of a building at the junction of Bridge Street / Rossa Road which needed to be preserved and he requested that Cork County Council come on board to assist with this.

Cllr. Carroll highlighted the need for a carpark at the Marsh in Skibbereen and he queried if progress could be expediated on the matter regarding the bridge into the Marsh.

In response to a query on the installation of new footpaths at Bridge Street, John Ahern S.E.E. advised that funding had been received from the NTA for footpaths and the infrastructure to accommodate other works such as the ESB infrastructure would be put in place, but the cost of undergrounding the ESB services is included in the RRDF funding.

Cllr. Hayes queried whether the application for the Community Recognition Fund was available. Noreen O' Mahony SEO noted that there was a Department briefing next week and the scheme should be launched after that.

Cllr. Hurley queried if groups who have staged projects could apply for their next stage under the Community Recognition Scheme. Jackie Mansfield MDO noted that the matter for follow up and will revert to the members in due course.

*At 12.10pm the Chair Cllr. Carroll informed members that he needed to leave the meeting and by general agreement of the members Cllr. Declan Hurley presided over the remainder of the meeting.*

The MDO advised the members that the tree report was now complete on Chateaulin Orchard in Clonakilty and costings were being sought on the 2 options recommended in the report.

The MDO gave a summary report on the playgrounds in West Cork to the members. In response to Cllr. Coakley for an update on the playground leases for Leap, Union Hall and Rosscarbery, the MDO informed the Members that in relation to Rosscarbery Foreshore, Cork County Council's legal Department are currently engaging with the Chief State Solicitors Office, and the CSSO has advised the matter has been passed on to a member of their staff for review, the lease for Leap is almost complete, and a draft lease had been received for Union Hall this week to be reviewed. Cllr. Hayes queried if Rosscarbery playground who had received funding from the Community Recognition Fund previously were they eligible to apply again. The MDO noted same and will follow up on the matter.

Cllr. Coakley requested that Skibbereen playground get cleaned and painted.

Cllr. Hayes requested an update on the signage for the wheelchair swing in Clonakilty playground. Jackie Mansfield MDO noted that a temporary sign was in place while the permanent sign was being manufactured.

### **Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance 2024 Programmes.**

John Ahern SEE, Skibbereen outlined a programme of works for 2024 for the Skibbereen, Clonakilty and Dunmanway Areas which included 41 schemes and covered a total area of 39km. He also advised that surface dressing would cover 57km.

Ruth O'Brien SEE outlined schemes which would be carried out in the Bantry, Schull, and Castletownbere area in 2024.

In response to a query from Cllr. Hayes on whether Patrick Street was included in the Programme. John Ahern noted that storm drains needed to be replaced in Patrick Street and until those works were completed resurfacing could not take place, and he advised that Astna Street was included in the programme for works. He also noted that an update on the Patrick Street works would be available in a couple of weeks and that resurfacing of that street was part of the storm replacement works.

Cllr. Hayes queried if there was any update on resurfacing works for the Dunnes Stores roundabout in Clonakilty, John Ahern SEE noted that a submission had been made to the TII for funding last August and he was hopeful that it may be funded this year.

## **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr. Coakley on behalf of all the members congratulated Cllr. Chris Heinhold on the recent birth of his new baby daughter Maise.

Cllr. Coakley requested an update on the funding available for Keelbeg pier, Noreen O' Mahony SEO noted that senior management were in the process of arranging a meeting with the Ministers Department to discuss the matter.

Cllr. Coakley sought an update on Ballineen Toilets, in response the SEO noted that archaeological and ecological reports were required prior to the Part 8 proceeding.

In response to Cllr. Collins regarding the pedestrian crossing in Newtown, Ruth O' Brien SEE noted that no update was available.

Cllr. Heinhold highlighted a recent meeting in Castletownbere regarding the quality of the drinking water and he queried whether the solution discussed at this meeting could be forwarded to Uisce Éireann. Cllr. P.G. Murphy informed members that the solution discussed at the meeting could bear fruit relatively quickly and that Cork County Council are due to meet with Uisce Éireann next week to discuss the matter further.

Cllr. Hayes queried if a list of property owners who received dereliction notices recently could be forwarded to members, Noreen O' Mahony SEO noted that under GDPR it was unlikely that such information could be provided.

Members discussed whether Uisce Éireann clinics could be reinstated with the members. Members agreed to submit a motion to Full Council requesting Uisce Éireann to attend Development Committee on a quarterly basis to update the Elected Members on Water Services matters.

John Ahern SEE advised the members of a Met Eireann briefing earlier that morning at which a wind and rainfall warning for the coming week was discussed. Ruth O'Brien SEE advised that the pumps were in place in Bantry town and sandbags had been delivered in advance of this briefing.

The members discussed the upcoming Community Grants and agreed to hold an 'In Committee' meeting on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 12 noon in Clonakilty Council Chamber to discuss the grant allocations.

The members discussed the date of their next Municipal District meeting and agreed on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 in Clonakilty Council Chamber. Member were notified by the SEO that an 'In Committee' meeting of the Western Divisional members would be held prior to the MD meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**CATHAOIRLEACH** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_