

## MINUTES OF MEETING OF ISLANDS COMMITTEE

HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2018 ON GOLA ISLAND

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- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllr. Michéal Choilm Mac Giolla Easbuig  
Cllr. John Sheamais Ó Fearraigh  
Cllr. Enda Bonner  
Cllr. Terence Slowey  
Cllr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill  
Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher  
Mairín Uí Fhearraigh  
Eamonn S. Mac Aoidh  
William Boyle  
Marjorie Uí Chearbhaill  
Séamus Mac Ruairí  
Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh  
Seán Ó Bríain
- OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Michael McGarvey - Director of Water & Environment Service  
Eamonn Brown-A/Area Manager, Housing & Corporate  
Charles Sweeney - Area Manager, Community Development  
John Hegarty-Executive Engineer, Roads Service  
Cathal Mac Suibhne - Marine Engineer  
David Friel - Coastal Officer  
Michael Rowsome-S.S.O, Corporate & Motor Tax
- Eibhlín Nic Suibhne - Secretary - Minister Joe McHugh T.D.
- APOLOGIES:** Dermot Brady - Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Rosaleen McShane  
Eamonn Bonner  
Diarmuid Ó Mórdha - An Roinn

**IC 08/18**    **WELCOME**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig commended the Gola Island Community for the warmth of the welcome and hospitality afforded to the Committee on the occasion of their first visit to a smaller offshore island.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig expressed his pride that the meeting was being held on Gola in his last meeting as Cathaoirleach of Coiste na nOileáin, and he also welcomed Eibhlín Nic Suibhne to the meeting in her capacity as Secretary to Minister Joe McHugh T.D., Príomh Aire an Rialtais agus Aire Stáit don Ghaeilge, don Ghaeltacht agus do na hOileáin.

Cllr. Slowey stressed the importance of having a meeting on a smaller Island to understand the issues facing Island inhabitants.

**IC 09/18**    **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2018**

On the proposal of Cllr. Bonner, seconded by Mairín Ní Fhearraigh, the minutes of the meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2018 were confirmed.

**IC 10/18**    **MARINE SERVICE**

**10.1**        **Magheroarty Pier**

A lengthy debate ensued regarding the occasional congestion and lack of berthage at the pier. Seán Ó Briain highlighted difficulties encountered by fishermen arising from (1) logistical deadlines for unloading catch from boats for immediate onward vehicular transportation and (2) berthage of both ferries at Magheroarty Pier reducing berthing capacity for fishermen and exacerbating safety issues.

Marjorie Uí Chearbhaill agreed that proposals are necessary to benefit all users of the pier and requested the implementation of positive proposals to benefit all stakeholders as soon as possible.

The Marine Engineer acknowledged the issues at the pier and informed the Committee that the Harbour Master based in Burtonport has jurisdiction at Magheroarty and that any issues should be communicated to him for resolution.

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill recommended that investment planned for Magheroarty in the context of the National Planning Framework 2040 be fast tracked and that a meeting of Departmental officials and a representation from the Islands Committee be arranged in this regard.

## **10.2 Marine report on outstanding issues from previous meetings**

The Marine Engineer discussed the Marine Report circulated at the meeting regarding items previously raised at Island meetings and updated the Committee on the status of various projects on all Islands.

Members were advised that the newly appointed Harbour Master is due to commence communication with owners of derelict boats to acquire the necessary permissions for disposal.

In response to a query from Cllr. Ó Domhnaill regarding the necessity to increase the height of the sea wall at the top of Tory pier, the Marine Engineer undertook to obtain a costing.

The Marine Engineer advised that he will investigate the provision of a crane next year and that he is not aware of any plans to extend the sea wall on Inishboffin.

Seán Ó Briain requested the Council to provide rails at the end of the pier on Inishboffin in the interest of health and safety.

## **10.3 Small Ferry Service**

Máirín Uí fhearraigh informed Members of the financing of support for a small ferry service to offshore Islands under the 'Salmon Hardship Fund' a number of years previously and the necessity for the re-introduction of such a service to increase and develop cultural tourism.

Seán Ó Briain stated that the re-introduction of a small ferry service would reduce the berthage of small boats at numerous piers.

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh and Cllr. Gallagher supported the immediate tendering of a small ferry service as a priority in advance of the tourist season.

#### **10.4 Burtonport Pier**

Cllr. Gallagher requested the Council to design a development plan for Burtonport Pier and to submit an application for funding to the relevant Departments.

#### **10.5 Leabgarrow Pier**

Cllr. Gallagher recommended that the Council develop and enhance car parking and toilet facilities at this location. Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh informed the Committee of severe congestion at the pier and the necessity to take measures to boost and enhance Marine Tourism initiatives on Arranmore.

### **IC 11/18 ROADS SERVICE**

11.1 The Roads Engineer discussed the report circulated at the meeting and informed Members of the status of road projects previously highlighted by Coiste na nOileáin.

#### **11.2 Island Roads**

Seamus Mac Ruairí expressed disappointment that the Doctors Road on Arranmore will not be taken over by the Council notwithstanding the major investment by An Roinn to upgrade this roadway and he requested a copy of the current takeover criteria.

Seamus Ó Domhnaill informed the Committee of the negative consequences of taking over Island roads and the potential loss of Department funding.

Cllr. Gallagher recommended the adoption of an Island Roads policy by the Council's Strategic Policy Committee.

11.3 **Local Improvement Schemes**

Seamus Mac Ruairí requested that all the Committee be issued with a copy of the relevant criteria to avoid unnecessary submissions.

11.4 **Gola Roads**

Eamonn Mac Aoidh expressed frustration at the lack of investment on Gola and also at the lack of urgency in the provision of funding to upgrade Roads infrastructure notwithstanding the presence of inhabitants on the Island throughout the year.

11.5 **Priority List - cost Estimates**

The Committee discussed the report on priority road costings circulated at the meeting and presented by the Roads Engineer.

Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh requested that Arranmore Priority 10 on non-County Road List (Ownie Green's, Screig to Lighthouse Road) be moved to replace Priority 5 (School to Co-op Junction) on the County Road list.

In response to queries from Seamus Mac Ruairí, the Roads Engineer advised of work in progress in relation to the classification of Island Roads.

**IC 12/18 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE**

12.1 The Community Development Manager updated the Committee in relation to the status of the following projects as detailed in the report circulated at the meeting.

- Tory Island Lighthouse feasibility study.
- ISLE Tourism Project.
- Tourism Impact Study
- Island Signage and Information Stands

## 12.2 Leabgarrow Foreshore Project

On the proposal of Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh, seconded by Cllr. Gallagher, the Committee recommended that the Leabgarrow Foreshore Development be included on the priority list for submission to An Roinn to source infrastructural funding. The Community Development Manager informed the Committee that:

- (1) The Council have already applied for Departmental funding in 2017
- (2) Further information supplied by the Council to the Department in January 2018 and
- (3) Further response to issue to the Department this current week.

## IC 13/18 WATER & ENVIRONMENT SERVICE

13.1 The Coastal Officer discussed the report circulated at the meeting in relation to the status of environmental projects on Inishboffin, Arranmore, Gola, Tory and Magheroarty. The Coastal Officer responded to queries from Mairín Uí Fhearraigh regarding the provision of temporary facilities on Gola and Inishboffin in light of planning issues. The Committee were also advised that portaloos will be delivered to Owey Island.

Seán Ó Briain requested both male and female portaloos to be provided on Islands.

13.2 The Committee welcomed the report from the Water Capital and Environment Service regarding the provision of the following services on offshore Islands:

- Group Water Schemes
- Waste, litter and recycling
- Beach Management and Water Safety
- Public Conveniences
- Coastal Management
- Laboratory Service.

The Committee also noted the report regarding the status of the Gola Island watermain.

**IC 14/18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**14.1 Vote of Sympathy**

Seamus Mac Ruairí proposed a vote of sympathy to the family of Neilly Andy Mc Gonagle.

**14.2 CPMR**

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh outlined the advantages of Island representation on the Conference for peripheral maritime regions.

**14.3 Coiste na nOileáin**

Cllr. Gallagher commended the circulation of the report on all services, leading to a more productive meeting and she requested that at the first meeting every year a report is available;

- detailing all projects completed in the prior year and
- details of applications submitted to Government Departments.

The Director of the Water & Environment Service stated the Islands Committee is an important forum to facilitate positive collaboration between Island Representatives and Council/Departmental officials to benefit Island Communities.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig informed Members that he was proud of his role as Cathaoirleach of Coiste na nOileáin, that his final meeting as Cathaoirleach was on Gola and the importance of the Coiste as a vehicle for continued Island development.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.**