

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE**

HELD ON 16th JANUARY 2018 IN DUNGLOE PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cllr. Michéal Cholm Mac Giolla Easbuig
Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher
Cllr. John Sheamais Ó Fearraigh
Cllr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill
Cllr. Terence Slowey

APOLOGY: Cllr. Enda Bonner

OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Michael McGarvey, A/Director Water & Environment
Eamonn Brown - A/Area Manager, Housing & Corporate
Services
Brendan McFadden - S.E.E. Area Manager, Roads &
Transportation
Charles Sweeney - Area Manager, Community
Development
Mairead Cranley, S.O. Community Development
Michael Rowsome, S.S.O. Motor Tax/Corporate

APOLOGY: Frances Horkan - Assistant Planner

GMD 01/2018

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

The Committee passed a vote of sympathy in respect of:

- (1) Ian Smith, Fermanagh who died tragically while working on Station Bridge, Gaoth Dobhair and
- (2) Sean Heraghty, Glasgow who also died tragically in Dunfanaghy.

A minutes silence was observed by all in attendance at the meeting.

GMD 02/2018

**MINUTES OF GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
MEETING HELD ON 14TH NOVEMBER 2017**

On the proposal of Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr. Ó Domhnaill, the Glenties Municipal District Committee confirmed the minutes subject to the following amendment to minute GMD 370/17:

"GRITTING OF THE RANAFAST ROAD -

A discussion took place in relation to the gritting of the Ranafast road. On the proposal of Cllr. Ó Domhnaill, seconded by Cllr. Gallagher it was agreed that a full open county public meeting should be held in relation to the gritting programme. Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig proposed a motion, seconded by Cllr O Domhnaill that a €50,000 loan be sought for lay-byes from Lifford Central Office.

Mr. McFadden stated that he would meet the Group later this week in relation to the Ranafast road. He advised Members of the gritting work that the roads service would carry out there in the interim ie. place sand/grit heaps along the route verge. He undertook to report the points raised, to the winter service staff centrally.

It was then agreed that the Roads Department would arrange a meeting between Mr. B. O'Donnell, Senior Engineer and the six members of the Glenties Municipal District in the first instance to discuss the gritting of the road in Ranafast."

GMD 03/2018

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF GLENTIES
MD COMMITTEE HELD ON 1ST DECEMBER 2017
IN COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD**

On the proposal of Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Cllr. Ó Domhnaill, the minutes of the special meeting of the Glenties MD held on the 1st of December 2017 were confirmed.

GMD 04/2018

PLANNING SERVICES

The Committee noted the reports circulated with the agenda.

Cllr. Gallagher requested the Planning Service to include the monthly schedule of planning clinics on future reports.

GMD 05/2018

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

5.1

Pride of Place

The Committee discussed the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Community Development Staff Officer in relation to the IPB Pride of Place Awards ceremony hosted by the Council on 2nd December 2017.

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill congratulated the Community Development Service for their contribution to the success of the event and also the winners and participants from the Glenties MD.

5.2

Donegal Walks and Trails

The Committee discussed the report circulated previously and presented by the Community Development Staff Officer, regarding the maintenance, development and promotion of walks, trails, cycle routes and Greenways.

Cllr. Gallagher highlighted the importance of expediting the proposed Greenway project from Letterkenny to Burtonport.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested the installation of seating on the railway walks.

5.3

Tourism

Members welcomed the reports circulated with the agenda in relation to the status of both the Tourism

Sectoral Forum and Marine Tourism Marketing and Development.

Cllr. Gallagher requested a presentation from Donegal Tourism at the next MD meeting, (1) to update Members, (2) promote ongoing tourism initiatives and (3) to include Marine tourism proposals in Glenties MD.

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh requested additional information on 'Flag North Marine Projects'.

5.4

Rural Development Programme / Leader

Members discussed the report circulated previously regarding the status of the Rural Development Programme, and the approval of 64 projects in Donegal.

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh requested additional details regarding the number of approved projects in (i)the Glenties MD, (ii)the Gaeltacht and (iii) on the Islands.

Cllr. Gallagher recommended the attendance of a representative from An Roinn to attend MD meetings to clarify their funding mechanisms.

5.5

Community Needs Assessment

On the proposal of Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Cllr. Ó Fearraigh, the Committee recommended the scheduling of a meeting as soon as possible to be attended by service managers, Councillors and any other relevant funding bodies, to advance the priorities included in this assessment.

5.6

Funding of Glenties MD Projects

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill criticised (1) the absence of appropriate funding mechanisms in the MD, (2) the lack of budgetary provision to carry out works highlighted by Members and (3) reliance on DFI monies.

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill requested;

- The Community Development Service to provide a budget for maintenance and repair of projects
- Requested an update on funding available for Community Development projects in the Glenties MD
- Details of Community Development monies spent on projects in the Glenties MD and
- Percentage of available monies spent on 'hard' infrastructural projects.

5.7

Island Tourism

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested the Council to schedule a meeting involving all relevant stakeholders to progress the proposed Arranmore Shorefront development.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig expressed frustration at the lack of a response to repeated calls for development and promotion of an Island Tourism brand.

5.8

Age Friendly Initiative

The Community Development Staff Officer updated the Committee on this initiative and informed Members that the Donegal Age Friendly Programme will be applying for membership to the World Health Organisation before the month end. Dungloe has been chosen as the location for an age friendly town business training pilot project. This will be conducted by the Council in conjunction with the assistance of older people in the town to determine the necessity for improvements.

Cllr. Slowey commended the prominent participative role of the Chief Executive in the Age Friendly Project.

Cllr. Gallagher outlined the requirements for bus shelters to accommodate older persons exiting buses in Dungloe, the dangers posed by kerbs at bus stops and the importance of a 'town trolley' system to facilitate older people transporting baggage between commercial premises.

6.1

Christmas Recycling

The Coastal Officer informed Members that the Christmas 'Greenpiece' recycling Advert was circulated on social media and in local print media prior to Christmas to promote waste prevention and waste recycling.

The Committee noted the report on Natural Christmas Tree Recycling locations throughout the County, circulated with the agenda.

In response to a query from Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig regarding the suitability of utilising discarded Christmas trees as a coastal protection measure, the Coastal Officer undertook to consider a pilot project in 2019.

6.2

'Bikes 4 Africa' Campaign

Members welcomed the success of this campaign in 2017 and commended the council and Bryson Recycling for continuation of their support for the 2018 campaign.

6.3

'Adopt a Road Scheme'

The Committee welcomed the initiative to support Tidy Towns and Voluntary Groups participating in the National Tidy Towns competition to 'adopt a road' and the allocation of funding in the sum of €30,000 to 33 groups in 2017.

6.4

Approach Road Grants

The Committee commended the distribution of funding in the sum of €30,650 to 40 groups in 2017 for works carried out on the approach roads to towns in the County.

6.5

Waste/Litter Enforcement

The Coastal Officer discussed the report circulated with the agenda regarding environmental complaints received (1112) and litter fines issued (59) during December 2017. The Coastal Officer acknowledged Members concerns regarding the prevalence of illegal dumping throughout the MD and informed the Committee of the ongoing covert recording of locations where dumping is reported.

Cllr. Gallagher commended the efforts of the Environment Service for their assistance to the Marameelan community.

6.6

Recycling Centres

The Coastal Officer informed the Committee that the tendering process for the operation of recycling centres is ongoing.

In response to a recommendation from Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig regarding the necessity to operate additional centres and for the Council to assume operational control, the Coastal Officer outlined the economic and value for money benefits arising from privately managed recycling provision. The Coastal Officer also responded to Cllr. Slowey's queries regarding cartridge and hazardous waste recycling.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested the location of bring banks at Molloy's Shop.

Cllr. Slowey highlighted the destruction of the environment as a result of plastic littering and recommended the provision of a plastic recycling facility.

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill recommended commencement of a paper waste pilot project at a recycling centre and the provision of recycling facilities on an outreach basis.

Cllr. Gallagher requested the Recycling Centres to promote the availability of household waste disposal at the recycling facilities.

6.7

Coastal Erosion

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill welcomed consultation with landowners of the erosion affected beach spit, regarding mitigation measures at Magheroarty and requested the Council to expedite necessary works as a matter of utmost urgency.

In response to a query from Cllr. Gallagher regarding coastal erosion at Maghery, the Coastal Officer undertook to revert to Members with a date for a meeting with the OPW.

6.8

Public Conveniences

The Committee discussed the reports circulated with the agenda and presented by the Coastal Officer in relation to requirements on Inishbofin, Gola, Owey and in Dungloe.

Cllr. Gallagher requested the progression of works at the Dungloe public convenience prior to the onset of the summer tourist season.

In response to a query from Cllr. Ó Fearraigh, the Coastal Officer informed the Committee that the Island Committees have undertaken to manage toilet facilities and that all public conveniences are undergoing a risk assessment to determine necessary works at each facility.

6.9

Water Safety Initiative

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda and presented by the Coastal Officer regarding water safety.

6.10

Cleaning of Rivers

In response to concerns expressed by Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig regarding potential flooding locations and responsibility for the cleaning of rivers, the Coastal

Officer recommended that Members liaise with Jimmy McVeigh, Communities Water Officer for Donegal.

The A/Director of Environment undertook to liaise with relevant state agencies regarding the possibility of funding a pilot project to clean a river in the MD. Cllr. Ó Domhnaill proposed the Glenea River for consideration on approval of funding.

6.11

Invasive Species

Cllr. Gallagher commended the Council for the success of the pilot project undertaken in the Dungloe area and recommended that the Council assume a leadership role in the initiation of an annual programme to counteract the harmful effects of Japanese Knotweed and Invasive species.

GMD 07/2018

HOUSING & CORPORATE

7.1

Grants

The Committee discussed the reports circulated and presented by the Housing Manager regarding the status of the following grants:

- (a) Housing Aid for Older People Grants
- (b) Housing Adaptation Grants
- (c) Mobility Aids Grants

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill expressed concern at the approval of 9 Housing Adaptation Grants from 37 submissions and stated that refusals should issue as a 'last resort' given the vulnerability of the applicants.

The Housing Manager outlined the restrictive nature of the eligibility criteria as per the adopted policy and informed Members of ongoing discussions in this regard at Housing SPC level.

7.2

Casual Vacancies

Members discussed the status of 23 no. casual vacancies as at the 8th of January 2018, circulated with the agenda and presented by the Housing Manager. The Committee welcomed the upcoming offers of 11 vacancies to qualifying applicants, the tendering of 6 units and the assessment by the Housing Engineer of the remaining 6 units.

7.3

Acquisitions

The Committee welcomed the progress report as at the 8th of January 2018 on the status of 8 no. acquisitions in the Glenties MD.

The Housing Manager updated Members on land purchase and turnkey proposals for the MD.

Cllr. Ó Fearraigh highlighted the necessity for consultation with the Planning Service prior to purchasing land for housing to minimise any subsequent complications.

Cllr. Gallagher and Cllr. Ó Domhnaill expressed concern at the lack of rented houses in the MD. Cllr. Ó Domhnaill outlined his concerns at the effect of house buying by the Council on availability of rental properties.

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill highlighted the poor pace of progress in relation to Part 8 Dunfanaghy development.

On the proposal of Cllr. Ó Domhnall, seconded by Cllr. Gallagher, the Committee requested a workshop with the Housing Capital senior architects and engineers to ascertain difficulties in relation to advancement of Housing developments.

In response to a query from Cllr. Gallagher, the Housing Manager informed the Committee that;

- Consultants on the CAS project are liaising with the Planning service in relation to a further information request,

- A meeting has been set up with Clúid and the HSE regarding utilisation of vacant units and
- The Council are liaising with Shanaghan House, Ardara, (Approved Housing Body), regarding a Phase 2 development.

7.4

Best Kept Council Housing Scheme 2017

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig welcomed the representatives of Ard McGill, Glenties and Ailt Aoibhinn (Phase 2), Meenaniller to the meeting to be presented with awards for winning best kept Medium Scheme and Small Scheme respectively.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig congratulated the award winners for their dedication to the voluntary upkeep of their housing schemes and their co-operation with the Council in the interest of their local communities.

7.5

Task Force

Cllr. Gallagher outlined the level of deprivation in the West Donegal region as identified in the Pobal Deprivation Index and proposed the establishment of a task force - led and resourced at National level

- To develop a 20 year coordinated plan involving all state agencies
- To address deficiencies in areas of Housing, Health, Education, Transport and Employment.

Cllr. Gallagher undertook to bring a motion in this regard to the Plenary Council and Cllr. Ó Domhnaill undertook to second any proposal in this regard.

7.6

Energy Awareness

Cllr. Slowey commended the Council for commencement of a lighting refitting programme to reduce energy use in Public Service Centres.

7.7

Island Committee

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested that an invitation issue to Udarás na Gaeltachta, Donegal Tourism & Bórd Fáilte to attend future Island Committee meetings. Cllr O Domhnaill recommended that notification issue to Island representatives in this regard.

7.8

Reception

On the proposal of Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr. Slowey, the Committee recommended that a reception be held on the 13th March to honour the achievements of Niall McCafferty, writer, actor and poet.

GMD 08/2018

ROADS

8.1

Restoration Improvement Programme

On the proposal of Cllr. Ó Domhnaill, seconded by Cllr. Slowey, the Committee adopted the Restoration Improvement Programme as agreed at the October 2017 Workshop.(See attached Appendix)

8.2

Islands Roads

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig highlighted the necessity to repair roads to lighthouses on Tory and Arranmore.

8.3

Road Maintenance

On the proposal of Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr. Ó Domhnaill, the Committee recommended repairs of the kerbing outside John McFadden's garage in Ranafast.

Cllr. Gallagher requested the Roads Service to address maintenance issues on the footpath in Glenties to the National School and take-over of the Non County stretch of the Barrack Brae in Dungloe.

8.4

Winter Service

The Committee expressed concern at the inability of the Council to grit a 1 km stretch of the Ranafast road notwithstanding previous assurances given by Members to local residents and transport companies in Ranafast. The Committee also requested the inclusion of additional areas in the gritting programme.

Brendan O Donnell, Senior Engineer informed Members of the difficulties experienced in carrying out the gritting programme. The Senior Engineer outlined budgetary, time, capacity and operational restrictions in increasing the length of roadway to be gritted, due to the maximisation of available resources to cope with the adopted programme.

After a lengthy discussion the Committee agreed to convene a Workshop at 10 a.m. in the Dungloe PSC on the 23rd of January 2018 to explore viable options for solving the local gritting programme requirements.

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