**MINUTES OF MEETING OF ISLANDS COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON 12th JUNE 2018 IN THE DUNGLOE P.S.C**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllr. Michéal Choilm Mac Giolla Easbuig

Cllr. John Sheamais Ó Fearraigh

Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher

Cllr. Terence Slowey

Cllr. Enda Bonner

Cllr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill

Marjorie Uí Chearbhaill

Eamonn S. Mac Aoidh

Máire Uí Dochartaigh

Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh

Séamus Mac Ruairí

Mairín Uí Fhearraigh

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Michael McGarvey – Director of Water & Environment Service

**Cathal Mac Suibhne –** Marine Engineer

Eamonn Brown-A/Area Manager, Housing & Corporate

Charles Sweeney – Area Manager, Community Development

Dermot Brady – Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer

John Hegarty-Executive Engineer, Roads Service

Michael Rowsome-S.S.O, Corporate & Motor Tax

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Michéal Mac Giolla Easbuig – Údarás na Gaeltachta

Gráinne Ni Ghallchóir – An Roinn

Ian Webster (Deputising for Rosaleen McShane – Rutland)

**APOLOGIES**: David Friel – Coastal Officer

Roseleen McShane

Naul McCole

**IC 15/18 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

Cllr. Michéal Mac Giolla Easbuig acknowledged the efforts of those who assisted him during his period as Cathaoirleach and also outlined his continued commitment and dedication to the development of the Islands.

He expressed disappointment at the difficulties experienced by Tory residents as a consequence of the introduction of a new ferry service. He also criticised the Council and Údarás for the delisting of the foreshore project on Arranmore due to a failure to adhere to reporting deadlines.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested nominations for the position of Cathaoirleach.

On the proposal of Cllr. Slowey, seconded by Máire Uí Dochartaigh, Cllr. Ó Fearraigh was elected Cathaoirleach of Coiste na nOileáin. Cllr. Ó Fearraigh acknowledged the efforts of the outgoing Cathaoirleach and looked forward to working with all Island reps to promote and advance the development of offshore Islands. Cllr. Ó Fearraigh welcomed the attendance of Michéal Mac Giolla Easbuig from Údarás and Gráinne Ní Ghallchóir from An Roinn and requested that an invitation issue to Minister McHugh to attend a future meeting of Coiste na nOileáin.

**IC 16/18 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10TH APRIL 2018**

On the proposal of Michéal Choilm Mac Giolla Easbuig, seconded by William Boyle, the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th April 2018 were confirmed.

**IC 17/18 ROADS SERVICE**

**17.1** **Island Roads**

Seamus Rodgers read correspondence from stakeholders on Arranmore regarding the necessity to takeover roads to preserve investment made by An Roinn and to cater for tourists, locals and emergency personnel. The Council were requested to revisit this issue. Seamus Rodgers also commented on the lack of courtesy from Minister Ring’s Department in relation to representations made to seek funding for road investment on Islands.

The Roads Engineer informed the Committee that eligibility criteria for Local Improvement Schemes are listed on the LIS application forms.

In response to a query from Mairín Uí Fhearraigh regarding the status of the Island priority road list, the Roads Engineer informed the Committee that the complete list was submitted to An Roinn for further consideration.

William Boyle and Marjorie Uí Chearbhaill commended the Roads Service for work carried out on Owey and Tory respectively.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested a meeting of the Council, An Roinn and the Co-ops on Tory and Arranmore to agree a plan for the development of the lighthouse roads on both islands and the Ring Road on Arranmore. Gráinne Ní Gallchóir undertook to revert to An Roinn officials in this regard. Seamus Mac Ruairí also informed the meeting that Irish Lights and Fáilte Éireann should be involved at any such meeting.

**17.2 Ballard Road Bridge Replacement**

In response to a query from Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh regarding the status of this project, the Executive Engineer advised that in accordance with Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2017 (as amended), that submissions and observations with respect to the proposed development may be made up until the 4th July 2018. The Roads Engineer informed the Committee that on conclusion of the public consultation period, the Roads Service will endeavour to bring the Part 8 application to the July Council meeting.

**17.3 Magheraroarty Pier Road**

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill highlighted the unacceptable condition of both the road leading to the pier and sections of the car park at Magheraroarty Pier & requested the Council and Údarás to liaise to get both a costing and funding for this necessary project. Cllr. Ó Fearraigh seconded this recommendation.

**IC 18/18 WATER AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE**

**18.1 Gola Island**

The Committee discussed the report from Eoin Kerrane, Water, Sewerage, Environment Engineer regarding Irish Water funded works to securely anchor 700 metres of watermain to the sea bed.

Mairín Uí Fhearraigh and Eamonn Mac Aoidh queried the slow pace of progress considering the recent favourable weather conditions. The Director of the Water Service undertook to progress this matter.

In response to a query from Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig regarding drilling for water on the Island, Cllr. Slowey outlined potential difficulties due to the Islands topography and the high salinity content of water, but that a test hole and geological assessment would determine viability of any proposal in this regard.

**18.2 Public Conveniences**

Mairín Uí Fhearraigh informed the Committee that the provision of portable toilet facilities, are awaited on Gola and Inishboffin along with a report regarding suitable sites on smaller islands. Members were advised of the difficulty in developing tourism to take advantage of the Wild Atlantic Way brand in the absence of basic facilities & requested an additional toilet on Gola.

The Director stated that budgetary constraints limit the ability of the Council to provide all facilities that they wish to provide, and that the Council is collaborating with businesses to invest in Community facilities.

**18.3 Litter**

Seamus Mac Ruairí commended the work of volunteers on Islands for their efforts to improve the environment and beaches & highlighted the detrimental effect of discarded plastic on marine life, fishing and the food chain.

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested an update on a proposed eco-tourism project on Inishboffin.

Ian Webster informed Members of;

* The cleanup campaign held on Rutland and the assistance received from the Council to remove 30 bags of rubbish from the Island.
* Of the necessity to liaise with the fishing industry to highlight damage caused by discarded nets, oil containers and industrial waste.

**IC 19/18 MARINE SERVICE**

**19.1 Rannagh Pier**

In response to a query from Seamus Mac Ruairí regarding the status of a foreshore licence to develop this pier, the Marine Engineer advised that a study costing €90,000 was requested to progress the application and that funding in this regard is unavailable.

Cllr. Bonner requested the Council to apply for funding to advance this project.

**19.2 Leabgarrow Pier**

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig queried if the Council had any proposals to repair the walkway at this location. The Marine Engineer informed the Committee that this issue is on the upcoming marine work programme.

**19.3 Burtonport Pier**

Cllr. Gallagher requested the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the development of Burtonport so that the Harbour area is fit for purpose. The Marine Engineer advised that village renewal funding is being used for traffic management on a temporary basis, and that negotiations are ongoing with local landowners to advance a permanent solution to develop the pier area.

**19.4 Cranes**

The Marine Engineer updated the Committee on the status of proposals to erect cranes on Tory and at Magheroarty.

Marjorie Uí Chearbhall proposed and Cllr. Ó Domhnaill seconded a recommendation that an electrical supply and water be provided to Tory pier in conjunction with the crane installation works.

**19.5 Small Island Piers**

Eamonn Mac Aoidh and William Boyle informed the Committee of necessary repairs required on Gola and Owey respectively.

**19.6 Rutland Island**

Ian Webster informed Members that 2 families are now permanently resident on the Island and outlined the challenges posed by submerged rocks at the pier and by low spring tides. Ian Webster requested the Council to dredge the harbour area and to install a pontoon and Cllr. Gallagher seconded this recommendation.

**IC 20/18 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**20.1 Arranmore Foreshore Project**

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig and Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh expressed annoyance at the failure of the Council to comply with deadlines set by An Roinn for the submission of responses to their queries in respect of the above matter.

The Committee were advised of the onerous costs borne by Arranmore Co-op and also of planning restraints in relation to proposals for foreshore development. Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig recommended that the Chief Executive visit the offshore Islands to familiarise himself with the challenges faced by Island residents.

The Director of the Water/Environment Service undertook to make immediate representations in relation to this project.

**20.2 Island Heritage**

Seamus Mac Ruairí and Eamonn Mac Aoidh suggested that an increased emphasis on heritage and historical matters in conjunction with appropriate signage needs to be promoted and delivered by state agencies.

**IC 21/18 FIRE SERVICE**

**21.1 Fire Prevention**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer discussed the report on fire prevention and safety circulated at the meeting. The Committee were advised that training days are planned on completion of delivery of fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, fire blankets and carbon monoxide alarms to all Island dwellings. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer emphasised the importance of smoke alarms in the prevention of fatalities.

**21.2 Island Fire Service**

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill expressed concerns at the inadequacy of fire service provision on Islands and requested a report outlining the extent of the fire service capability on Islands and also requested the attendance of the Chief Fire Officer at the next Island Committee meeting.

**IC 22/18 Small Ferry Service**

Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig requested a response from Donegal Tourism to his previous recommendations regarding the provision of a ferry service to cater for the transportation of tourists to smaller Islands and the marketing of the Islands as a ‘stand alone package’ both at home and abroad. Mairín Uí Fhearraigh supported this proposal.

**IC 23/18 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

On the proposal of Cllr. Mac Giolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr. Gallagher, the Committee recommended the addition of representation from Cruit Island and Oileán Treora on Coiste na n-Oileáin. Cllr. Gallagher also recommended the inclusion of Termon (outside Maghery) on the Committee.

Cllr. Ó Domhnaill requested that Corporate Senior Management be contacted to ascertain the rules and regulations in relation to Island Committee membership.

**IC 24/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee agreed that the next meeting of Coiste na n-Oileáin will be held on the 9th October 2018. The Committee also agreed to Mairín Uí Fhearraigh’s suggestion that the 2019 offshore meeting be held on Inishboffin.

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