

**Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Stranorlar held  
29<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in the County House, Lifford at 11.30 am**

<b>Members Present</b>	Cllr. Martin Harley, Cllr. Gerry Crawford, Cllr. Patrick McGowan, Cllr. Gary Doherty, Cllr. Frank McBrearty.
<b>Officials Present</b>	Joe Peoples, Olive Gillespie, Donna McGroarty, Kathleen McGowan, Simon Harron, Claire McGeever, Paul Gallagher.
<b>Apologies</b>	Cllr Liam Doherty.

Cllr. McGowan thanked everyone for their attendance. Items from the agenda were discussed as follows:

## **190 Corporate Services**

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### **190.01 Votes of Sympathy**

Members passed a vote of sympathy on the passing of:

- **Eamonn McDaid**, father-in-law of Michelle McDaid (Water & Environment Service).
- **Francie Ward**, father of Liam Ward, Director of Service (Community Enterprise & Planning) and Deirdre Ward, Finance.
- **Bertha McCloskey**, mother of Siobhan McDaid (HR).
- **Charlie Lynch**, Raphoe.

### **190.02 Confirmation of Minutes of Municipal District of Stranorlar Meeting held 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018.**

The minutes were approved on the proposal of Cllr. Gary Doherty and seconded by Cllr. Frank McBrearty.

## **191 Confirmation of Date and Venue for Next Meeting and Business Prescribed by Statute**

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**191.01** It was agreed that the next meetings of Stranorlar Municipal District would be held on **Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018 in the Regional Training Centre, Stranorlar** as follows:

- **Workshop** 10.00 am.
- **Meeting** 11.00 am.

## **192 Consideration of Reports & Recommendations from Services**

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### **192.01 Roads & Transportation**

Claire McGeever was invited to address the meeting. The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- Survey works under the Accident Remedial Schemes for 2018 are now complete including Porthall.
- Cllr. G Doherty requested referred to the no. of accidents on the Castlefin to Castlederg Road and requested that the Area Roads Office examine same.
- 90% of works under the 2017 LIS Programme are now complete. Funding of €148,884 has been allocated to 7 projects across the Municipal District under the 2018 LIS Programme.
- Cllr. Crawford requested that the Council take action to improve vision lines on the R265 at the Ard Baithin and Bunrana Road junction at St Johnston. All Members supported this request and called for urgent action to be taken to improve vision lines at this location in the interests of public safety.
- Members were advised that works at Murlog will commence following the completion of road works at Convoy, which are being carried out by the same Contractor.
- A funding application has been submitted by the TII for works on the main Ballybofey / Stranorlar road. Works are currently at tender stage when realistic costs will become known.
- In response to Cllr. McBrearty's query regarding works at Raphoe National School, Claire McGeever advised that Road design had been contacted with view to meeting with the Principal.
- Members requested a copy of the Tree Felling Programme, which Claire McGeever advised had been received from Planning.
- Cllr. McGowan requested an update on the correspondence to Minister Ross seeking a delegation / meeting regarding Stranorlar MD.
- Cllr Harley requested that the Area Roads Office carry out safety works on Meenreagh side of Trusk Lough.
- Cllr McGowan requested that a list of priority projects under Low Cost Accident be brought to Members for consideration.

## **192.02 Community & Enterprise**

Kathleen McGowan was invited to address the meeting. The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- A revised funding application for the Riverine Project is to be submitted by June 15<sup>th</sup> 2018. Members commended the Council staff on their commitment to the project.
- It was agreed that an update report on the following items would be circulated to Members via email:
  - Drumboe Walkway
  - CCTV at Ballybofey / Stranorlar
  - Town Park (Ballybofey / Stranorlar)
  - All weather pitch
  - River Finn
- Following a meeting request by Cllr. McBrearty in relation to progress tourism development of Raphoe, Joe Peoples agreed to confirm the date of same in advance of the next MD Meeting.
- Cllr. McGowan proposed the development of a twinning project with a European region also affected by border issues which was supported by all Members. A meeting with the various agencies including EU Funding Unit, Donegal East Tourism, DLDC, Donegal Tourism etc. was requested in relation to same.

### **192.03 Housing & Corporate Services**

Olive Gillespie was invited to address the meeting. The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- In response to Cllr. G Doherty's query regarding the Habinteg proposal at Castlefin, Olive Gillespie advised that the stage 1 application for the CAS project for 20 units has received approval in principle. The Stage 1 application for the CALF project of 10 units is currently being assessed by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government.
- Cllr. McGowan advised of the allocation of additional resources in Ballybofey Garda Station including a 3<sup>rd</sup> Garda Sergeant, 3 Gardai and a Community Liaison Garda.
- Members were advised that a painting programme of social housing stock is currently being considered by Stranorlar Housing Office.
- In relation to emerging maintenance issues on properties following refurbishment works, Olive Gillespie requested that Members report these issues to the Housing Area Office for follow up by the Housing technical staff.
- Cllr. McGowan proposed that the Council examine the possibility of developing a Serviced Land Initiative.

### **192.04 Planning**

Simon Harron was invited to address the meeting. The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- It was confirmed that the County Development Plan 2018-2024 will become operational on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2018.
- The Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan will be considered at the Council Meeting to be held on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018 and if adopted, will become operational 4 weeks later.
- Simon Harron advised that Members will be provided with a written report on Derelict Sites in advance of the next meeting. The relevant Planner will also be requested to attend the next meeting.
- Cllr. McBrearty advised that funding allocations under the Structures at Risk Fund did not include the Heritage Towns.
- Members advised of the importance of roads being reinstated to adequate standards following works undertaken by other utilities / government agencies.

### **192.05 Environmental Services**

Paul Gallagher was invited to address the meeting. The update report circulated with the agenda was taken as read. The following comments were made:

- Members requested that correspondence issue to the Minister seeking progress to be made on CFRAMS.
- Cllr. McGowan requested that an update on progress on public conveniences in Ballybofey be brought to the next meeting of Stranorlar MD.
- Members were advised that additional resources will be allocated to the Environment Section over the coming weeks and months.
- Paul Gallagher agreed to circulate an update advising Members on progress on the installation of Bring Banks at Castlefin. Cllr. McGowan highlighted the issues around the Bring Banks at Stranorlar.

- Cllr. McGowan requested a meeting with Michael McGarvey, Director of Service in relation to approach roads to towns and Paul Gallagher agreed to revert directly.
- Members requested that Con McLaughlin, Senior Engineer attend a future meeting of Stranorlar MD to make a presentation on the Catchment Care Project.

## 193 Motions

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### 193.01 The following Motion was submitted by Cllr. Frank McBrearty:

**Motion:** The Stranorlar MD calls on their roads section to repair Raphoe Town road damage to the appropriate standards, damaged to parking spaces around The Diamond and that the road from St Eunan's Chapel to Meeting House Street Raphoe be left back to the same condition when it was resurfaced a couple of years ago and that the pothole machine be used in these repairs where needed, especially due to the fact that Raphoe is a heritage Town.

**Reply:** Once Irish Water have completed their works on the new Convoy to Raphoe watermain, all temporary reinstatement shall be replaced with permanent reinstatement. All works will be in accordance with current standards. Where the contractor has laid a trench through a recently overlaid road then the half of the carriageway where the trench was laid shall be resurfaced.

Any potholes outside of the watermain works shall be repaired by Donegal County Council.

The Motion was seconded by Cllr. G Crawford.

### 193.02 The following Motion was submitted by Cllr. Patrick McGowan:

**Motion:** That a special meeting be convened with the TII and senior Council Roads Management to discuss planned work on Donegal Road Ballybofey, Ballybofey & Stranorlar Main Street planned work's and the increasing problems faced by residents & motorists on the Ballybofey to Crossroads Village L3044.

**Reply:** A meeting with TII can be requested. When requesting a meeting it will be necessary to set out the Agenda in advance and have clarity around what is being requested from TII. It is understood that TII have agreed to fund works and in such circumstances it falls to the Council to implement the works and to put in place whatever measures are necessary to manage local issues during construction. TII would not normally be involved in such details. Also as the Ballybofey to Crossroads Road is a non-national it will be necessary to set out what context it is proposed to be discussed with TII.

The Motion was seconded by all Members. Claire McGeever was requested to follow up in relation to this meeting.

**193.03** The following Motion was submitted by Cllr. Gary Doherty:

**Motion:** That Donegal County Council urgently address the continuing issue with the traffic lights at Castlefinn Bridge and upgrade the lights to the same standard as those at Clady Bridge to allow for the continuous flow of traffic.

**Reply:** The traffic lights at Castlefin Bridge were repaired on 22 May following what appears to have been vandalism. There has been one other call out in 2018 for fault repair. The lights at Castlefin have traffic sensors similar to those at Clady bridge and it was this sensor that appears to have been vandalised.

The Motion was seconded by Cllr. Martin Harley.

## **194 Members Written Questions**

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**194.01** The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Frank McBrearty:

**Question:** I am requesting a break down of claims for compensation made against the Council for Stranorlar MD since 2009. A. How many claims were made, B. Categories of claims. C. Number of case's settled and number of case's that went to court and the number of case' still unresolved. D. What is the total financial amount of payouts since 2009. E. What is the legal cost's to the Council and how many case's are still before the courts. F. What is the financial pay out from the council's insurance body and how much has the Council paid out for insurance premiums for Stranorlar MD from 2009 to date.

**Reply:** IPB insurance provides insurance cover for Donegal County Council across a number of policies – including Public Liability, Employers Liability, Property and Motor insurance. IPB provides the Council with Quarterly Insurance reports that provide a high-level analysis of claims data. Claims data is recorded on a countywide basis; the data is neither recorded nor available on a per Municipal District basis. The data is available from Quarter 1 of 2012. Reports covering this period are attached hereto.

IPB Insurances manage all aspects of the claims process on behalf of Donegal County Council. This includes the management of the legal process; and the payment of legal fees, costs and settlements. Insurance costs for the years 2014 to 2017 (since the merger of the town and county councils) are shown below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount</b>
2017	€3,482,518
2016	€3,086,008
2015	€2,842,604
2014	€2,487,831

The figures shown above take account of all insurance premiums. Public Liability Insurance makes up the largest element of these costs (€2,103,024 for 2017), and is also the premium that has increased the most in the last number of years. The 2017 Public Liability Premium includes an increase arising from the decision to take out 'ground-up' cover (no excess). This increased the annual cost of the premium. However, it removes the risk that the Council will suffer significant excess costs that can be difficult to predict.

**194.02 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Frank McBrearty:**

**Question: Has the Stranorlar MD Roads section researched and clarified that all LIS programs and application have passed the criteria set down under the legislation before any application's were approved for funding since they were re-introduced in 2017.**

**Reply:** The 2017 LIS applications closing date was 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. All applications were checked, costed and submitted to the Department by the 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. In 2017 there were in excess of 1200 applications received County wide with 928 deemed eligible.

In 2017 there were 173 eligible applications in the Stranorlar MD with 25 ineligible and 3 further information requests.

The 2018 LIS applications closing date was 13<sup>th</sup> March. All applications were checked, costed and submitted to the Department by 28<sup>th</sup> March. There were 176 eligible schemes in Stranorlar MD (which included the balance of the 2017 schemes that did not receive funding).

All 2017 and 2018 schemes were assessed within the tight time frame against the eligibility criteria as set out in the Department's memorandum. Where a determination could not be made as to its eligibility based on the information submitted then the application was deemed to require further information.

It is understood that the Department is reviewing the Local Improvement Scheme process including what information will have to be submitted by the applicant in the future.

**194.03 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Patrick McGowan:**

**Question: As previously discussed can the Stranorlar MD agree a plan to pilot a initiative to get all areas, roads, streets and estates involved in regular clean-ups all year long by supplying bags, pickers, vests, gloves etc. as well as providing waste disposal solution for items collected. This initiative could be developed similar to the best kept estate scheme.**

**Reply:** In support of initiatives for a cleaner environment, Donegal County Council supply materials to local communities for clean-up campaigns, including litter pickers, skips, Hi Viz vests, bags, gloves etc. This support is available throughout the year to all community groups and the Council also arranges for the collection of the waste afterwards. The Litter Wardens, Mobile Litter Units and Environment staff will continue to support any group wishing to get involved in clean-up activities.

In addition, the Council has a number of supports in place for local communities and Tidy Towns groups including:

- The Big Donegal Clean-Up.
- Tidy Town Improvement Grants 2018.
- Tidy Towns Clean & Green Awards 2018.
- Approach Road Grants.
- Adopt a Road Grant.

Application forms for the Tidy Towns Improvement Grant 2018 have already been circulated to Tidy Towns groups.

**194.04 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Patrick McGowan:**

**Question: Following my question to the full Council meeting recently on specific supports for persons with disabilities in acquiring suitable housing, please give the numbers waiting suitable housing in the Stranorlar area, what specific steps are being taken to have them re-housed in suitable housing. Is the housing section working to any definite plan or time frame, please give details.**

**Reply:** In the Stranorlar MD, there are currently 13 approved applicants with disabilities, waiting for suitable housing to meet their accommodation needs.

Under the Council's grant scheme (Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability), applications can be considered for works which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable to suit the accommodation needs of a person with a disability. The Council also carries out adaptation works to Council housing stock where a specific need is identified and approved.

In the Council's Allocation Policy, provision is made for a number of dwellings to be reserved for particular classes of households and forms of tenure. In this regard, when housing vacancies arise for allocation, the Housing Section examines the approved waiting list where specific accommodation is required. In addition, the Council works closely with the HSE and the Approved Housing Bodies in this regard.

Furthermore, when the Council is designing new Housing Schemes, the waiting list is examined for that particular location to ascertain the requirements of approved applicants. In cases where the approved need for an applicant with a disability is identified, provision can be made to design the property with regard to the specific needs of the applicant.

Under the House Acquisition Programme, the Council has regard for approved applicants with a disability when sourcing housing under this Programme.

The timeframe to secure suitable accommodation for applicants with a disability varies depending on the specific circumstances of each individual case.

**194.05** The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Gerry Crawford:

**Question:** What progress is there in providing new build homes in area's not included in the social housing schemes to be constructed in the Stranorlar MD.

**Reply:** The Council has developed a very ambitious capital programme for social housing delivery under the Rebuilding Ireland Programme. This Programme is based on the social housing need in the county and outlines the Council's delivery methods to the end of 2021 including:

- The House Acquisition Programme,
- Turnkey Acquisitions,
- Construction Programme,
- Buy and Initiative,
- Specific Instance (SI) Houses.

With regard to the Municipal District of Stranorlar, the Housing Capital Office is working in conjunction with the Area Housing Office to acquire suitable properties under the House Acquisition Programme. A total of 12 properties were identified as suitable in 2017 and to date for 2018, three suitable properties have been identified.

A turnkey acquisition at Mullindrait, Stranorlar for the construction of 21 units in due for completion in mid 2018.

The Council has also initiated a new turnkey acquisition public procurement process seeking to acquire social housing through turnkey developments. A total of 17 towns including Ballybofey / Stranorlar, Lifford and Convoy from the Stranorlar Municipal District were included in this process.

Proposals were sought from Developers in a position to deliver (i) completed units, (ii) units under construction and (iii) units to be constructed on suitable sites, within a reasonable timescale. Pre-Qualification Questionnaires are currently being assessed and Developers who successfully pass this stage will progress to the next stage of the process, i.e. Dialogue Stage, which is expected to commence in June 2018. The Dialogue Stage enables the Council to negotiate with tenderers on issues such as specific need, design, specification and price.

A further two construction projects at Raphoe and St. Johnston are also progressing through the relevant DHPLG approval stages and will provide 6 and 11 units at these locations respectively.

**194.06** The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Gerry Crawford:

**Question:** What plans exist to replace railings at St Patrick's Tce Ballindrait.



**Reply:** From our records, the railings at St. Patrick's Terrace, Ballindrait, were upgraded / refurbished in 2011. The railings were inspected recently and were found to be in good structural condition. There are no plans to replace these railings in the current programmes, however this matter can be kept under review.

**194.07 The following Question was submitted by Cllr. Gary Doherty:**

**Question: How much has this Council paid to the traffic lights management company for the maintenance of the traffic lights at Castlefinn Bridge since they were upgraded?**

**Reply:** Since October 2016 Donegal County Council has paid € 1,804 for fault repair in relation to traffic lights at Castlefin Bridge. There have been two further call outs that have yet to be paid for on 24th April and 22nd May. In relation to a call out on 22nd May, the company advised that 'the above ground safety detection which looks for vehicles still crossing the bridge was vandalised and pointing into the river. It also appears the front of the detector units were sprayed'.

Cllr McGowan requested that staff from the various Council Departments schedule sufficient time in their diaries to attend full Meetings of Stranorlar Municipal District.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

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**Cathaoirleach  
Municipal District of Stranorlar**

**As agreed at the Stranorlar MD Meeting held 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018.**