

**MINUTES OF OCTOBER MEETING OF THE CASTLECOMER MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL ON MONDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 2017, AT 11.00 A.M.**

CHAIR: Cllr. John Brennan

Cllrs.: Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael McCarthy, Maurice Shortall and Mary Hilda Cavanagh.

Apologies: Cllr. Pat Millea

Officials Michael Delahunty, Philippe Beubry and Catherine Cooney
Apologies: Nancy Byrne

Vote of Sympathy

Members joined with the Chair in offering a Vote of Sympathy to the family of the late Fr. Joe Champion, former Curate of Castlecomer. All Members acknowledged the service Fr. Champion gave to the community in the Parish of Castlecomer and his previous appointment to the Parish of Freshford.

Storm Ophelia

Cllr. John Brennan and all members present expressed their appreciation to County Council staff, both indoor and outdoor, Emergency Services and local media for their contribution to the measures put in place for public safety during the recent storm Ophelia. All members also acknowledged the level of community spirit that was evident during such a difficult time.

Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh suggested that the ESB and EIR should be requested to carry out an audit on roadside poles. Cllr. Cavanagh stated that there are a number of unused poles which fell during the storm and from a Health and Safety point of view all unused poles should be removed.

Cllr. John Brennan stated that an audit should also be carried out on the stability of roadside trees.

Mr. Michael Delahunty agreed to pass on the concerns of the Members in relation to roadside trees to the relevant Director of Services and also confirmed that landowners are responsible for the trees situated on their lands.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of:-

(a) Ordinary Meeting of the Castlecomer Municipal District held on 18th September, 2017.

The Minutes were proposed Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. Michael McCarthy and agreed.

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

(a) Castlecomer Draft Local Area Plan

Mr. Nicholas Louw, Senior Planner, gave a brief update on the position in relation to the Castlecomer Draft Local Area Plan, outlining that the plan is currently on public display with a closing date for receipt of submission on 7th November, 2017. Mr. Louw advised that it is proposed to bring the Chief Executive's Report to the December County Council Meeting for consideration by the Members.

Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, Cllr. Maurice Shortall and Cllr. John Brennan expressed their appreciation to the Council's Planning Staff for holding a public information meeting/workshop in Castlecomer and hope that the concerns raised at this meeting will be taken on board. Members also urged people to engage with the public consultation process and take the opportunity to make submissions.

(b) Community Update

Mr. Michael Delahunty circulated a report updating Members on the following community schemes:

- CLÁR – Clontubrid National School, Galmoy Hall and Crosspatrick.
- Children Rights and 25th anniversary of Ireland ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Comhairle na nÓg AGM
- Castlecomer Community: BOI Enterprise Town and The Castlecomer Synergy Group.
- SICAP (Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme).
- Estate Management Grants Scheme.
- Large Estate Enhancement Grant Scheme.
- Town & Village Renewal.
- Urlingford – The Mill Family Resource Centre
- Kilkenny Fieldnames Project.
- County Kilkenny Cultural Strategy.

Members thanked Michael Delahunty for his comprehensive report and commended the work being carried by the Council under all schemes and in securing a significant amount of funding for various projects. Mr. Delahunty responded to queries raised by Members in relation to:

- Funding applications under Town and Village Renewal Scheme
- Potential future application under the T&V Renewal Scheme in Urlingford
- The proposed Pedestrian Bridge in Castlecomer and the shortfall in funding.
- Public access to Fieldnames Project when project is complete.
- Conahy – resurfacing of community car park-Future CLÁR proposal.
- Local Area Plan – link in with Synergy Group.

(c) Roads Report/Update

Mr. Philippe Beubry circulated report updating Members on the Road Works Scheme and went through the details contained in the Report. Mr. Beubry responded to queries raised in relation to:

- Drainage at Bayswell.
- Kilashulin Lane, Barna – Local Improvement Scheme.
- Discretionary Budget – implications on 2018 Road Works Scheme.

3. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council for transaction at such meeting.

None.

4. Other Business set forth in the Notice convening the Meeting.

Items submitted by the Members:

Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh

(a) Japanese Knot Weed

Cllr. Cavanagh enquired as to what the procedure is if someone discovers Japanese Knot Weed on their land.

Mr. Michael Delahunty advised that the Environment Department of the Council are currently producing an information leaflet which will contain information on how to deal with Japanese Knot Weed. He also informed the meeting that the National Parks and Wildlife are the lead authority and landowners are responsible for dealing with Japanese Knot Weed on their own lands.

Mr. Philippe Beubry informed the meeting that there has been an explosion in the number of locations of Japanese Knot Weed. All locations have been signposted and sprayed twice or three times this year to date and it can take up to 10 years to eradicate the problem altogether.

(b) Driver Feedback Signs

Cllr. Cavanagh enquired about the possibility of erecting Driver Feedback Signs in all villages in the County and in particular, Johnstown, as this measure has proven to be very effective in reducing speed.

Other Members supported Cllr. Cavanagh's suggestion and in response Mr. Philippe Beubry advised that the cost of 2 no. such signs are in the region of €8,000.

It was agreed that Mr. Beubry would bring back a proposal to the Members for Driver Feedback signs together with costings for same. Mr. Beubry suggested that if these signs are being introduced they should be introduced on the Regional network first.

Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick

(a) Update – New Public Lighting Programme 2017

Mr. Philippe Beubry advised that 4 no. lights will be erected in Clogh in December, as well as Freshford.

(a) Plans for resurfacing from Discovery Park to county bounds.

Philippe Beubry advised that the contract documents for the N.78 Pavement Improvement Scheme from Castlecomer to the Laois Co bounds are currently being prepared in view to go to tender in the next few weeks and construction in 2018. Formal TII approval is still required. The proposed scheme includes the resurfacing of the N.78 from the bridge in Castlecomer to

the Laois Co. Bounds but does not include an 800m section at Coolbawn. This section was already resurfaced in 2015 under the HD.28 programme.

(c) Improved safety measures outside Discovery Park and at Coolbawn.

Philippe Beubry advised that it is proposed to address the road safety outside the Discovery Park under the Pavement Improvement Scheme outlined under (b). The exact safety measures to be determined as part of the Detailed Design will prevent the current dangerous parking of vehicles opposite the Discovery Park from the junction to Coon to the Castlecomer Bridge and near the upper entrance to the Discovery Park. It is also proposed to improve the public realm in the vicinity of the Church of Ireland.

Cllr. M. Shortall

Cllr. Shortall advised that the items submitted by him and listed on the Agenda have been dealt with.

5. Notice of Motion.

None.

6. Correspondence.

None.

7. Matters arising from Minutes.

None.

8. Any Other Business

Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick enquired as to when the speed limit reductions will take place. In response, Mr. Philippe Beubry stated that the changes have been carried out on the local and regional networks and he will enquire with Road Design in relation to the national network.

Cllr. Maurice Shortall requested that the public be advised in advance of the implementation of changes.

Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh proposed that the Committee write to the IFA, both at national and local level, requesting them to advise farmers that due to increasing number of thefts of gates from farms, it is important that gates should be purchased from reputable sources. Cllr. Maurice Shortall seconded this proposal.

Budget Meeting

It was agreed that the Statutory Budget Meeting for the Castlecomer Municipal District will take place on Friday, 27th October, 2017, at 3.45 p.m. in Meeting Room 2, County Hall.

SPC 3 – Review of Community and Cultural Grant Scheme 2015-2017.

Mr. Michael Delahunty informed the Meeting that a review of the Community and Cultural Grant Scheme is being carried out by SPC 3. He circulated full details of the current scheme and a breakdown of funding by Electoral Area. Michael explained the details of the scheme and in particular the need to address a number of issues such as the geographical spread of funding. He asked Members to come back to him over the next few weeks with feedback.

Following a discussion it was agreed to hold a meeting in committee before the November Meeting of the Municipal District at 10.30 a.m. to discuss this item.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____