

Minutes of Special Meeting held on Friday 8th January, 2016 at 2.30p.m.

Chair: Cllr. M. H. Cavanagh

Cllrs: M. Shortall, J. Brennan, P. Millea, P. Fitzpatrick, M. McCarthy, M. Doyle, M. Doran, M. Noonan, J. Malone, A. McGuinness, E. Aylward, K. Funchion, T. Breathnach, F. Doherty, P. Dunphy, P. McKee, D. Fitzgerald, M. O' Neill, G. Frisby, P. Cleere, B. Gardner, P. O' Neill, D. Kennedy.

Officials: C. Byrne, S. Walton M. Prendiville, M. Melia, F. Stafford, K. Hanley, P. Beubry, S. Kavanagh, T. Lauhoff, R. Regan, J. Collins, M. O' Toole, S. Foley, B. Tyrrell and A.M. Walsh.

Cllr. M. H. Cavanagh wished all a Happy New Year.

She advised that the meeting will be in public for 1 hour and that the members would meet in committee from 3.30p.m. as Municipal Districts to discuss individual cases of flooding.

It was proposed by Cllr. M. Noonan, seconded by Cllr. M. Doran and agreed: -
"That the meeting of Municipal Districts and the meeting on the Boundary Review be held in committee".

Cllr. Fitzpatrick asked why a representative of the OPW was not at the meeting. Cllr. Cavanagh asked that an invitation be sent to OPW asking them to attend the meeting on the 11th January, 2016 or 18th January, 2016. Cllr. M. H. Cavanagh thanked the executive and all staff of Kilkenny County Council, Emergency Services, Civil Defence, Gardai, Army, Order of Malta and the many communities who assisted during the recent flooding event.

She thanked a number of people who made pumps available on all days and at all times to assist in keeping water out of properties.

She also thanked all the Councillors for their efforts and co-operation in dealing with local issues.

Contributions of thanks were received from all Councillors present and the co-operation from all agencies was acknowledged.

Number of Councillors referred to the preventative measures which have been put in place over the last number of years under the Minor Flood Mitigation Works Scheme. These works have been successful and have prevented numbers of properties from being flooded.

A number of issues were raised by members during their contributions.

- Reduced level of staff in the areas to deal with all the works arising from the floods and the damage caused to roads.
- Ongoing availability of sandbags
- Evaluating the cost of the response to the emergency and seeking funds from Department
- Evaluating the cost of the damage caused by the flooding and submitting a claim for special funds.
- Co-operation between adjoining local authorities where roads are closed and detours are being signposted.
- Impact of social media – use of Twitter, Facebook is the way forward, communications with public is critical.
- Progressing outstanding flooding projects with OPW.
- Need to liaise with people who have been flooded, designated person to deal with applications for compensation from Red Cross.
- Long term solutions for clearing drains etc in all areas.
- Need to have streams cleaned out
- Carry out a full review of procedures in major emergency planning
- Consider a rates relief for businesses affected.
- Available emergency number was appreciated by the public
- Consider non- engineering solutions e.g. planting in the flood plains
- Need to consider effects of climate changes.

Mr. S. Walton acknowledged the concerns raised by all members and advised that staff are working on compiling the costs of the response to the severe weather and also evaluating the damage caused to the infrastructure.

Response plan is in place since 3rd December, 2015. It was activated on 30th December, 2015 at 8.30a.m and has not been stood down yet.

He gave a PowerPoint presentation on the following:-

- Statistics in relation to the recent storms in November and December, 2015
- River levels at a number of locations
- Regular monitoring of river levels enables Kilkenny County Council to warn property owners.
- Staff on alert since 3rd December, 2015.
- Activation of the Flood Emergency Response Plan
- Details of calls received, sandbags distributed, temporary flood defences etc
- Temporary accommodation provided to a number of families
- Statistics on social media reach
- Impacts of Flooding events
- Investment under the Flood Relief Works
- Pending flooding projects
- Projects for 2016 and CFRAMs
- Statutory role of Kilkenny County Council and OPW
- Administering Red Cross forms

Copy of Mr. Walton's presentation was circulated to all members. Cllr. Cavanagh thanked Mr. Walton for his presentation.

Number of queries were raised by Cllr. M. H. Cavanagh, B. Gardner, M. Shortall, G. Frisby, F. Doherty, P. Cleere, E. Aylward and M. Noonan in relation to:-

- Legal authority to enter private lands to allow water to run off the roads
- Re-opening library Thomastown
- Discussion of CFRAM report at each Municipal District.

- Write to Minister seeking funds for costs incurred
- Flood resilience projects
- Positive effects on works completed under flood relief schemes
- Current status of weather-gritting of wet roads, storage of sandbags.

Mr. Walton responded to the queries, at this stage, it was proposed by Cllr. M. Noonan, seconded by Cllr. M Doran and agreed: - "That the members would now meet in committee as Municipal Districts to consider individual issues related to the flooding."

Meeting then concluded.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE