

Minutes of the March Meeting of the Municipal District of Callan-Thomastown

Date: Wednesday 9th March, 2022 at 4.00p.m.

Venue: Meeting conducted via MS Teams remote access

- Chair:** Cllr Michael Doyle
- Present via MS Teams:** Cllr Deirdre Cullen, Cllr Matt Doran, Cllr Joe Lyons, Cllr Pat O'Neill, Cllr Peter Chap Cleere
- Apologies:** Ms Fiona Deegan, Meetings Administrator
- In attendance via MS Teams:** Ms Mary Mulholland, Director of Services; Mr Declan Murphy, Area Engineer; Ms Oonagh Bannon, Staff Officer.

1) Confirmation of Minutes

(a) Minutes of Municipal District Meeting of 9th February, 2022

The Minutes of the Municipal District Meeting of Wednesday 9th February, 2022 were proposed by Cllr Doran, seconded by Cllr Doyle and agreed.

Retirement

It was noted that Mary Rowan, Clerical Officer at the Callan Area Office would retire shortly from Kilkenny County Council after many years of service. The members acknowledged her dedication, commitment and the exceptional service she has given to the Council over the years. The members joined with Cllr Doyle in wishing Mary a happy retirement and very best wishes for the future.

Ms Mary Mulholland also took the opportunity to wish Mary well in her retirement on behalf of the executive of Kilkenny County Council, stating that Mary is the epitome of what public service is, having given many years of dedicated service and she will be a huge loss to the Callan Area Office.

2) Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

(a) Presentation of Environmental Awareness (Bernadette Moloney)

Ms Bernadette Moloney, Environmental Awareness Officer thanked members for the opportunity to give an update on environmental matters and outlined details as follows:-

- WEEE Ireland household electrical collection will take place 4th June 2022 at Thomastown Quay Car Park, promotional material to be circulated when available. The importance of awareness and usage of this service was noted in order to ensure continued future collections at this location.
- Permanent WEEE drop off locations throughout the County were noted. It was also noted that the large electrical retailers will facilitate recycling of electrical items.
- Bottle Bank locations and usage noted. It is hoped to install additional bottle banks in the Windgap and Knocktopher / Ballyhale areas and members were advised to contact Francis Brophy in the Environment Section with any suggestions they may have for appropriate locations for additional bottle bank services.
- Deposit Return Scheme being introduced nationally – details and benefits of the scheme were outlined, which it is hoped will increase recycling of drinks bottles and cans and reduce litter and waste. It was noted that Voice Ireland, who are running an awareness

- roadshow on the new scheme, will be in Kilkenny City on 19th May. It is hoped that the scheme will be up and running with machines installed nationwide by the end of 2022.
- Litter Infrastructure Support Grant Scheme 2021 – this scheme provided for installation of solar compacting bins at Callan, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh and enabled support and assistance to be given to communities to eliminate litter at riverside amenities during the summer season, including Thomastown Weir Pool.
 - National Spring Clean – groups encouraged to register with An Taisce, 87 groups in Kilkenny registered so far, assistance provided to groups by Kilkenny County Council with supply of bags, litter pickers and with the disposal of litter collected.
 - Tidy Towns Forum – first event for 2022 will be held on 2nd April at Kells, with a tour of village projects, further details of this event to be circulated next week.
 - Other ongoing litter initiatives were noted, including schools Picker Pals programme run by Voice Ireland, Bag It Bin It dog fouling campaign and the Green Schools programme.
 - Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) – programme funded by the EPA, it was noted that Kilkenny County Council received €18k in funding last November to complete 5 community projects, all promoting waste prevention. Two of these projects involve the collection, repair and recycling of old bicycles and old musical instruments.
 - Energy in Focus Week – it was noted that this programme is running in the current week in collaboration with Carlow County Council, through social media and KCLR, focusing on different aspects of energy use, giving energy saving advice and raising awareness on the availability of energy saving kits at libraries across both Counties.

Cllr. Doyle thanked Ms Moloney for her comprehensive report and acknowledged the large number of community groups involved in litter picking and enhancing their communities and thanked them on behalf of all the elected members.

The following items were raised and discussed:-

- Electrical recycling – it was agreed that more awareness was needed and will be undertaken with regard to location of permanent facilities for WEEE recycling.
- Deposit Return Scheme – it was noted that VOICE Ireland are working with the Department on this scheme, details on how the scheme will work have yet to be finalised.
- Callan Recycling Centre – the matter raised regarding signage for the Centre to be referred to Francis Brophy, Environment Section.
- Litter black spots and use of cameras – the Enforcement Team will continue its activities around enforcement, members and the public are encouraged to continue to highlight issues to Enforcement Officers for investigation.
- Ms Moloney's presentation to be circulated to members for information.
- Dog fouling – the continued negative impact on the community was noted, in spite of the Bag It Bin It campaign. It was noted that community packs were also available to help improve awareness, engage with and appeal to dog walkers locally.
- Solar compacting bins – it was agreed that all other possible sources of funding would be examined in order to secure funding for the installation of additional solar compacting bins, which have proven to be hugely successful. Ms Mulholland advised that this could be looked at in the context of Trail Kilkenny, ORIS or various other projects promoting outdoor activities.
- Additional Bottle Banks – it was noted that no sites have yet been secured for Windgap or Knocktopher/Ballyhale, members advised to contact Francis Brophy with any potential locations they may be aware of.
- Picker Pals Programme – it was noted that this programme was piloted in Kilkenny City schools and subsequently received national funding, allowing additional schools in the

County to participate. All schools in the County were given the opportunity to register their interest in participating in the programme.

Ms Mulholland referred to the recently held Community Awards Night for Pride of Place, Tidy Towns and Estate Management and took the opportunity to acknowledge the time and effort put in by local community groups and the phenomenal work being done by them on the ground. She thanked Ms Moloney for her very informative and comprehensive report.

(b) Presentation of 2022 workplan for Taking in Charge of Estates (Úna Kealy & Alan Hyland)

Ms Úna Kealy circulated report to members and advised that the Council currently have a total of 31 taking in charge applications, 9 of which are within the Callan-Thomastown municipal district. The position in relation to these 9 applications was noted and Ms Kealy stated that it is proposed to take 3 of these in charge in the current year, namely The Greens, Thomastown, Kiln Lane, Callan and Castlehyde, New Ross. The current status on each of these 3 estates was noted and a further update will be provided in due course.

The following query was raised:-

The Greens, Thomastown – concerns were raised with regard to laneway alongside this estate. A Hyland confirmed that the issue raised with regard to this lane, which is private property, is not a matter for the planning authority, however it is hoped that an update can be provided to members on the matter as the taking in charge process progresses.

Cllr Doyle thanked Ms Kealy and Mr Hyland for their presentation and they withdrew from the meeting.

(c) Presentation of Roadworks Programme 2022 (Declan Murphy)

Mr Declan Murphy circulated the Roadworks Programme 2022 for the Callan-Thomastown MD to members and outlined the overall budgets and allocations received for 2022. A full list of specific schemes to be undertaken in the current year will be circulated to members. The members thanked Mr Murphy and staff for the huge amount of work undertaken in the preparation of the programme of works for 2022.

The following items were raised:-

- Danesfort Overlay and Safety Works – the members welcomed funding for the proposed safety works at this junction, which will be a huge improvement to safety and a positive for the local community.
- Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Works – it was confirmed that works being carried out under this heading were larger scale projects to relieve flooding and surface water, with the aim of protecting the road network.
- Low Cost Safety Works – members welcomed funding for these schemes and thanked Mr. Murphy and all involved for the engagement with residents and securing funding.
- Footpath projects – funding for the continued upgrade and improvement of the footpath network in the district was noted and welcomed by members.
- Members took the opportunity to thank the crews in the area and acknowledge their hard work and efforts on the ground.

The Callan-Thomastown Municipal District Roadworks Programme 2022 was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr O'Neill and agreed.

(d) Monthly Roadworks Update (Declan Murphy)

Mr Declan Murphy circulated report and updated members on works being progressed since the last meeting.

The following was noted:-

Roadworks Programme 2022

- Restoration Improvement works due to commence 21st March, weather permitting – the four schemes to be completed were noted.
- Restoration Maintenance works will commence in May.
- Drainage projects progressing in all areas along with inlets.
- Low Cost Safety Works – clearance works commenced at Victoria Bridge R697 Ahenny and works progressing on Chapel Hill, Thomastown and R703 at Graiguenamanagh.

Town & Village Renewal Schemes

- Stoneyford-Ennisnag – works to complete installation of public lighting and footpath is progressing well.
- Hugginstown – works to include new footpath, 2 no. raised pedestrian crossings, landscaping, seating, new road markings and parking – it was noted that tenders have been received and a Contractor will be appointed shortly.

CLÁR 2021

- Kilmaganny – works to pedestrian crossing, ramp and footpath complete, ESB connection awaited to enable pedestrian lights – works to continue with regard to design for footpath out the Carrick Road, Kilmaganny.

Active Travel / TII Projects

- Callan One-Way System / Public Realm and Flaggy Lane – it was noted that preliminary designs must be approved by the NTA before proceeding to Part 8.
- Callan Ring Road Widening of Footpaths – Road Design progressing design works with TII, awaiting confirmation from NTA / TII with regard to the funding of this project.
- Mill Street, Thomastown – it was noted works commenced on 1st March, drainage works completed with remainder of works to be completed by the end of the month, weather permitting.

General

- Inistioge – raised ramp and footpath outside Inistioge Primary School completed.
- Killarney Bridge – demolition, stabilisation and shotcrete works complete – remaining works to be completed in 2/3 weeks weather permitting.

The members thanked Mr Murphy for his update and raised the following items:-

- Member welcomed LCS works at Graigenamanagh – Mr Murphy agreed to revert to members with timeframe for completion, following engagement with landowners.
- Concerns raised locally regarding issue with road surface subsidence at the wall on the Quay in Thomastown – Mr Murphy confirmed that he would look at addressing the road surface issue and will keep the matter under review.
- Callan One-way System – Mr Murphy confirmed that the options report will be submitted to the NTA along with further information requested, but this will not cause any significant delay to this project.
- Opening of St. Mary's Church, Green Street, Callan to visitors – Mr Murphy to follow up and revert to members.
- Removal of silt from eye of bridge in Callan – Kieran Kelly, Engineer, to engage with stakeholders in this regard, consent is required from Inland Fisheries and the National Parks & Wildlife Service and an appropriate assessment is required to see what impacts are on the river.

(e) Monthly Rural Development Update (Mary Mulholland)

Ms Mulholland advised as follows:-

- Allocations in relation to the 2021 Town & Village Renewal applications have been announced and funding has been received for 6 projects across the County, to the value of almost €1.2m. It was noted that the Barrow Activities Outdoor Hub has been allocated funding for improvements to their facilities, which is very welcome in Graiguenamanagh.
- RRDF funded projects, Callan Friary Complex and Bridge Street – it is proposed to proceed with design, public consultation and planning process for the refurbishment of the Bridge Street buildings and to commence the assessment process of the Friary Complex, Ms Mulholland confirmed she will keep members updated as things progress.
- Expressions of interest will soon be sought for the Town and Village Renewal applications process for 2022 and groups are encouraged to engage with Community Section as early as possible in this regard.

The following queries were raised by members:-

- Inistioge TVR scheme – Ms Mulholland confirmed that an application for Phase 2 of this project will be submitted for funding in 2022. It was noted that higher marks will be given to areas who have not received funding previously.
- Criteria for 2022 Applications – Ms Mulholland advised that any changes to criteria is not expected to be significant, but may include more emphasis on outdoor facilities and economic benefit, similar to 2021.

(f) Monthly Greenway Update

Update report was circulated to members and noted.

Ms Mulholland drew members attention to open evening meetings in relation to links to Slieverue and Glenmore taking place this week to inform the public of proposed route options, submissions on which will be taken until 31st March, full details available on the project website.

3) Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District members for transaction of such meeting.

There were no items for discussion

4) Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting

There were no items for discussion

5) Notices of Motion

There were no items for discussion

6) Correspondence

There were no items for discussion

7) Any Other Business

Cllr Cullen referred to the war in Ukraine and took the opportunity to acknowledge all of the ongoing community efforts across the area in support of the people of Ukraine, including fund raising, events and collection of essential supplies. She said that Ireland will receive many refugees and had no doubt that Kilkenny will play its part and on behalf of the members and the District, she wished to offer solidarity and pledged support to communities in helping those seeking refuge in Ireland. She asked if information on all the supports available to people could be circulated for distribution.

Ms Mulholland also acknowledged the unbelievable show of support in Kilkenny, which is nowhere more visible than in the Housing Department. She stated that a significant number of Ukrainian refugees have already arrived in Kilkenny and the Housing Department are working with the various Government agencies to secure accommodation services and the financial supports they need. She said if people have any queries in this regard, they should contact the Housing Department so they may be directed to the relevant agencies for assistance.

It was noted that the single point of contact for all refugees entering Ireland is the International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) and anyone wishing to pledge accommodation can register a property through the Red Cross at registerofpledges.redcross.ie.

Cllr Doyle thanked all for attending. This concluded the business of the meeting at 17.30.

Chairperson: Cllr Michael Doyle

Date: 6/5/22