

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

Laytown-Bettystown Municipal District

10.00a.m, 06th February 2025, Duleek Civic Offices

Cathaoirleach, **Councillor Paddy Meade** presided.

Councillors Present: Geraldine Keogan, Carol Lennon, Maria White & Sharon Tolan

Councillors Present via Zoom: Stephen McKee, Wayne Harding

Apologies/Absent:

Officials in Attendance:

Director of Service: Fiona Lawless

Executive Engineer: Paul Tumelty

Meetings Administrator: Francis Regan

Assistant Staff Officer: Stephen Carey

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting of 16th January 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16th January 2025 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Geraldine Keogan** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**.

2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were none

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of Thomas Moffett, Monaghan.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Linda Nelson Murray and re-election of Senator Sharon Keogan to the Seanad
- Evan Ferguson on his recent move to West Ham Utd
- Annie Hoey on recently leaving the Seanad

4.0 Statutory Business

4.1 Heritage

To seek/nominate Two Elected Members to become members of the proposed Town Team for the Duleek Heritage Led Regeneration Plan

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The members elected to 'Duleek Heritage Led Regeneration' on the proposal of **Councillor Carol Lennon** and **Councillor Sharon Tolan** include **Councillor Paddy Meade, Maria White, Geraldine Keogan** and **Stephen McKee**. Whilst the proposal was for two Members, it was agreed that four names could be nominated. Pat Shore thanked the members for their nomination and mentioned how he will be back in contact soon to start the process.

4.2 Transportation

4.2.1 To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Laytown- Bettystown Municipal District.

The report circulated in advance was noted and the following raised:

- Can we have an update on the maintenance for the Duleek park?
- Can the road marking on the junction next to the Duleek Graveyard be painted again?
- Expressed the need to make the Southgate roundabout more aesthetically pleasing
- Update on all the fallen trees in MD because of the recent storm
- Can we have the road sweeper schedule?

The Executive Engineer noted the above and assured members that GSS team are clearing trees in the priority of danger.

4.2.2 To present the Schedule of Municipal District Works, for Transport, in Laytown-Bettystown MD

Caroline Corrigan, Executive Engineer for Transport gave a presentation on the 2025 Schedule of Municipal District Works Laytown & Bettystown, for Transport and answered questions from all members as detailed below.

- The new average speed average camera, why the N2? Julianstown is in desperate need traffic calming measure as speeding is the real issue? – *Where such cameras are located is the decision of the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). For these cameras to work it must be on a straight road with a minimum distance between cameras with no bye roads or shortcuts. The new cameras will be data led for future proofing new locations.*
- Are the contactors happy to use the warm mix? Are they invested in the circular economy? – *Yes, very much so. Irish Asphalt Association and Kilsaran are driving sustainability by signing up to Environmental Products Declarations. Presently, Meath County Council would have the most sustainable roads in the country.*
- The Laytown maintenance depot is situated in a conservation area. Can this be relocated? – *Our transport section would like to move to a larger depot. The present depot is owned by Uisce Éireann. Presently this MD does not have the land to relocate the depot.*

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- Can we get a percentage break down of the allocation matrix and is it fair? *Yes, it will be fairly allocated.*
- Can we have a list of 'Community Involvement Scheme' (CIS) and the 'Local Improvement Scheme' (LIS)? *Yes, there are 26 'LIS' scheme presently. The department identifies and directly funds the schemes. Funding never matches the amounts of applications received, however the additional 15% will make an impact. Each MD is getting its fair share of funding based on its need. CIS is a work in progress and completed by priority and need rather than time.*
- The CIS at L16042 is not complete, can this be prioritized? *Yes this will be investigated further.*
- Can the Rosnaree/Beamore junction be placed on this year's schedule of works? *This will be explored.*

The above statutory process was confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Carol Lennon**

4.3 Housing

4.3.1 To present the Schedule of Municipal District Works for Housing for Laytown-Bettystown MD

Corrina Elder, Executive Engineer for Housing gave a presentation on the 2025 Schedule of Municipal District Works, for Housing and answered questions from all members as detailed below.

- Is there a grant to retrofit and is there a policy on the external finish of the house where maintenance work done? i.e. exterior plaster often shows stains – *Yes funding is provided for retrofitting in the maintenance programme. All external finishes to houses will be in keeping with the area.*
- When will the road and footpath be finished in Alverno estate following its refurbishment? *It is anticipated that the works will be completed this year.*
- What is the policy on fireplaces being removed or covered up, especially after our recent electricity outages? *This is Government policy therefore this will continue.*
- Some heat pumps in Grangegeeth do not appear to be working, can other systems be explored? *The pumps will be investigated. Only air to water heat pumps will be used in the future.*

The above statutory process was confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Carol Lennon**

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4.4 Corporate Affairs & Governance

- 4.4.1** To note the Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Laytown-Bettystown Municipal District

This was noted.

5.0 Notice of Questions

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Carol Lennon

"What are the provisions in place for staff & visitor parking at the library situated in Bettystown Village?"

Response:

Staff and visitors using the new East Meath Civic Centre for car parking will use the existing car parking facilities as per the approved Part 8 Planning process 98/20001, dated 2020. As part of the planning process a Transport Assessment Report was compiled for the project and assessed the impact that this development would have on the road network and parking in the town, this report was submitted with the Part 8 application for the building. In the report it recommended that no additional parking was required, that the existing parking in the town was deemed satisfactory to service the building. In conjunction with the public accessing the library on foot, utilising public transport and cycling, the traffic generated by this development is a moderate increase in traffic engineering terms and will not adversely impact the operation of the wider road network. There are 12no already existing parking spaces adjacent to the development, the disable parking bay was improved to meet current regulations and the existing EV charging bay was re-located. These parking bays will allow for short stay visitors using the library and any other residual parking demand is expected to be generated from linked trips to Bettystown town centre and these linked trips will be served by existing parking facilities within the town centre. In addition, a number of bicycle stands were included in the development. Public transport will also allow users access the library with local bus stops serving bus routes to and from Drogheda, Mornington, Donacarney and Laytown

Councillor Carol Lennon was not satisfied with the response and asked that the 'Meeting Administrator' seek further clarify on the following:

- At the time of this assessment report was it envisaged that the beach parking would be restricted to spaces only for blue badge holders, the aged, and construction workers or was it compiled pre closure?
- Will there be a time limit on the "short stay" and if so how will the duration of ones stay be enforced?
- How many staff are to be employed in the new build?

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5.2 Submitted by Councillor Maria White

“Is there a plan to cut the hedging on the Coast Road between Laytown and Bettystown this year as this has not been done in a few years and path accessibility in the summer has been an issue and will be again if unattended.”

Response:

The MD will engage with the relevant landowners prior to the season of growth and request that they maintain their boundary hedge so as to not cause obstruction to members of the public.

Cllr Maria White asked, ‘what if the landowner fails to cut the growth’? Paul Tumelty replied and said his team would cut it and then charge the landowner.

6.0 Notice of Motions

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Carol Lennon

“I call on Meath County Council to publish a comprehensive map, showing the parking spaces that are in the power and/or control of Meath County Council, outlining clearly the location of blue badge spaces and e-charge spaces in the Laytown Bettystown LEA.”

Supporting information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded, and considered:

Meath County Council Transportation Section is currently preparing an EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy for the County, which will identify the infrastructure needs across the County. As a follow on from this work, a mapping exercise can be considered in consultation with our GIS Team.

The notice and response were noted on the proposal of **Councillor Carol Lennon** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

Cllr Lennon introduced the motion but would still welcome a map of where the spaces are and which is in the control of the Council. Cllr Meade highlighted the need for a practical solution and asked that land to the west of Laytown be purchased and be used for a 300 plus car park. Cllr Meade also suggested a park and ride system may help from the train station. Cllr Maria White suggested that a ‘think tank’ should be created so for the area and come up with creative solutions and be more proactive.

Fiona Lawless, Director, informed members that Irish Rail need to take more responsibility also and asked members that if they knew of land that was for sale to contact her directly.

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6.2 Submitted by Councillor Carol Lennon

"I call on Meath County Council to approve a spend on purchasing and planting a mature tree in the village square to use as a Christmas tree for Bettystown village."

Supporting information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded, and considered:

Executive Engineer, Paul Tumelty, responded at the meeting that further consultation with stakeholders is required in the interim. As this motion is ongoing it was not proposed and seconded.

6.3 Submitted by Councillor Maria White

"I call on Meath County Council to either reinstall the concrete sign that blocked vehicular access to the Special Area of Conservation at Mornington dunes at the Maiden Tower or to initiate the compulsory order purchase process in relation to this section of privately owned land at Mornington dunes."

Supporting information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded, and considered:

The property in Mornington on which the relevant sign was installed is private property. Following Meath County Councils (MCC) placement of the sign last year, Solicitors for the owner communicated that the owner will not permit or tolerate any works being carried out to its lands or any interference of any kind with its lands and so we withdrew the signage and relocated to the entrance to the Mornington Dunes area at Lady's Finger Bridge. We have no plans to reinstall the Signage presently.

The Mornington Dunes are designated as a Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protection Area and the National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) have responsibility for the protection and conservations of these areas. The NPWS and MCC are currently finalising the 'Mornington Dunes Co Meath, Visitor Access and Conservation Management Plan' which deals with access issues onto the Dunes system at Mornington. It is presently with the NPWS' ecological unit for finalisation. MCC will continue to work proactively with the NPWS to protect and conserve this area. MCC has no plans to purchase the said lands.

The notice and response were noted on the proposal of **Councillor Maria White** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

A passionate debate by all members ensued. Members expressed concern that the 'Mornington Dunes Co Meath, Visitor Access and Conservation Management Plan' has taken so long. Members asked that representatives from the National Parks & Wildlife Service attend the March MD meeting to give members an update. Furthermore, it is suggested that signage be placed at the Dunes, warning sports clubs not to train on the Dunes.

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6.4 Submitted by Councillor Maria White

“I call on Meath County Council to complete an assessment as to where pedestrian crossings and other road safety measures are required in the Laytown-Bettystown MD to address ongoing health and safety concerns, particularly in areas of high traffic density and population increase and to develop a plan for delivering the required measures.”

Supporting information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded, and considered:

The elected representatives will be aware that Meath County Council has carried out assessment and review of pedestrian crossings in the Laytown-Bettystown area which has been shared with you previously, reference the “Laytown and Bettystown Walking and Cycling Study” originally published in 2014 and reviewed in 2021. This study has an action plan with ranked priorities identified. Meath County Council are endeavoring to progress these as funding and resources permit.

The notice and response were noted on the proposal of **Councillor Maria White** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**.

Cllr Maria White introduced the motion and asked for further information from the period of 2021 to 2025 and be reported back in an easy-to-read table format. Additionally, Cllr Tolan believed the response to be disingenuous as the pedestrian crossing element is not answered, walking and cycling is different to paths and people have to run across the road to access public transport. Cllr Lennon gave the example of Inse Bay, Eastham Road opposite Tesco of an example of where a pedestrian crossing should be.

Fiona Lawless did remind members that where we would like to have road safety measures, sometimes it just isn't always possible or practical, and we must follow a methodology.

7.0 Correspondence

There were none.

8.0 Any Other Business

There were interventions from Councillors Sharon Tolan, Paddy Meade & Carol Lennon.

Matters raised included:

- Sought an update on the proposed plans for the Tara Road Community facility
- Sought an update on a footpath to Lobinstown school
- Update on Rosnaree junction
- Footpath Mornington Road
- Golf links road

The area engineer said he will respond to the above and the meeting administrator will seek an update on the Tara Road Community facility.

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The meeting concluded at 11.43

Signed:

Cathaoirleach