

***Minutes of the Piltown Municipal District Meeting held on Wednesday,
7th February, 2024 at 10:00am at Ferrybank Library Meeting Room.***

Present: Cllr G. Frisby, Cathaoirleach
Cllrs F. Doherty, P. Dunphy, E. Aylward and T. Breathnach

In attendance: S. McKeown, Director of Services, Stan Cullen, Area Engineer, M. Phelan, Meetings Administrator, U. Kealy, Administrative Officer, Planning, W. Delaney, Executive Engineer, Planning and O. Bannon, Staff Officer

Condolences

At the outset Cllr Frisby, on behalf of the Piltown MD, wished to extend condolences to the Bruton family on the passing of John Bruton, former Taoiseach.

1. **Minutes of Ordinary Statutory Meeting held 10th January, 2024** – proposed by Cllr Dunphy, seconded by Cllr Doherty and agreed.

Matters Arising

S. McKeown referred to the matter raised by Cllr Doherty at the January meeting in relation to an invasive species, namely the Asian Hornet, and he advised members that Ms. Bernadette Moloney, Biodiversity Officer, will attend the March meeting to provide an update on how to deal with its possible threat and she will also make a presentation to members on the preparation of the Biodiversity Plan, seeking their input on same.

2. **Consideration of Reports and Recommendations**

- (a) ***Unfinished Housing Estates***

Ms. Una Kealy and Mr. William Delaney, Planning Department, were in attendance to provide an update to members on the taking in charge of unfinished housing estates in the Piltown MD.

It was noted there are currently 29 taking in charge applications for the County, 3 of which are in the Piltown MD and an update was provided as follows:-

- Greenoaks, Ferrybank – engagement with the Developer is ongoing. A schedule of required works has been compiled and is currently with the Developer, his proposals are awaited. Cllr Frisby raised concern about flooding issues within this estate. S. Cullen confirmed that the drainage within the estate is fit for purpose but that the surface shape and construction need attention.
- Farmlea, Ferrybank – there is a bond in place, a schedule of works will be prepared for completion and agreed with the Developer. However, right-of-way / wayleave issues need to be addressed before works progress.
- Fiodh Mór – it was noted there is no bond in place, the developer is no longer operating but it is hoped to engage with them to progress the taking in charge process.

The following was also raised and discussed:-

- Timeframe for completion of works – it is hoped that all three applications can be progressed in the current year, however progress can be slow.
- Efforts are always made to come to an agreement with the Developers in each case, where they will complete the required works and the bond is then released back to them, however in some cases there may be no bond available.
- Ms Kealy and Mr. Delaney were requested to attend a further meeting of Piltown Municipal District later in the year to update on progress.

Cllr Frisby thanked Ms Kealy and Mr Delaney for their update and they withdrew from the meeting.

- (b) ***Monthly Roadworks Update***

S. Cullen, Area Engineer, circulated report outlining works being progressed and completed over the period since the last meeting, including updates on major schemes – N24 Waterford to Cahir, N24 Tower Road Improvements, N24 Carrick Road, Belmont Link Road and Greenway Connectivity.

The following items were raised and discussed:-

- Works at the Slieverue Roundabout N29/R711 – S. Cullen advised that a road opening licence had been granted for works at this location in order to facilitate the movement of wind turbines through the roundabout and he outlined the route taken, from the N29, to N25 and on to the M9. It was noted that these manoeuvres take place at night time, causing minimal disruption. It was also noted that Belview Port has become the main hub to serve the growing offshore wind energy industry, which is a welcome development for the local economy.
- Mill Road Footpath, Mullinavat – S. Cullen advised Cllr Aylward that there is no update on this scheme at present, details of the allocations for 2024 are awaited.
- Road Safety Audit N24 Tower Road – S. Cullen confirmed to Cllr Dunphy that the road safety audit is an independent process, looking at all aspects of road safety and what issues may arise for road users and he advised that the Project Liaison Officer is aware of some issues which have been raised.
- Greenway Carpark, Ferrybank – S. Cullen advised Cllr Breathnach that the planning process is expected to commence Q1 or early Q2 2024, depending on whether this will be a Part 8 or Part 10 application.
- North Quays, traffic delays – Cllr Frisby raised concern about traffic delays exiting at Abbey Road onto Fountain Street, due to the closure of the slip lane, which is becoming unsafe and causing long tailbacks heading into Waterford. He asked for this to be highlighted to the Project Team. S. Cullen advised that the slip road is due to reopen shortly, however traffic disruptions and delays are likely to continue as other works commence.

(c) Greenway Update

S. McKeown circulated a report and provided the following update to members.

Mainline Works

- Glas Civil Engineering Ltd commenced works on Lot 5A (c5.5km section from Ferrybank to Curraghmore) in November. Works are progressing to programme and the anticipated contract completion date remains the end of 2024.
- No tender submissions for the provision of Technical Services for a multi-disciplinary engineering consultancy team, to complete all remaining phases of the Greenway, were received before the submission deadline of 17th January. The Project Team are now in discussions with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to agree a path forward to advance the appointment process.
- Legal contracts are now finalised and will be signed shortly to conclude the acquisition of the lands along the abandoned rail corridor from CIE.

Interpretation, Wayfinding & Orientation Plan

- On the 25th January, Fáilte Ireland and The Paul Hogarth Company (TPHC) gave an on-line presentation to the Elected Members of the 4 Municipal Districts through which the Greenway traverses. The presentation outlined the emerging animation themes and the programme of works still to be undertaken. A brief Q & A session was held after the presentation and inputs by those in attendance were noted by TPHC for consideration.

Related Schemes

- **Greenway Link to Glenmore:** Part 8 planning is now in place. A funding application is currently being prepared under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) to advance this project to detail design, land acquisition and construction stage. The funding application will also incorporate the provision of a new Pink Rock Cycle Loop, which would present Greenway users, travelling from the New Ross end, with the option of cycling back on an alternative route along the scenic River Barrow.
- **Greenway Link to Slieverue:** The Feasibility and Route Selection Report are completed. Consultation is ongoing with the TII Structures Section prior to commencing the planning process.
- **Woodstock (Inistioge) to South East Greenway Link:** The Tender Assessment and Recommendation Report for Technical Consultancy Services to identify and progress a route to planning has been approved by TII. The appointment of the successful multi-disciplinary engineering consultancy team will be concluded with week.

S. McKeown responded to queries in relation to timelines and funding for the Greenway Links to Glenmore and Slieverue.

(d) Ferrybank Shopping Centre

It was confirmed that further correspondence had issued to Dunnes Stores regarding engagement on the Retail Strategy and review of the Local Area Plan, but no response has been received to-date. S. McKeown confirmed that there is good communication with Dunnes regarding operational matters and agreed to continue efforts to engage with them on corporate matters.

(e) North Quays SDZ Update

S. McKeown circulated a report, outlining the following update provided by the North Quays Project Team, Waterford City & County Council:

- The overall North Quays project is progressing well. The substructure works for the Sustainable Transport Bridge continue to progress in the River Suir. The Skerchi barge has relocated to the north side of the river to progress the northern cofferdam construction (gridline C). The fabrication of the superstructure is progressing in Belgium with over 10,000 work hours/ month being expended on its fabrication.
- Sheet piling for the South Plaza quay wall (S37) is 90% complete
- All piling for the Transport Hub building and platforms is now substantially complete. The remaining foundations are nearing completion, and the superstructure is also progressing (rising walls, slabs, supporting walls, etc.). Irish Rail is continuing to install a new rail track to the south of the existing rail track, see below.
- The road and access infrastructure is progressing well; works are ongoing to various bridge structures. Traffic management measures continue to be in place along Dock Road to install sewer and surface water network services. Works have extended to Abbey Road / Fountain Street junction and required the commencement of Phase 4 traffic management measures in early January.
- The two pump station contracts are c. 90% complete, but the programme has been extended into Q2 2024.
- ROD Consulting Engineers were appointed project engineers for the Flood Defence West Scheme and is progressing the scheme's scope and programme which will be constructed to the west of Plunkett Station.

S. Cullen responded to queries in relation to traffic delays, which he stated are inevitable but that the project team are aware of issues as they arise and will try to minimise disruption.

(f) Curraghmartin Solar Community Benefit Fund Committee Nominations

S. McKeown advised that EDF Renewables, who own the Curraghmartin Solar Farm, have retained the services of SECAD Partnership CLG, Middleton, Co. Cork who will manage and administer the Curraghmartin Solar Community Benefit Fund. SECAD are now looking for two elected representatives from the Piltown MD to sit on the Community Benefit Fund Committee and formal nominations must be proposed and agreed. He outlined the process for Solar Farms to connect to the grid and noted that they are required to establish a community benefit fund and contribute €2 per MWh produced. It was noted that the Curraghmartin Solar Community Benefit Fund is estimated to generate approximately €10,650 annually, which is to be used for community projects close to the solar farm, in the areas of Carrigeen and Mooncoin. A recent survey was undertaken among local groups and it has been decided that the focus of the Benefit Fund in year 1 will be on youth services. The Terms of Reference for the Committee will be finalised shortly. The proposed membership and structure of the Committee was noted. Cllr Breathnach asked that clarification be sought with regard to areas which qualify for funding, as he understood that applications for funding will also be invited from the Kilmacow area. S. McKeown agreed to seek clarification on this matter.

Cllr Aylward proposed that Cllr Pat Dunphy and Cllr Tomas Breathnach be formally nominated to the Curraghmartin Solar Community Benefit Fund Committee, which was seconded by Cllr Frisby and agreed.

Cllr Aylward stated that while the Fund may be relatively small annually, it will have huge benefits to the local community in the long term.

3. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Order or Resolution of the Municipal District Members for transaction at such meetings

None

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

None

5. Notice of Motion

None

6. Correspondence

M. Phelan advised members that she had been in contact with the Regional Manager, HSE in relation to the proposed visit to the Primary Care Centre, she will revert to members with an update at the next meeting.

7. AOB:

Traffic congestion at Ferrybank Soccer and GAA Clubs – S. Cullen confirmed to Cllr Dunphy that he had met with officials from WCCC with regard to progressing a taking in charge application for Abbeylands. Once KCC has control of this area, it can look at dangerous traffic movements to try to address safety concerns, however it is a very confined site with little room for expansion. Other ways to improve safety will need to be explored in order to prioritise the safety of children. With regard to the request from the Clubs to access the Dunnes Stores car park and sharing of contact details with the Clubs, it was noted that GDPR issues were being worked through at present.

Ballyogreek, Mullinavat – Cllr Dunphy asked if any solution could be provided to prevent lorries using this route. S. Cullen noted the difficulties with erecting signage to prevent HGVs from travelling along this route, stating there was no solution to the issue as yet and that he is cognisant of the issue and finding the right solution.

Greenway, Mount Elliot – S. McKeown confirmed to Cllr Doherty this is Lot 4 of the Greenway.

Clover Centre – S. McKeown advised Cllr Doherty that the transfer of assets to Kilkenny County Council has recently been finalised and the building has been secured by the local Area Office. Funding will be sought under the next call of the ORIS later this year, in order to develop a master plan for the development of the site over the next number of years, which will include engagement with the local community.

N29 Belview Port Road – Cllr Doherty raised concerns over the general condition and appearance of the N29, with litter and damage to roadside margins due to trucks parking etc. S. Cullen advised that funding has been secured under the URDF to improve the junction to the Glanbia facility. He noted lack of parking facilities at the Port, leading to containers being parked in the hard shoulder. Signage restricting parking on the hard shoulder was installed but is largely ignored. He acknowledged the amount of litter present on the Port Road and agreed to liaise with the Environment Section with a view to arranging a litter pick and to look at improving the overall appearance of the road in the current year.

Joint Meetings

M. Phelan advised members that the next joint meeting with Carrick-on-Suir MD will take place on Thursday, 28th March at Town Hall, Carrick-on-Suir. Items for the Agenda were noted, including presentation from Declan Rice, Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Lingaun Valley Tourism.

A date for the joint meeting with Waterford Metropolitan District was also agreed for Wednesday 6th March at 11.30am. This date to be confirmed with WCCC, M. Phelan to revert to members.

Next Meeting

The February meeting of the Piltown MD will take place on Wednesday, 6th March at 10:00am. This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: 

Cathaoirleach

Dated: 6/3/24