

**MINUTES OF THE APRIL MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CASTLECOMER HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021 AT 11.00AM.**

**In the chair:** Cllr Michael McCarthy

**Present:** Cllrs John Brennan, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Michael Delaney, Pat Fitzpatrick and Denis Hynes

**In attendance:** Mr Martin Prendiville, Mr Philippe Beubry, Ms Anne Maria Walsh, Ms Martina Comerford, Ms Nancy Byrne and Mr Steve Coverdale

***Cllr Michael McCarthy in his opening address:***

- Welcomed the awarding of the contract for the provision of the Pedestrian Foot Bridge in Castlecomer.
- Welcomed the Health Checks that are taking place at present time in four towns in the Castlecomer Municipal District Area.
- Welcomed the awarding of funding under the Active Travel Scheme and said that a lot of projects in our Area would benefit. Cllr McCarthy thanked Mr Phillippe Beubry, Ms Nancy Byrne and the Castlecomer Area Office Staff for the work that they had put in in preparing the application for this funding and also the Senior Roads Engineer.

Members welcomed the announcements as detailed by Cllr McCarthy.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of :**

**(a) March Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed.

**2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations:**

**(a) Broadband - Overview on additional Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)**

Mr Steve Coverdale delivered a presentation to members which provided an overview on BCPs and how they fit into the NBP. Mr Coverdale confirmed that as an interim measure BCPs were to be set up in communities that would be at the latter end of the NBP rollout and there will be an ongoing broadband service cost for each BCP until fibre broadband is delivered in the area split between DRCD and the Local Authority. Mr Coverdale advised that Kilkenny County Council had made an application for 10 sites which was reduced to 6 sites after the OpenEir 300k project and the Church withdrawing schools for public connection. Mr Coverdale advised members that there would be a cost to the Council for the provision of additional BCPs and went through costs involved.

Cllr John Brennan and Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick raised high speed broadband delivery for Castlecomer. Mr Martin Prendiville confirmed that they are continuing to engage with Cellnex. He advised that Cellnex are seeking a new location for the provision of infrastructure in Castlecomer and 'Broadband' will remain as an item on the Municipal District's agenda.

Members raised the following queries / observations:

- Members thanked Mr Martin Prendiville and Mr Steve Coverdale for their work completed to date.
- Clarification sought on how to connect to broadband at BCPs and a request that contact details for the 6 locations would be provided to members.
- The success of the BCP to facilitate remote learning and remote working at Muckalee was acknowledged by Cllr Fitzpatrick.

**(b) Outdoor Seating and Accessories Grant Scheme for Tourism and Hospitality Businesses**

Ms Martina Comerford delivered a presentation to members on the Outdoor Seating and Accessories Grant Scheme for Tourism and Hospitality Businesses which she advised was launched by Fáilte Ireland on 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2021.

Ms Comerford confirmed:

- That the aim of the scheme is to provide support to individual independent hospitality and tourism businesses towards the cost of equipment to provide additional outdoor seating and facilitate these businesses to increase their outdoor dining capacity.
- The Scheme will be funded by Fáilte Ireland and administered by Kilkenny Council Council.
- Applicants can apply for a grant of up to €4,000.
- Details of eligible expenditure.
- Key dates for the Scheme.
- All applicants will be required to comply with planning codes, legislative requirements and other compliance requirements.
- Section 254 licence fee for 2021 is being waived.
- Grant only available to existing businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector where food is sold for consumption on the premises.
- Details of the Scheme are available on the Council's website and Ms Martina Comerford is the key contact.

Members raised the following queries / observations:

- Ms Martina Comerford was thanked for the comprehensive and informative presentation provided and also for her presentation prepared for the business community.
- Clarification sought on what businesses are eligible for inclusion under the Scheme.
- Time frame for Section 254 licence and planning permission.
- Clarification sought on width of footpath required to facilitate outdoor seating.

Ms Martina Comerford and Mr Philippe Beubry dealt with members queries.

**(c) Application for funding under Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works**

Details of a funding application under Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works which includes schemes with a total value of €200,000 per Municipal District was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Mr Philippe Beubry advised that this was a new fund available from the Department of Transport; works included under the application were distributed across the Municipal District and comprised of works that have become necessary due to the effect of climate change.

Members raised the following queries/ observations:

- Members welcomed the proposed works and acknowledged the equity in distribution of schemes.

**(d) Active Travel Funding Allocation**

A report was circulated to members in advance of the meeting which outlined details of works included under the Active Travel Funding Allocation for the Castlecomer Municipal District.

Members raised the following queries / observations:

- Works identified for funding were welcomed.
- Cllr John Brennan welcomed the €20,000 allocation to prepare a Mobility Management Plan for Castlecomer and highlighted the need for a review of Traffic Management for the town.
- Cllr John Brennan sought an update on €10,000 allocated for footpaths in Clogh under the 2020 Active Travel Funding allocation and was advised by Mr Philippe Beubry that these works are schedule for completion in the next couple of weeks.

**(e) Road Works - Update**

An update on the Road Works Programme was circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

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

None

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

None

**5. Notices of Motion**

None

**6. Correspondence**

None

**7. Matters arising from minutes**

None

**8. Any other business**

**(a) Grangefertagh and Clonmantagh Church**

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh told the meeting that two of North Kilkenny's most iconic historical landmarks are facing the risk of imminent collapse, Grangefertagh and Clonmantagh Church.

Cllr Cavanagh advised that there has been a dedicated committee established in Clonmantagh attempting to tackle this very issue and they are seeking the relevant funding. Following discussion, Mr Martin Prendiville told councillors that he will raise the issue of Grangefertagh Church with the Office of Public Works and will seek contact with the owners of the Clonmantagh site.

Members agreed that both structures are a very important part of North Kilkenny's heritage.

**(b) Destination Greening – #KILKENNYINGREEN**

Cllr Michael McCarthy highlighted the positive impact of buildings in our city and towns lit up in green to celebrate St Patrick's Day. It was proposed by Cllr Michael McCarthy, seconded by Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh that this would become an annual event. Cllr Michael Delaney asked that attention would also be given to the greening of buildings in our villages.

**(c) Date for Annual Meeting**

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Castlecomer Municipal District would take place on the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2021 prior to the Municipal District's June Ordinary Meeting. Mr Martin Prendiville confirmed that HSE & Government Guidelines will determine the location of these meetings.

**(d) Illegal Dumping**

(i) Cllr Michael Delaney raised the issue of illegal dumping at Ballymartin Cross and requested the provision of new signage to tackle the issue.

(ii) Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh raised the issue of 'Naming and Shaming' as a deterrent to tackle illegal dumping and advised that she will include a Notice of Motion on the agenda of the May Municipal District Meeting on this issue.

(iii) Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick requested that clarification be obtained from the Environment Section on conviction obtained by Kilkenny County Council in respect of illegal dumping in Ballyragget.

**(e) Footpath - Paulstown**

Cllr Denis Hynes raised concern for the safety of pedestrians on an approximate 150m stretch between footpaths in Paulstown. Mr Philippe Beubry confirmed that these works will be considered for funding.

**(f) Footpath - Coolbawn**

Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick requested that an extension of footpaths at Coolbawn be included for funding in 2022. Mr Philippe Beubry confirmed that these works will be considered for funding.

**(g) Street Cleaning – Castlecomer**

The excellent work completed by Mr Paul Butler, Kilkenny County Council and the Castlecomer Tidy Town's committee was acknowledged.

This concluded the business of the meeting

Chairperson: MOO R<sup>o</sup> Gately

Date: 17/5/2021

