Minutes of Meeting of Carrick on Shannon Municipal District

Held in Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae, Carrick on Shannon, Co Leitrim

On Tuesday 12th January 2016 at 3.30pm

Members Present:  Councillor Sinead Guckian  
                   Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire  
                   Councillor Des Guckian  
                   Councillor Séadhna Logan  
                   Councillor Sean McGowan  
                   Councillor Enda Stenson

Officials Present:  Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning, Environment & Transportation  
                   Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing & Community, Corporate Services, Culture & Emergency Services  
                   Emma Clancy, Senior Executive Librarian  
                   Michael Flynn, District Engineer  
                   Mr Shay O’ Connor, Senior Engineer, Roads  
                   Joan Lowe, Economic Development, Planning, Environment & Transportation

CMD16/01  12/01/16  Minutes of 7th December 2015 Carrick on Shannon Municipal District Meeting

Councillor Des Guckian stated that due care was not taken in compiling the draft minutes and that there were a number of items that needed to be corrected. On Page 1 - Minute CMD15/164 the wrong road number was given. The correct road number is L1601 and the minutes are to be amended accordingly.  
Councillor Des Guckian stated that on Page 6 – Minute CMD 15/176 his comments in relation to the motion on the walking route to Sheemore wasn’t recorded. He stated that when he makes a contribution at a meeting that he wanted it recorded. Councillor Sinead Guckian stated that minutes were not meant to be a verbatim record but rather a record of decisions made. The Director of Services indicated that the minute of a meeting was a record of all resolutions passed at the meeting and would include items of a material consequence to the decision made.

In response to a query raised by Councillor Des Guckian regarding the potential to record Municipal meetings Councillor Sinead Guckian asked the executive to reconsider the potential for webcasting the Carrick on Shannon Municipal meetings.

Proposed by Councillor Enda Stenson, Seconded by Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED;

“That the Minutes of Carrick on Shannon Municipal District Meeting held in Aras an Chontae, Carrick on Shannon, Co Leitrim on Monday 12th January 2016 be adopted as amended”.

Ms Emma Clancy, distributed a handout to the members and gave a brief overview of the Leitrim County Library Service including details of the activity and programme highlights from 2015 and also the proposed library service developments for 2016.

Councillor Sinead Guckian thanked Ms Clancy for her presentation. All the other members each complimented Ms Clancy on her presentation.

Councillor Des Guckian raised the issue of the non filling of the County Librarian position for a number of years. Ms Mary Quinn clarified that the post was not sanctioned by Department at the time of the retirement of the former County Librarian in the context of the discussions which were ongoing re shared services. Councillor Des Guckian stated that he didn’t consider that this was acceptable and the situation needed to be reviewed and that he considers shared services a retrograde step. As part of the general discussion Councillor Des Guckian paid tribute to Sean O’ Suilleabhain, retired County Librarian for his work over the years. This was supported by all present.

Discussion took place on relation to the library services sources of income. In response to a query from Councillor Des Guckian as to how much the Department contribute to the service as part of the Local Government Allocation and what was provided in the Budget. Councillor Des Guckian was informed that the members had adopted the 2016 Budget in December and that the library expenditure accounts for in the region of €1.5 million.

Councillor Sinead Guckian asked Emma to pass on the members compliments to the Library staff.

Ms Mary Quinn gave a short briefing on the Draft Polling Scheme 2016 for County Leitrim as distributed with cover note to the members. It was noted that the polling scheme for County Leitrim has not been amended in recent years and the proposed scheme would be a means of tidying up the various changes which have been made over the years. Ms Quinn stated that notice of the intention to prepare a revised Polling Scheme for County Leitrim was to appear in the Leitrim Observer dated 20th January and would indicate that Leitrim County Council would consider submissions on the draft scheme made on or before 24th February 2016. Polling Scheme would be brought back to the Council members after that date for final approval.

Discussion ensued in relation to the location of polling booths and the possibility of community centres being used rather than schools having to be closed for the day. Members were advised that in the Carrick on Shannon Municipal Area of the 13 polling booths 6 were located in schools and 7 in community centres.

The following were considered under Meeting correspondence.
Letter dated 12th November 2015 from the National Transport Authority concerning Bus Éireann Expressway Route 23.

The members expressed their disappointment with the response received particularly relating to Dromod and Rooskey.

Letter dated 22nd December 2015 from The Office of Public Works acknowledging receipt of resolution by the members of Carrick on Shannon Municipal District in relation to the dredging of the River Shannon.

The members noted the response received.

CMD16/05
12/01/16 Sign at junction of L1601 and the bypass at Farnought

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Des Guckian;

"That the large 8ft by 3ft arrowed road sign, at the junction of L1601 and the bypass, at Farnought, mown down by a new car in July, be fully replaced."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"The sign will be replaced as requested."

Councillor Des Guckian noted the reply but stated that he understood from discussions with the Engineers that the sign would be replaced. In response Michael Flynn stated that the reply is as is. Michael Flynn stated that the Council were trying to establish why the sign had not been replaced. Mr Flynn stated that the Council’s role in this regard is to advise the NRA that the sign had been damaged. It is a matter for the NRA to replace the sign in question.

Councillor Des Guckian asked if the Council told the NRA to replace the sign. Councillor Des Guckian asked if it was the view of the Council that the sign was in the way. In response Michael Flynn stated that he assumed that it was and this may represent the reason why the NRA has not replaced the sign. Michael Flynn agreed to clarify same with the NRA. Councillor Des Guckian disagreed and stated that he regularly uses this exit and the sign never blocked his view. Councillor Des Guckian stated that the Council staff probably used an angle grinder to cut the remaining steel uprights. Councillor Des Guckian stated that “to me that’s an act of vandalism”.

Councillor Sinead Guckian asked Councillor Des Guckian not to use words like vandalism and to withdraw same. Michael Flynn stated that this was not an act of vandalism and asked Councillor Des Guckian to withdraw this statement, who refused to do so. Michael Flynn explained that when the Council encounter such a sign they make them safe by cutting them at the base, until such time as the NRA address the matter.

Councillor Enda Stenson stated that this matter had gone too far. You are accusing Council staff of vandalism. Councillor Stenson added that the Council staff always do their best for every elected member and in no way can he tolerate anyone who refers to them as vandals or anything of the kind.

Councillor Sinead Guckian asked Councillor Des Guckian to have regard to the Standing Orders in his conduct towards the Cathaoirleach and to all present.
Shay O’Connor again clarified the role of Leitrim County Council in this regard. The Director of Services confirmed that such decisions to remove damaged poles are carried out for health and safety reasons and the District Engineer is entitled to do so.

CMD16/06
12/01/16  Flooding during Hurricane Desmond

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Des Guckian;

"That the engineering staff identify all places along roads where flooding built up during Hurricane Desmond and that steps be taken to make sure that these floods cannot recur."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"The flood levels have been recorded on each section of road that flooded during recent storms. An application for funding to undertake improvements will be made to the department."

It was noted that this subject had been discussed at Council meeting on 11 January 2016 and all members had been given information.

CMD16/07
12/01/16  Traffic calming and/or relevant signage on the R299 Drumsna/Kiltoghert road

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sinead Guckian;

"I will ask the Director of Services, Planning & Infrastructure, to investigate the possibility of providing traffic calming and/or relevant signage, on the R299 Drumsna/Kiltoghert road, to address road safety concerns on the road. The volume of traffic has increased considerably on this road and there are high volumes of large vehicles also travelling on this route. Over the years the Council has increased the width of the road to allow two vehicles to pass safely but in doing so, most of the grass margins have been removed and incorporated into the road width, leaving little or no room for pedestrians or persons moving farm animals, to stand in for safety, from passing traffic."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"This is a busy regional road, similar in alignment and width to most other regional roads in the county. If there are particular warning signs requested these will be considered."

Discussions took place in relation to the type of sign required. In response to query relating to current speed limit on this road and whether it could be lowered Shay O’ Connor replied that this matter could be considered as part of the Rural Speed Review later in the year.

CMD16/08
12/01/16  Drainage system at Belmont, Drumsna

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sinead Guckian;

"I will ask the South Leitrim Area Engineer to install an additional drain gulley, into the existing public drainage system, at Belmont Drumsna. The installation of this additional gulley was previously agreed, as water lodges along the road causing flooding adjacent to Duignan’s and O Dowd’s houses in Belmont. The footpath in this area has also been damaged and eroded due to the ongoing flooding and it requires immediate attention and repair too."
Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"The drainage layout at this location will be examined and additional gully provided as necessary."

Councillor Sinead Guckian asked that this item get back on the work programme.

CMD16/09
12/01/16  Flooding related works - Central car parks in Carrick on Shannon

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Finola Armstrong-McGuire;

"Carrick on Shannon town centre was hugely impacted negatively by recent high waters. The core problem was that parking of cars was next to impossible. Customers were circling the town often two and three times to achieve or not a parking spot. We must improve access to our Free Car Spaces. The road along by Cryans Hotel, behind The Landmark Hotel, from the N4 to the Bush Hotel Car Park must be attended to and raised sufficiently. Together with this, the car parks always open to public by both The Landmark and Bush Hotels must be raised. Business in Carrick will only continue successfully if this is done."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"The flooding of the central car parks was extensive during the recent storms. Leitrim County Council will be investigating the possibility of raising the roads in this area above flood level in the coming months. Once our investigations are complete we will be seeking funding from Government to carry out the work."

Discussions took place in relation to this item. It was felt that the Council need to help the Bush Hotel and Landmark Hotel with works required to their car parks as a result of the flooding. Although private property these car parks are available to the public for car parking purposes and are essential to the well being of the centre of the town.
It was noted that the Council would be restricted in what they could do as funding would only be available for works to public infrastructure.

CMD16/10
12/01/16  The National Revaluation Programme for County Leitrim

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Finola Armstrong-McGuire;

"I request Leitrim County Council to send out a message to those with Rateable Properties in County Leitrim, both landlords and tenants, that they can access help in filling out forms recently received from valuation office."

Report by Senior Executive Officer, Planning, Community and Economic Development
"The responsibility for The National Revaluation Programme for County Leitrim rests solely with the Valuation Office.
Leitrim County Council have no responsibility for same.
On 23rd November 2015 each rated occupier in the County was issued with documentation from the Valuation Office which included the Valuation Office Property Number and PIN Code for their property.
As part of this communication, all Leitrim rated occupiers were issued with An Explanatory Guide and FAQ on the Revaluation to assist them in completing the Revaluation Information Form which can be done either online or by post.
In addition all Leitrim rated occupiers were also advised of the Revaluation Helpline Contact details if they had any queries relating to the completion of the Revaluation Information Form."
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire stated that there was a very short turnaround time from receipt of correspondence to deadline for return of completed form and it would have been helpful if there had been someone in the local council office who could have helped ratepayers. Joseph Gilhooly stated that Leitrim County Council had no function in the revaluation process and wouldn’t be in a position to advise on the matter.

CMD16/11
12/01/16  Repairs to road into Leitrim Gaels Community field

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Enda Stenson;

"The road into Leitrim Gaels Community field, which is widely used, as it’s the only Community field in our area is badly in need of repair and widening mid way in. May I ask, could we look at the possibility of carrying some works here in 2016 and more in future years."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"The road can be considered for inclusion in the roads programme if funding is provided in the relevant works programme."

Councillor Enda Stenson stated he was happy with reply.

CMD16/12
12/01/16  Accommodation of displaced refugees in County Leitrim

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Enda Stenson;

"In light of recent reports that, refugees are to be sent to Leitrim, may I ask, has any area being ear marked to house the refugees or is it proposed to put them in single houses or in groups or other facilities."

Report by Director of Service, Corporate Services & Housing
"At this point the Council does not have any formal notification or directive regarding accommodation of displaced refugees in the administrative area of County Leitrim."

Discussions took place and it was noted that position is currently as set out in report.

CMD16/13
12/01/16  Review speed limits on section of the Mohill –Drumlish Road

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sean McGowan;

"I will ask the South Leitrim Area Engineer to provide two No. 60km speed signs on the Farnaught side of Patrick Gilroy’s house, Beihy, (Mohill – Drumlish Road) and to have improvements to the sightlines on this stretch of road, included in the 2016 Roadwork’s programme."

Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"It is proposed to review speed limits throughout the county during the coming year. The requested speed limit reduction can be considered as part of this review. Improvements to sightlines will require a suitable source of funding to be identified."
Councillor Sean McGowan stated he was happy with reply but asked that small allocation from 2016 Low Cost safety programme could be used to improve visibility at this location.

**CMD16/14**  
**Flooding problem at the Dromod roundabout at Cloonturk on the Dromod – Rooskey By Pass**

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sean McGowan;

"I will ask the South Leitrim Area Engineer to immediately put in place a programme of works to solve the flooding problem at the Dromod roundabout at Cloonturk on the Dromod- Rooskey By Pass, it would appear that the outlet pipe is blocked in one or two areas at the roundabout, which leads to the road being flooded after heavy rainfall which can be very dangerous for motorists and other road users."

**Report by Senior Engineer, Roads**

"Works are on-going to resolve the problems identified at this location."

It was stated that work taking place on day of meeting at this location and it was hoped that problem will be resolved.

**CMD16/15**  
**Vacant Local Authority Dwellings in Carrick Municipal District**

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Seadhna Logan;

"That all the Councillors are given a detailed breakdown of the number of council houses in the Municipal District that are vacant, including length of time each unit has been vacant and estimated cost of works required and proposed timescales by which vacancies would be filled. If possible, please include the specific details of the Councils role in the proposed housing of refugees in the Carrick on Shannon area."

**Report by Director of Service, Corporate Services & Housing**

"There are a total of 27 No. Vacant Local Authority Dwellings within the Carrick Municipal District at various stages of pre-letting:

6 No. Houses will be ready for occupation in January.
15 No. Included in works programme requiring various levels of repair and energy upgrade. These are receiving a priority focus with a target to return to lettable condition by end of April.
3 No. Houses included in Submission for Funding under Derelict Scheme - awaiting funding approval.
3 other properties are the subject of tenancy issues including turnover and legal enforcement."

Councillor Seadhna Logan stated he was happy with reply. Cllr Sinead Guckian stated that this information be given to all councillors.

**CMD16/16**  
**Maintenance and improvements to drainage**

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Seadhna Logan;

"Given the extent of flooding in the County in recent months, could all the Councillors be given a detailed breakdown of all the drainage works and the cost, undertaken by the Council in 2015, and any drainage works proposed to be undertaken by the Council in 2016."
Report by Senior Engineer, Roads
"This council carry out maintenance and improvements to drainage on our roads throughout the year. The improvements are curtailed to where road schemes are carried out. In 2016 it will be a similar situation and we will improve drainage systems when we carry out a road scheme. We do not have the resources to improve main drainage networks within our towns and villages."

Shay O’ Connor indicated that he had misunderstood motion and would come back with information.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:  
Councillor Sinead Guckian  
Cathaoirleach  
Vincent Dwyer  
Meetings Administrator

Date:  
8th February 2016