

**GRANARD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

**Minutes of Meeting of Granard Municipal District held in Granard Library**

**on Tuesday, 28 November 2023 at 3.30pm**

**CATHAOIRLEACH**: Councillor Turlough McGovern

**MEMBERS PRESENT**: Councillors – Paraic Brady, Garry Murtagh, P.J. Reilly and

Colin Dalton

**IN ATTENDANCE**: Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services

Ms. Linda Higgins, Administrative Officer

Mr. David Coppinger, Senior Executive Engineer

Ms. Linda Beirne, Community Climate Action Officer (part)

**APOLOGIES** Ms Claire McNabola, Administrative Officer

**MEETINGS**

**ADMINISTRATOR**: Ms. Linda Higgins

1. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES – circulated**
2. On the proposal of Councillor P.J. Reilly seconded by Councillor Colin Dalton, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Minutes of Granard Municipal District Meeting held on the 26 September 2023, as circulated.
3. On the proposal of Councillor P.J. Reilly seconded by Councillor Colin Dalton, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Minutes of Granard Municipal District Committee Meeting held on the 26 September 2023, as circulated.
4. On the proposal of Councillor P.J. Reilly seconded by Councillor Colin Dalton, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Minutes of Granard Municipal District Meeting held on the 24 October 2023, as circulated.
5. On the proposal of Councillor P.J. Reilly seconded by Councillor Colin Dalton, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Minutes of Granard Municipal District Committee Meeting held on the 24 October 2023, as circulated.
6. **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

None

1. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

None.

1. **MANAGEMENT REPORT INCORPORATING AREA ENGINEER’S PROGRESS REPORT – circulated**

Barbara Heslin highlighted the following from the Management Report and responded to queries raised by the Elected Members:

* Longford Tourism Christmas card campaign
* Heritage Conservation Grants and Heritage Week
* Knights & Conquests Heritage Centre being shortlisted for the 2023 National Heritage Week Award
* DHLGH National Parks & Wildlife Service Local Biodiversity Action Fund
* Update on Regeneration Projects, including the official opening of Rose Cottage War of Independence Centre by Taoiseach Leo Varadkar
* Housing Capital update, vacant properties, and the rent review currently underway.

David Coppinger detailed the Area Engineer’s Progress Report and responded to queries raised by the Elected Members –

* General Roadworks
* Low Cost Safety Scheme (LCSS)
* Community Involvement Schemes (CIS)
* Drainage
* Climate Action Funding
* Local Improvement Schemes (LIS)
* Commencement of Car Park behind Granard Garda Station
* Storm Debi, clean up afterwards including the removal of unsafe trees
* Staffing

The members commended the community in Ballinalee for preparations made for the successful official opening of Rose Cottage, and expressed thanks to the Council executive and staff for all their help and support. The event was very successful, and it was a credit to all involved in this collaborative effort including An Garda Siochana, Tidy Towns and volunteers. Members were advised the lease will be finalised soon to officially transfer responsibility for the premised and facilitate the opening of the café and interpretative centre by the Community Group. It will be up to the committee to ensure that the project is successful and sustainable.

All involved in the recent Dead of the Night festival held in Longford Town were praised by the members. This event was very well attended and was a huge success.

Aughnacliffe was congratulated on recently winning the national Pride of Place award in the category for towns/villages with a population of 500-1,000. This is a fantastic result for all concerned, and the community was commended on all its hard work and efforts.

Work is well advanced on the France Road CIS. David advised that ten new CIS projects have been forwarded to the Department of Transport for funding in 2024-2025. A further three CIS applications were held back due to funding limitations, but these can be revisited in the future should more funds become available. The Lissameen bridge on the Ballinalee/Edgeworthstown Road and Main Street Ballinalee were discussed, and further updates were provided.

Landowners are again reminded they are responsible for trees on their lands. Cllr. Paraic Brady enquired about the Council’s environmental policy regarding ash trees, and also what if anything could be done regarding the trees along the R198 from Monaduff to Lough Annagh. David advised it was a huge task to trace landowners.

The inclusion of the Smear to Aughnacliffe Road in the winter salting programme was acknowledged. Cllr. Turlough McGovern enquired about car park charging points in the car park at Barrack Lane, Granard. David advised these will be included in the development, with works on the car park to commence shortly.

Members welcomed Joe Gorman back to his assignment in Granard MD. Harry Rogers’ work and dedication to Granard MD was acknowledged, and all present wished him well in his forthcoming retirement.

1. **COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION FUND**

Linda Beirne – Community Climate Action Officer provided the members with a high level overview of the Community Climate Action Fund. Some of the key points covered were:

* €328,000 has been allocated to Co. Longford under the Community Climate Action Fund
* Main Objectives of the Programme:
  + To help contribute to national climate and energy targets
  + Support and empower communities to shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in Longford
  + Support small and large, rural and urban communities to take climate action
  + Direct engagement with communities to promote and assist in the scale up of community climate action regardless of the starting point of the community
  + Community Climate Action Fund
* Framework for the Community Climate Action Programme
* Five Main Themes of the Programme
  + Community Energy
  + Travel
  + Food & Waste
  + Shopping & Recycling
  + Local Climate and Environmental Action

Linda answered any questions raised by the Members.

The Members expressed some concern over the level of funding granted to Longford. Barbara Heslin encouraged the Members to work with their communities to explore options to combine various funding streams including the Community Grant Support Scheme, to be strategic in their plans and deliver sustainable projects in their areas. She also highlighted the important role of the Members in helping communities navigate the various funding opportunities which could be confusing for them.

1. **UPDATES ON THE COMMUNITY GRANT SUPPORT SCHEME FOR 2023 & 2024 AND ON SPECIAL PROJECTS/DISCRETIONARY GRANTS FOR 2023**

Linda Higgins asked for the Members’ assistance in encouraging the last three Community Groups to drawdown their allocated CGSS 2023 grants before the end of November. The Members were advised the CGSS for 2024 will be open from 3 to 31 January 2024 inclusive. Applications will be considered by the Members at a Municipal District meeting in February 2024.

After today’s meeting, Special Projects’ grants approved in September will be paid. Proposals for 2024 can be considered in February 2024.

The members were advised there is an overspend on the sub-service for Town Twinning and, as proposed by Cllr. Paraic Brady and seconded by Cllr. Garry Murtagh, it was agreed to transfer the underspend of €439 on the sub-service for Tidy Towns towards this.

1. **CONSIDERATION OF PART VIII NO. 112 - PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 1 NO. 2 BEDROOM SINGLE STOREY HOUSE, INCLUDING BOUNDARY WALLS/FENCES, CAR KPARKING, ENTRANCES, LANDSCAPING, ON SITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM, CONNECTION TO EXISTING SERVICES AND ASSOCIATED SITE WORKS**

On the proposal of Councillor Garry Murtagh, seconded by Councillor Turlough McGovern, the members unanimously agreed to approve the Part VIII No. 112 application in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)

1. **PROPOSED DATES FOR 2024 MD MEETINGS**

It was agreed to postpone the January 2024 meeting until Tuesday, 20 February 2024. Applications under the Community Grant Support Scheme 2024 and proposals under Special Projects 2024 will be considered then.

It was agreed to hold the May 2024 meeting on Tuesday, 7 May 2024. If the CPG meeting is to be held that day, it is proposed to hold the Granard MD meeting in Longford at 2pm. If the CPG meeting is not scheduled for that day, the Granard MD meeting will be held in Granard at 3:30pm.

Members were advised it is expected the AGM of Granard MD will be held on 25 June 2024.

1. **NOTICE OF MOTIONS, SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS:**

**The following notice of motion was proposed by Councillor Garry Murtagh and seconded by Councillor Turlough McGovern**

1. Calling on Longford County Council to install speed ramps at the entrance to Dring car park. There are a large volume of people using this facility as a camp site and a meeting place. It has been brought to my attention that the car park area is approached at high speeds with there are a lot of children running around enjoying the freedoms of Dring.

**Response**

As this is classified as a private road it may well be possible to install ramps. However as always, funding may be an issue as there is no specific funding for this type of work at Dring. Members were advised it would be a matter for the SPC to consider any change to current policy.

**The following notice of motion was proposed by Councillor Garry Murtagh and seconded by Councillor Paraic Brady**

1. I call on Longford County Council for a Low Cost Safety Scheme at Legga Cross.

**Response**

An application for funding for a Low Cost Scheme at Legga Church Crossroads has been submitted to the Department of Transport as part of the 2024 Funding Application. Longford County Council has been trying for many years to get agreement with the Landowner of the lands at the junction and finally, following a recent change of ownership we managed to get that agreement. A decision on the funding application is expected in March 2024.

**The following notice of motion was proposed by Councillor Turlough McGovern and seconded by Councillor P.J. Reilly**

1. I call on Longford County Council to upgrade footpath on Market Street (from the Barbers shop to Ptb yard entrance) in line with the opposite side recently worked on.

**Response**

Area Staff will examine this path and determine what works if any are required. As always with Footpaths, priority will be given to repairing existing defective paths on a ‘worst first basis’.

**The following notice of motion was proposed by Councillor Turlough McGovern and seconded by Councillor P.J. Reilly**

1. I call on Longford County Council to put in place a plan for the two derelict buildings owed by the Council since 2018 (property on Main Street) and 2022 (property on Market Street) as they are eyesores in the main town and Granard Tidy Towns are hindered by these in progressing with their work.

**Response**

The Housing Section of Longford County Council have engaged the Housing Agency to prepare Feasibility plans / proposals for both sites. They are also looking at the former Hourican’s hotel site in Granard.

They are preparing the Hourican’s Hotel site first and will then follow on with the two noted by Cllr. McGovern.

Cllr. Turlough McGovern asked if the Housing Section could be requested to tidy up and paint the two derelict properties.

**The following notice of motion was proposed by Councillor Turlough McGovern and seconded by Councillor P.J. Reilly**

1. I call on Longford County Council to consider a Safety Awareness plan for outside Convent of Mercy School on N55 ie. put in place pencil bollards as the amount of near miss accidents are at risk of being a serious accident and I want the safety of the children to be the priority in getting this done ASAP.

Councillor McGovern clarified that this Notice of Motion should have referred to the Sacred Heart Primary School. The amendment to the Notice of Motion was unanimously agreed by the Members.

**Response**

The Safe Routes to School programme, managed by the NTA and the Green Schools Programme, specifically looks at this type of issue. The provision of pencil bollards is one of a number of measures provided as part of a detailed delivery plan in response to safety at the fronts of schools. However, the initiatives must come from the relevant school. Should the Sacred Heart P.S. wish to progress these type measures they should be requested to contact the Safe Routes to School, section of An Taisce at[www.greenschoolsireland.org/saferoutestoschool](http://www.greenschoolsireland.org/saferoutestoschool)who will be able to provide them with full details of the application process.

Furthermore, Longford County Council through the Longford Safety Partnership will ask AGS if the Community Policing unit can provide a briefing on road safety to the students in the school.

Longford County Council, Road Design Section, subject to the availability of resources, will liaise with the TII with regard to a review of the N55/R194 layout at this location.

Members asked about safety measures like ‘pencil’ bollards and the cost of same. They were advised Longford Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) will liaise with the school to organise a ‘kids court’ in Q1 2024. Also information was provided on the invitation to submit EOIs under a new fund administered by LCSP.

Cathaoirleach Turlough McGovern thanked everyone for their support in helping to make 2023 such an eventful and successful year for County Longford and Granard MD area. He wished everyone a very Happy Christmas.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Linda Higgins**

**A/Meetings Administrator.**

**Confirmed and adopted at Granard Municipal District Meeting held on the 20 February 2024.**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Cathaoirleach.**