

Minutes of Special Meeting of Tullamore Town Council held in the Town Hall, Tullamore on Thursday 18th June, 2009 at 2pm

PRESENT: Cllr. T McKeigue (Presiding), Cllrs. M. Buckley, S. O'Brien, B. Killeavy, T. McCormack; L. Byrne; D. Harvey.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. Declan Kirrane, Director of Services; Mr. Gabriel Conlon, A/Senior Executive Officer; Mr. P. Devaney, Town Engineer; Mr. A. Murray, Senior Planner; Ms. A. Walsh, Executive Planner, Ms. B. Maher, Executive Planner; Mr. Conor Skehan, CAAS.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. S. Dooley; Cllr. Paddy Rowland.

Mr. Andrew Murray introduced Mr. Conor Skehan from CAAS, the consultants undertaking the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the plan, and asked that the Elected Members earnestly try to make a decision by 2nd July 2009 regarding putting the draft plan on display.

Mr. Conor Skehan of CAAS made a presentation outlining the work done to date. He briefed the Members on the role of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the need to show how the environment is affected by the proposals in the plan. The SEA is mandatory in accordance with legislation and all changes in the plan are assessed for impact. When the plan is implemented, he advised that an SEA statement must accompany the final plan. He outlined some of the issues faced in Tullamore including river water quality but assured the members that the existing plan does not present any major issues. Topics such as flora and fauna are also examined as part of the assessment. The members thanked Mr. Skehan for his presentation.

Cllr. Buckley asked for clarification regarding zoning on flood plains.

Mr. A. Murray pointed out that zoning in these areas would be based on the Tullamore Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study.

Ms. Walsh, Executive Planner, referred the members' attention to the proposed amendments to the draft plan, as circulated to the members and stated that the majority of the proposed amendments were prepared as a result of the recommended mitigation measures included in Section 9 of the Draft Environmental Report and sought to minimise the environmental issues raised therein. Ms. Walsh read through the amendments which were proposed for 5 chapters of the plan: Chapter 1 Introduction and Vision, Chapter 8 Transport, Accessibility and Movement, Chapter 10 Infrastructure and Environment, Chapter 13 Natural Heritage and Chapter 14 Development Standards.

Ms. Walsh stated that if the members were to agree to the proposed amendments, the environmental report would have to be updated to reflect the inclusion of the mitigation measures into the draft plan. She advised that the inclusion of the amendments would result in a strengthened Tullamore Town and Environs Draft Development Plan.

The members commended the policy changes as outlined and in addition, further amendments were suggested by the Members as follows:

- Cllr. T. McKeigue referred to the need for a designated area for buses and also for trucks in the town and that the plan should reflect this.

- Cllr. S. O'Brien referred to the need for easily accessible car parking spaces for people with disabilities which should be of an adequate size.
- Cllr. S. O'Brien suggested that Chapter 8 should include the full list of road names in order to clarify those roads that are illustrated in Map No. 8.1.
- Cllr. T. McKeigue suggested that a policy should be included relating to rain water harvesting.

Cllr. McKeigue suggested that the planners draft the changes as recommended by the members and that these were to be included in the plan once it went on display.

All amendments to the Draft plan as presented by the Executive and requested by the Members were approved.

Cllr. McCormack asked for more time for the new councillors to consider the plan. This was agreed and a further meeting was scheduled for Thursday 25th June 2009 at 3:00pm

The meeting then concluded.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Town Clerk

Date: _____