**MINUTES OF MARCH MONTHLY MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR HELD ON MONDAY 11TH MARCH, 2024 IN BIRR CIVIC OFFICES, WILMER ROAD, BIRR AT 4.30 P.M.**

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| **MEMBERS PRESENT:** | **Cllrs P Ormond, J Carroll, E Dooley,**  **J Clendennen, C Claffey and J Leahy** |
| **IN ATTENDANCE:** | **Ms A Dillon, DOS, Mr J Mitchell, SEE, Carole Broadbank, Joe Ruane & Donal Rogers HSE, & Ms D Molloy, Meetings Administrator** |

1. **Adoption of Minutes of Meeting in Committee held on 12th February, 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr Ormond and seconded by Cllr Carroll the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Birr MD held on the 12th February, 2024 were adopted.

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On the proposal of Cllr Ormond and seconded by Cllr Claffey the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Birr MD held on the 12th February, 2024 were adopted.

1. **Matters Arising from February Meeting.**

There were no matters arising.

1. **Meeting with Carole Broadbank, Chief Officer, Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation, HSE**

The Members had requested a meeting with representatives from the Health Service Executive to discuss the current situation in relation to Respite Services at Birr Community Nursing Unit(CNU). Ms Carole Broadbank, Chief Officer CHO, and her colleagues Mr Joe Ruane and Mr Donal Rogers HSE attended the meeting to address same. They advised the Members that there was no reduction in Respite Services in the Birr area, that the beds that were previously respite beds in the Nursing Unit were now being used as rehabilitation beds, and respite services had been secured in private nursing homes to replace them. They advised that this was in a move to support Tullamore Hospital in the repurposing of beds. The Members thanked the HSE reps for their update and raised the following:

* There is great concern within families and patients that use and depend on the Respite Service in relation to clarity and lack of communication and understanding of the situation. The Members said that they had a number of calls from concerned constituents and that a like for like service was not being provided.
* The Members asked that the issue of staffing levels be clarified and if this was being affected by the change of use of beds.
* The Members asked for a breakdown of the number of people availing of respite services in the area and how long the waiting lists are for inclusion.
* The Members asked if this was a permanent change in services and were advised that it would be reviewed in six months.
* The Members enquired about the overall capacity of Birr CNU, and Ms Broadbank advised that she would send out a report to the Members following the meeting outlining and clarifying all the details that they requested.
* The Members highlighted the lack of communication between the HSE and the Members in relation to this and other issues and it was hoped that the communication issue would be resolved going forward.

**The HSE advised the following:**

* Mr Joe Ruane advised that work on the Primary Care Centre in Birr would commence on March 19th and it was hoped it would be completed late 2025 early 2026. He further advised that there would be 100 workers on site during construction and approx. 75 people employed post construction. The Members welcomed same but noted that there would be a number of empty buildings in town once the Primary Care Centre is complete and they would be anxious that they would be disposed of in a timely manner and not fall into dereliction.
* The Members were advised that there is an MMR vaccine catch up campaign being launched, and they were asked to encourage people to avail of same.
* The issue of the Civic Registrations Office in Tullamore being closed temporarily is a staffing issue and will be reopened as soon as possible.

1. **Roads Programme 2024**

Mr John Mitchell welcomed Mr Niall Hogan EE, BMD to the meeting and advised that Niall had put a lot of work into preparing the report to present to the Members. Mr Hogan proceeded to present the proposed Road Programme for 2024 to the Members. The Members thanked Mr Mitchell and Mr Hogan for all the work carried out in the MD in delivering the 2023 programme and works currently being carried out and raised the following:

* The waiting list for LIS in Birr MD and how the funding will be allocated as the applications received in Birr MD are always greater than the other areas and therefore people have to wait longer to have the work done. Mr Mitchell advised that he would revert to the Members on this and the CIR schemes but that it was hoped this year we would cover 50-60km of road and there are currently 18 scheme on the waiting list in the Birr MD area.
* The Members enquired as to why we seem to be covering longer stretches of road under this Programme as opposed to previous years where there would be more schemes and shorter distances covered. They were advised that there is currently a difficulty securing contractors so it is harder to cover more schemes and deliver the full programme.
* The Members enquired about the criteria that is used when selecting the roads to be covered under the programme and stated disappointment that certain areas were not included.
* The Members further enquired about Energy Companies that are developing facilities on cut away bogs and if there is a way that conditions could be attached to their planning permission to include the reconstruction of road once the development is complete.
* Raised the issue of the funding for reconstruction of peat based roads as opposed to repair and wondered when funding for this work would become available to Birr MD. They stated that this issue was first highlighted by Birr MD and yet no funding is being spent in this area, Mr Mitchell advised that it was hoped that we would secure some of that funding in the near future.
* The Members stated that they would like to see more footpath works being carried out, they were advised that all footpath funding now seems to be allocated under Active Travel Schemes and this is no longer within the remit of the MD.
* The Members raised the issue of water cuts on the road and the importance of them being maintained for drainage purposes. They also raised the issue of cleaning of signage as it was important for tourism promotion in the area, Mr Mitchell advised that this work would be carried out.

The Members requested that we would write to the Dept of Transport to seek increased funding for Local and Regional Roads as they felt that the roads had suffered as a result of recent adverse weather conditions and the funding increases are not in line with inflation.

The Meeting then concluded.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**CATHAOIRLEACH MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR**

**DATE:**