**MINUTES OF NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIRR HELD ON MONDAY 13th NOVEMBER, 2023 IN CHARLEVILLE ROOM, ARAS AN CHONTAE, TULLAMORE AT 4.30 P.M.**

**========================================================**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MEMBERS PRESENT:****APOLOGIES:** | **Cllrs E Dooley, P Ormond, J Carroll****J Clendennen,** **Cllrs C Claffey and J Leahy** |
| **IN ATTENDANCE:** | **Ms A Dillon, DOS, Mr J Mitchell, SEE, Ms Orla Martin Head of Enterprise LEO, Mr M Mahon SE , Climate Action, Environment & Water Services OCC & Ms D Molloy, Meetings Administrator** |

1. **Adoption of Minutes of Meeting in Committee held on 16th October 2023.**

On the proposal of Cllr Carroll and seconded by Cllr Dooley the Minutes of the Meeting in Committee of Birr MD held on 16th October, 2023 were adopted.

1. **Adoption of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 16th October, 2023**

On the proposal of Cllr Ormond and seconded by Cllr Carroll the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Birr MD held 16th October, 2023 were adopted.

1. **Matters Arising from October Meeting.**

There were no matters arising.

1. **Public Lighting**

Mr John Mitchell advised the Members that at this time there are 201 faults with public lighting across the county and 57 of those faults are within Birr MD, 15 of which are due to ESB power issues and 42 that need to be repaired by the Contractor. The Member thanked Mr Mitchell for the information and raised the following:

* The Members felt that the response time for the lights being fixed is too long, particularly in winter, and that a notification should be sent out once the issue has been repaired.
* The Members asked that this would continue to be monitored and in particular lights that are out for a long time and not being addressed.
1. **LEO Presentation – Head of Enterprise Ms. Orla Martin**

Ms Orla Martin, Head of Enterprise, LEO Offaly gave a presentation to the Members in relation to the key objectives of the Local Enterprise Office for 2023 and activities carried out throughout the year. The Members thanked Ms Martin for her very informative report, congratulated the great work carried out and support that is available for businesses to assist them. The Members then raised the following:

* Welcomed the work being carried out in schools promoting entrepreneurship amongst young people.
* Enquired about the sites that have been sold in Ferbane Business Park but have not been built on yet, can this be followed up and ensure that these sites will be utilised, Ms Martin advised that this is being monitored to ensure that all sites will be built upon. The Members also enquired if there were any aspirations to recreate parks similar to Rhode and Ferbane business parks on other parts of the county.
* The Members noted a key objective of 2023 was new industrial sites and enquired if there had been any engagement with Bord Na Mona in relation to repurposing old sites, Ms Martin advised that site opportunities are being sought and discussions have been held with Bord na Mona and separately with IDA. The development of new business parks or serviced sites would require financing.
* The Members enquired about the new pilot scheme to support export and enquired if this was a county wide project and what the timeframe for this will be, they were advised that this is a county wide scheme and that it is an open pilot at present with no finishing date set.
1. **Environment, Climate Action and Rural Water Report**

Mr Mark Mahon, OCC presented a report to the Members in relation to Environment Climate Action and Rural Water. He advised that the draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 is currently on display for public consultation and should be before the Members for adoption before 23rd February, 2024. The Members thanked Mr Mahon for his report and raised the following:

* The Members acknowledged the great work that is being carried out trying to raise awareness about littering but they are still concerned that the amount of fly-tipping and littering is very high. The Members stated that a large amount of the waste was coming from fast food outlets and that the proprietors should have some responsibility for the amount of litter that is created. The Members enquired about convictions and the need to name and shame individuals to act as a deterrent to other people. Mr Mahon advised that he would have to check on the outcome of waste convictions and revert to the Members with this information. The Members welcomed the addition of solar bins in the MD area.
* The Members acknowledged the huge input by volunteers and community groups in carrying out litter picks and collecting rubbish to try and keep their areas tidy.
* The Members raised the issue of the upkeep of burial grounds and if the allocation needs to be increased in the budget for the satisfactory maintenance of same. They outlined the need for OCC to meet with community groups that are looking after burial grounds and that a plan be put in place in relation to upkeep and the biodiversity element of the sites and how this is advertised and communicated to the public. Mr Mahon advised that staff are currently meeting with burial ground committees and also the biodiversity officer would be available to input to the plan. The Members acknowledged the great work being carried out by volunteers in maintaining burial grounds to an excellent standard and cited the new Lawn Cemetery at Clonoghill in Birr as a prime example
* The Members noted that the civic amenity site is not being used to its full potential by the public and enquired if anything could be done to raise awareness of the facility and the services provided there. Mr Mahon advised that he would discuss this matter with the Awareness Officer in OCC and see what can be done through a campaign, renaming, signage etc. to encourage the public to make full use of the facility
* The Members enquired about the historical landfill sites at Birr, Kilcormac and Ferbane and how long it was envisaged it would be before they could be brought back in to use and what could they be used for. Mr Mahon advised that he did not have the full specifics of this and would revert to the Members at a later date with a response.
* The Members thanked the Environment Section and Birr MD for work that was carried out on a dangerous structure in Shinrone. Mr Mahon advised for clarification that the function of dangerous structures is managed by the Environment Section and Derelict Sites is managed by the Planning Section in OCC
* The Members enquired about the number of GWS that remain in the MD and also welcomed the increase in grants for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems. Mr Mahon advised that he was not sure of the exact number of GWS but would revert to the Members on this.
* The Members noted that Veterinary Services were now shared with Westmeath County Council and enquired if this had resulted in a saving in expenditure and also enquired about the management of the Dog Shelter and how we deal with dogs that are not rehomed.
1. **Correspondence received from Uisce Eireann**

The Members noted a response received from Uisce Eireann following their invitation to them to attend the November meeting of Birr MD. The Members expressed their disappointment that their invitation was not accepted and asked that the Executive would contact Uisce Eireann and ask that details of staff structure and contact details of staff working within Birr MD would be provided to them.

1. **Any Other Business**

The Members requested that they would meet in a Committee for a short time after the meeting ended to discuss a proposal.

The Meeting then concluded.

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

**CATHAOIRLEACH MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR**

**DATE:**