

NOV MD MEETING

Members Present: Cllrs E Dooley, P Ormond, J Carroll, C Claffey, J Clendennen & J Leahy

In Attendance: Mr Frank Heslin, Mr John Mitchell SEE

1. Adoption of Minutes in Committee meeting held on 14th October, 2019.

On the proposal of Cllr Leahy, seconded by Cllr Clendennen the minutes of the in committee meeting of Birr Municipal District held on 14th October 2019 were adopted.

2. Adoption of Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 14th October, 2019.

On the proposal of Cllr Leahy, seconded by Cllr Clendennen the minutes of the in committee meeting of Birr Municipal District held on 14th October 2019 were adopted.

3. Update on Community Grant Allocations

It was agreed that this update would be deferred until the next MD meeting.

4. Notice of Motion from Cllr John Carroll:

“ Propose that this council review the traffic flow in and around Birr town, investigating the development of new links which were identified as part of the Local Urban Transport Study (LUTS) carried out for the old Town Council.”

The Notice of Motion proposed by Cllr Carroll was seconded by Cllr Ormond.

Cllr Carroll highlighted the traffic delays that were being experienced in the town during peak hours and particularly on Fridays. He stated that a review should include examination of the following:

- Access to the Scurragh housing estate and the impact of the nearby pedestrian crossing and filling stations
- Access from the convent at the River Camcor bridge
- The roundabout at Tesco/ County Arms hotel
- The need for a pedestrian crossing on Emmet Street in the vicinity of the crèche
- Speeding on High Street
- Review of the direction of flow on Moorepark Street
- The impact of the 2 cycle lanes on coach road on private access
- Progressing a Distributor road from the N52 at the County arms to the regional road at the Workhouse

Cllr Clendennen supported the points made by Cllr Carroll and also asked that the following issues be examined:

- Safety, traffic flows and speed be examined throughout the town, in particular concerns about traffic in the vicinity of the funeral home on the Tullamore Road
- Congestion at peak hours at St. Brendan’s Community School
- Parking arrangements on Oxmanstown Mall

- The possibility of providing a footpath connecting Syngfield and Whiteford Cross

Cllr Clendennen stated that he understood that all these issues could not be all addressed overnight but a Masterplan for the delivery over time would be useful.

Cllr Leahy welcomed Cllr Carroll's motion and stated that he felt speed was the main issue. He said the issues raised confirmed that Birr was now a thriving town.

Cllr Ormond said that Birr was now in some ways a victim of its own success with increased number of visitors to the town. He stated the problem of congestion was particularly evident at peak hours and school times on the Tullamore road and Roscrea road. He asked if the number of traffic lights were contributing and wondered if the sequencing of the lights could be tweaked to improve flows.

5. Any other business

Cllr Dooley asked for the support of the other members to raise at the next Planning SPC the issue of the management and decommissioning of wind and solar farms in the county. Cllr Dooley stated he would like to see special provisions put in place to ensure that the end of life arrangements of these energy sources are addressed. The other members agreed that the issue should be raised at the SPC.

Cllr Dooley requested that the members write a letter to the DOS for Planning asking what plans are being put in place for the stewardship of the BNM bogs once production ceases on them. Cllr Dooley said that he is concerned that the bogs may be targeted for dumping or criminal activity.

All the members expressed their disappointment at the recent Rural Regeneration funding announcement and the fact that Offaly received just €700k out of €62m awarded nationally. It was agreed that the members should write to Minister Ring to express their disappointment. Mr Frank Heslin stated that the executive would be requesting feedback separately to determine why OCC's other applications were not successful in receiving funding.

The meeting then concluded.