

**Minutes of the Municipal District of Muinebheag Meeting
held on Wednesday 4 December 2024 at 4.00 pm
in the Meeting Room, McGrath Hall, Muinebheag**

Members present: Cllr Tommy Kinsella (Cathaoirleach)

Cllr Michael Doran
Cllr Daniel Pender

In Attendance

Virtually: Cllr Willie Quinn

Apologies: Cllr Andy Gladney

In attendance: Mr Pádraig O’Gorman, Director of Services, Transport & Infrastructure
Mr Brian O’Donovan, Senior Executive Officer, Housing
Ms Lilly Slye, Senior Executive Engineer, Muinebheag MD
Mr Ray Wickham, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads Department.
Ms Laura Kelly, Community Development Officer, Community.
Ms Margaret Moore, Administrative Officer, Community.
Ms Maria Ahearne, Meeting Administrator, S/Staff Officer

Cllr T Kinsella, Cathaoirleach opened the meeting by wishing Cllr A Gladney well on the news of his ill health. All members and officials wished Cllr A Gladney a speedy recovery.

- 1. Confirmation of Draft Minutes of the Municipal District of Muinebheag Draft Budgetary Plan (General Municipal Allocation) 2025 held on 23 October 2024.**
Resolved on the proposal of Cllr D Pender, seconded by Cllr W Quinn, following a show of hands that the draft minutes of the Municipal District of Muinebheag Draft Budgetary Plan (General Municipal Allocation) 2025 held on 23 October 2024 be confirmed as accurate and taken as read.
All agreed.
- 2. Confirmation of Draft Minutes for Municipal District of Muinebheag Monthly Meeting 23 October 2024.**
Resolved on the proposal of Cllr M Doran seconded by Cllr D Pender, following a show of hands that the draft minutes of the Municipal District of Muinebheag Monthly Meeting held on 23 October 2024 be confirmed as accurate and taken as read.
All agreed
- 3. Matters Arising**
No matters arising.

Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

4. Housing

Mr B O'Donovan referred to the circulated housing report and addressed any questions raised by the members including:

- Increase in income amounts for self-help housing grants,
- Timelines for completion of schemes at Bilboa and Borris.

The members thanked Mr B O'Donovan for the report.

5. Community Department – Muinebheag MD Community Development Update

Ms Laura Kelly gave a presentation on the community development update for the municipal district which under Carlow County Local Economic and Community Plan (2023-2029) HLG 2 our communities are safe, empowered and supported through an active community-led local development approach and participative democracy. Ms Kelly gave an overview of several programmes/initiatives, including Bagenalstown in Bloom, Community Get Togethers, Community Roots Programme, Anti-Litter Project, Loc8Code, Culture Night, IPB Pride of Place, Carlows Pride of Place, Dementia Café, Training Initiatives, International Women's Day and Seasonal Events.

Cllr T Kinsella thanked Ms Kelly for her presentation on behalf of all members adding the benefit of groups getting involved and the importance of renewed succession in groups.

6. Tidy Towns Competition 2024 Update

Ms M Moore circulated the results of the Tidy Towns Competition for the Municipal District of Muinebheag showing an increase in points for all towns/villages under all categories, adding that Carlow County Council looks forward to working alongside all the Municipal District of Muinebheag Tidy Towns groups in 2025 to continue the great work being done across our communities.

7. Section 38 Royal Oak Junction, Muinebheag

Mr R Wickham informed the members that following lengthy discussions regarding the high collision frequency and the possibility of improving safety at the Royal Oak Junction Carlow County Council engaged CST Chartered Consulting Engineers to undertake a study of the area, recommending options to improve safety for all road users at this location. The subsequent report identified 4 potential options with Option 1: Junction Tightening being agreed with the District Engineer at the time. Panther Ecology Ltd were engaged to undertake environmental assessments for this recommended option and have concluded there would be no potential for a significant impact upon the qualifying interests/special conservation interests of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002162) during both the construction and operational phase of the development site, and furthermore that a Natura Impact Statement is not required.

Therefore, Mr R Wickham asked for the members support in exercising the powers conferred on it under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994 as amended by the

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Public Transport Regulation Act, 2009 (Section 46), to commence the process pertaining to this development.

The members expressed a preference for a roundabout as a resolution but understood the financial and longer timelines involved and had further discussions regarding Option 1 as presented for clarity. Mr R Wickham addressed a number of questions, including location for the suggested option for works, timeline of works and parking in the area. The members agreed that the safety of all road users was paramount, and all agreed to proceed to the next step in the Section 38 process for this location with the option as presented.

8. Roads MD Report

Ms Lilly Slye circulated the roads report, and addressed any questions raised by the members including:

- Carpark at Ballyellen, noting that this is tentatively agreed with discussions underway with Active Travel and Kilkenny County Council as works continue regarding the Goresbridge Pedestrian Improvement works.

9. Muinebheag Public Realm Update

Mr P O’Gorman confirmed that Suir Plant Ltd had signed the contract this afternoon to carry out a transformative project in Muinebheag with €500k funding approved for Muinebheag Public Realm under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme. The proposed project aims to revitalise the key urban space at Market Square, enhancing both its aesthetic appeal and functionality for residents, visitors, and businesses alike. As part of the improvements, the Market Square will undergo a redesign to create a more attractive and welcoming environment. This will include, amongst other works, footpath improvements, street furniture, public lighting, new landscaping elements, as well as improvements to the road and road marking. Mr P O’Gorman added that works are due to commence in January 2025 and to finish by March.

10. Correspondence

No correspondence to note.

11. Any Other Business

The members and officials extended their congratulations to Ms Catherine Callaghan and Ms Jennifer Murnane O’Connor on their successful general election campaigns and wished them well.

Cllr T Kinsella, on behalf of all the members wished all and their families a safe and happy Christmas.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 5th February 2025.

This concluded the business of the meeting.