

**MINUTES
COMERAGH DISTRICT MEETING**

**DÚICHE AN CHUMARAIGH
HELD ON 20th SEPTEMBER 2023 in Civic Offices Chamber, Dungarvan**

PRESENT

Cllr. Seanie Power, Cathaoirleach

Cllr. John O’Leary

Cllr. Ger Barron

Cllr. Declan Clune

Cllr. Liam Brazil

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Ivan Grimes, DoS Housing, Community & Emergency Services

Mr. Gabriel Hynes, SE, Roads

Ms. Maria Goff, SEE, Roads

Ms. Dawn Wallace, SEO, Environment.

Ms. Aisling O’Sullivan, SP, Planning.

Mr. Niall Kane, SEE, Environment

Ms. Grainne Kennedy, Climate Action

Ms. Honor Dunphy, Meetings Administrator

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

It was unanimously resolved that this Council extends its sympathy to the families of the late Ava Battye, Peter Queally, Mary Wheldon, Kathleen Dunphy, Mary Callaghan, O’Reilly family from Cashel and the victims of the tragedy in Clonmel.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of District Meeting held 19th July 2023 proposed by Cllr. Clune seconded by Cllr. Barron and agreed by all.

2. MATTERS ARISING

None

3. REPORTS

(a) Planning

Cllr. Barron requested update on taking in charge of Cruachain View in Kilmacthomas.

Cllr. Brazil enquired if there are plans for new housing estates in the Comeragh district, noted that due to investment in water services for Dunhill and if this will benefit applications for the area.

A. O'Sullivan, SEP noted that update on TIC will be dealt with at November meeting. Advised that there have been a few pre planning meetings for bigger developments in the district and hopeful that these will materialise into planning applications in coming months. Improvements in services will benefit the area.

(b) Housing

Cllr. Clune welcomed new developments for Kilmacthomas and Kilmeaden which is positive for the communities, he outlined his concern for the development and growth of Portlaw as numbers of students in the primary school decline and demonstrates rural decline. He requested an indication of the short and medium term outlook to sustain the growth of the village into the future.

Cllr. Brazil requested update on Pinewood Drive in Kilmacomma, queried why Waterford is one of the few Local Authorities that operates Choice Based Letting (CBL) noting need to provide houses to locals. He enquired if the council would be interested in buying land in Lemybrien for development of housing. He questioned how long it would take for tenants to be able to move back into house with fire damage in Kilmacthomas.

Cllr. Power noted need to ringfence housing for locals.

I.Grimes, DoS, outlined that the Housing Delivery Action Plan sets out targets for delivery over the next four years across the county. Delivery will be based on existing housing list and demand for houses and the council plans to exceed the targets as set out in the plan. Will be bringing forward proposals for the district.

Cllr. Clune enquired if Part V included.

I.Grimes, DoS, outlined that it will include a combination of capital Part V and repair and lease units. The issue in Kilmacomma has been raised with Uisce Éireann. He noted that CBL is government policy with Waterford being one of the first Local Authorities to launch the scheme, it has proved very effective in progressing the allocations process and will not be reverting to the previous method of allocation. A number of properties are held in the local areas for medical allocations. Will review site in Lemybrien to determine suitability and will review options for tenants of house in Kilmacthomas.

Cathaoirleach noted that introduction of CBL gives people more of an option and reduces refusals.

I.Grimes, DoS, confirmed that the previous refusal rate has reduced from 40% to 20% with CBL.

(c) Roads

Cllr. O'Leary requested update on N25 at Kildermody where road narrows and people cycling on road have no hard shoulder to use. Also highlighted issues at junctions along N25 and speed of traffic when vehicles need to take right hand turn. Welcomed move by government to reduce speed on the roads, enquiring when changes to speeds will take effect.

Cllr. Barron requested options to address footpath from High Street to St. Annes Terrace in Kilmacthomas as Active Travel have rejected funding the works.

Cllr. Clune outlined that feedback on traffic management for All Together Now was very positive, noted that private contractors cut Japanese Knotweed in preparation for the event and this needs to be avoided next year. Welcomed speed limit changes to assist with reducing fatalities, noting need to reduce speed limit on High Road from 80kph to 60kph and need additional measures of enforcement to be effective. New footpaths in Portlaw welcomed but noted that Uisce Eireann are currently digging them up for works in the area, this work needs to be co-ordinated.

G. Hynes, SE, aware of issue at Kildermody on N25 as hard shoulder phases out as approach from Dungarvan side, discussed with TII, need to move the road slightly to accommodate a hard shoulder. Considering a paving scheme in 2024 and hope to address as part of the scheme. Noted that right turn movements are a high risk manoeuvre, not many options at this location highlighting that the N25 needs

to be reviewed in its entirety to eliminate right turn moves and needs to be included on government programme for transport. Recent government announcement has resulted in commencement of the speed limit review being delayed, will commence on receipt of new guidelines from the Department. Had commenced design for St. Annes Terrace under Active Travel, which was refused, currently no other source of funding, will review what alternative measures can be undertaken. Hedge cutting season has commenced and advised landowners of their responsibility and will be sending out notices to landowners as required. Noted that cutting of Japanese Knotweed is not permitted, signage in place where exists and spraying is the only measure to be taken. Speed limit enforcement is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána and the Road Safety Authority. Noted that where agencies need to carry out works on footpaths and roads that would liaise to ensure works are carried out in advance of any improvement works, regrettably this is unavoidable in some instances. There are conditions set as part of the road opening licence to ensure proper reinstatement of surfaces.

M. Goff, SEE, noted that Knotweed signage had been removed in some locations and have now been replaced.

Cllr. Brazil requested update on Lemybrien and Mahon Bridge, noted that the Carrick road to Lemybrien needs repairing, important to inform landowners to carry out hedge cutting. Outlined that Greenway hedges need cutting.

Cllr. Power requested reducing speed signage on the approach to school in Clonea Power, noted that hedge cutting on rural roads should be permitted all year round to make them safer. Enquired about the responsibility of replacing fencing at junctions where installed by the council and noted that sightlines at the beehive junction needs to be reviewed.

G. Hynes, SE, outlined that the Carrick Road is a bog road and will be undulating, aware of the issues and will review and included in next year's roads work programme. Lemybrien progressing and will be at construction next year, site investigation crew currently on the ground and looking at bridge, which is delaying the works, Uisce Éireann also installing foul sewers which will delay works but are necessary. Procurement end of this year with start in Q2. Agree that local roads need to be cut as advised for safety reasons and integrity of roads. There is provision for road safety and hedges on road network to be cut all year round but also need to adhere to environment reasons. Hedges along Greenway will be cut by roads crew where encroaching on people using the Greenway. Fencing at junctions are landowners responsibility, where removed ditch and replaced with fence depends on the agreement in place and each reviewed on a case by case basis. Junction onto regional road with sightline issue needs to be addressed, low-cost safety can be used to finance the work.

M. Power, SEE will look at Newcastle junction next year, all junctions improved and occur with good will of landowners which is very welcomed.

Cllr. Brazil highlighted issue of deer crossing roads in Comeragh district and need for signage.

Cllr. Barron welcomed progress at Mahon Bridge and would like to see old pump enhanced as part of the works.

G. Hynes, SE, outlined that Mahon carpark due for completion in 4-6 weeks.

(d) Environment

Cllr. O'Leary requested update from Department regarding use of CCTV.

Cllr. Clune enquired about increase in figures for dog control, noted abandoned vehicle as reported on CRM hasn't been removed and is attracting anti-social behaviour.

Cllr. Brazil highlighted that obtaining a permit for controlled burning on the mountain has become very difficult and there is an increasing problem with ticks that are killing livestock on the mountains.

N. Kane, SEE, outlined that legislation to allow for the use of CCTV hasn't yet commenced, will advise on any updates.

D. Wallace, SEO, advised that increase in reports on dog control is because of people being more vigilant due to the level of recent attacks nationally.

N. Kane, SEE, will review issue of abandoned vehicle and outlined that it is the responsibility of National Parks and Wildlife to determine the carrying out of controlled burning.

(e) Arts & Culture

Cllr. Barron welcomed that both libraires in the Comeragh district are doing well and enquired if the open library scheme could be considered for the libraries in Kilmacthomas and Portlaw.

H. Dunphy, MA, outlined that the request will be referred to Jane Cantwell and will revert with response.

4. Climate Action Plan Update

Presentation by Grainne Kennedy

Cllr. O'Leary enquired where in the Comeragh district and social houses and we are low in relation to BER ratings and how long will it take for all council vehicles to be electric.

I.Grimes, DoS, outlined that have carried out an assessment of all hosing stock and identified the poorest performing properties and these are proposed for funding. Funding is not increasing significantly and currently carrying out work on 50-60 houses yearly. There has been an element of resistance to the removal of solid fuel heating to new air to heat systems.

G. Kenndy, SEE, outlined that going forward there is a national requirement for vehicles to be sustainable. Expect by 2026 that all council vehicles will be electric, challenge in changing over larger vehicles and new options coming on stream.

Cllr. Brazil outlined that it will be a challenge for households not to have an open fire.

G. Kennedy, SEE, outlined details of upcoming consultation period on the Climate Action Plan.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

None

6. NOTICE OF MOTION

Extension of Standing Orders for ten minutes proposed by Cllr. Barron, seconded by Cllr. O'Leary and agreed by all.

Motion in the name of Cllr. Declan Clune

"That the elected members of Comeragh District Council request that Waterford City and County Council make available serviced sites in Portlaw, Co. Waterford, from existing local authority landbanks, without delay."

Reg. No. CS/2023/17 (dated 22nd August, 2023)

Proposed by Cllr. Clune, seconded by Cllr. Brazil and agreed by all.

I.Grimes, DoS, outlined that there are government schemes in place to allow for the purchase of serviced sites. Planning team are working on proposals for this scheme and will have a proposal by the end of the year. Will revert to district and plenary meetings with proposals.

7. AOB

Cllr, Barron requested progress update on Kilmacthomas fire station and development of Durrow Station. Cllr. O’Leary outlined need for directional signage in Kilmeaden to Mount Congreve.

G. Hynes, SE, agree and aware of the lack of signage and programme in place to have it delivered. I.Grimes, DoS, outlined with the fire service are currently finalising the Part V111 documentation for the new fire station in Kilmacthomas.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Dated: _____

