

**MINUTES
COMERAGH DISTRICT MEETING**

**DÚICHE AN CHUMARAIGH
HELD ON 17th April 2024 in Conference Room, Dungarvan**

PRESENT

Cllr. Seanie Power, Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Ger Barron

Cllr. Declan Clune

Cllr. Liam Brazil

Cllr. John O’Leary

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

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

Mr. Gabriel Hynes, SE, Roads

Ms. Maria Goff, SEE, Roads

Ms. Dawn Wallace, SEO, Environment

Ms. Aisling O’Sullivan, SEP, Planning

Mr. Conor O’Neill, SEE, Economic Development

Ms. Honor Dunphy, Meetings Administrator

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

It was unanimously resolved that this Council extends its sympathy to the families of the late Louise Dawn, Jimmy King.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of District Meeting held 20th March 2024 proposed by Cllr. O’Leary seconded by Cllr. Barron and agreed by all.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Cllr. Clune enquired as to when workshop on proposed Greenway extension to Blueway will be scheduled and requested update on maps for the zoned local authority lands for zoned sites.

I.Grimes, DoS, noted that will have maps circulated to the members.

C. O’Neill, SEE, will revert with date for workshop.

3. REPORTS

(a) Environment

Cllr. Barron requested removal of clothes bank from the entrance to the Greenway in Kilmacthomas as it is attracting illegal dumping.

Cllr. Brazil acknowledged work in relation to the recent Comeragh clean up and noted the need as a council to do more to tackle illegal dumping across the district, highlighting need to progress the roll out and use of CCTV.

Cllr. O'Leary acknowledged the communities and tidy towns committees involved in clean ups and litter picking.

Cathaoirleach supported the issues raised and the constant reoccurrence of littering.

Cllr. Clune noted it is a minority of people who are littering, community groups are being proactive in tackling it, but it is constantly reoccurring.

D. Wallace, SEO, will review removal of clothes bank by Old Mill. Currently working on the set up on an oversight group for the roll out of CCTV noting it is a complex process and needs to be included in strategy of CCTV for the council. Reviewing CCTV infrastructure and working with IT to progress, noted importance of having evidence of where dumping is occurring and reporting on CRM. Council also has a number of initiatives in relation to anti-dumping and anti-littering to reinforce the message.

Cllr. Power noted current issue of disposal of a dead pony on Coillte lands enquiring how it can be addressed.

D. Wallace, SEO, outlined that when on private land the council doesn't have the power to remove so is the owner's responsibility.

(b) Roads

Cllr. Clune outlined issue with condition of road in Beallough with potholes and significance subsidence on road with repairs needed. Pedestrian crossing in Kilmacthomas leading to the Square needed due to the volume of people using the area. Need to improve safety on roads.

Cllr. O'Leary supported issue in Beallough, road from O'Keeffe's cross to Dunhill needs to be resurfaced and strengthened and requested update on safety funding at Kilmeaden junction. Noted challenges facing the roads department and noted need to improve signage on roads.

Cllr. Brazil noted weather has impacted on the roads in the district, enquired if there are any grants for upgrading of old council depots on the Carrick Road and coast road to improve their presentation. Requested update on Lemybrien and issues with traffic as a result of buses parking there, enquired if there is any temporary measure to stop buses and lorries parking where it is reducing sight lines for roads users. Enquired if there is funding for repairs to Mahon Bridge.

Cllr. Barron supported Cllr. Brazil in relation to the stone depots, noting they are protective structures and unique to Waterford and needed to be protected and preserved.

Cathaoirleach supported Cllr. Brazil in relation to Lemybrien, noted impact of weather on the road network, noted need to continue with site cleaning on roads.

G. Hynes, SE, noted that have had unprecedented rainfall which has impacted on the road network and creation of potholes and damage to roads. Period of dry weather will allow for tackling the issues and repairs being carried out. Would welcome a second allocation from the Department and asked for political support to get additional funds. Currently stretched to maintain our roads and need to address. Agreed that pedestrian crossing in Kilmacthomas is warranted, needs to come under Active Travel as local authority doesn't have funding for this work. NTA have finalised the current year's programme and will included in submission for funding for 2025 from NTA. There is an agreement with Uisce Eireann to carry out road reinstatement to Dunhill which is planned in the coming month noting that time is needed for settlement before doing final surface. Outlined that local authority has a role to play in road safety, annually repaint statutory signs, have reconvened a road safety committee with all agencies to put a strategy in place for the city and county which will launch by year end. Outlined that there are a number of contributing factors to accidents, noting speed which will be looked at as part of the speed limit review. Enforcement is responsibility of An Garda Siochana, local authority is responsible in relation to

improving road design and carry out annual review. Outlined that currently finalising design for Kilmeaden junction with construction to commence June/July with completion in current year. Council depots are protected structures and can talk to conservation officer to seek funding to address and programme repair and protection. Work in progress for traffic calming in Lemybrien, regular monthly meetings to progress project, new scheme will include new bus bay with disability access. Will look at current issue of bus parking in Lemybrien and see if there is an interim solution until the traffic calming is done.

(c) Planning

Cllr. Brazil enquired if there is to be any extension to the development levy charges, supported by Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. O'Leary noted that need to have more detail included in planning applications.

A. O'Sullivan, SEP, outlined that requirement for a planning application is outlined in statutory guidelines, any planning application can be checked through online system or can be viewed in person. Encouraged the public to engage with the process if they have any concern in relation to a planning application, planning staff will assist if they are having any difficulty in interpreting an application. Would welcome extension of the Development Contribution Scheme.

Cllr. Clune noted current planning application by EIR that is being appealed to An Bord Pleanála, enquired how long it will take for decision to be made.

A. O'Sullivan, SEP, noted that An Bord Pleanála endeavour to make decision in 6 months noting that they are not bound on timelines for decisions.

(d) Housing

Cllr. Brazil outlined there is a private house vacant for a number of years enquiring if the council have responsibility to put pressure on owner to get back into use. Requested update on Old Pike building and options for progressing new use for the 3 old Garda Barracks in the district. Outlined issue with Kilmacomma remains and requested update on landbank in Comeragh district.

Cllr. O'Leary enquired if can provide reply to unsuccessful CBL applications within Comeragh area.

Cllr. Clune enquired if zoned maps will include land we are prepared to provide for affordable sites and what is the process for their provision. Outlined that Portlaw is well positioned as a pilot for community CCTV which would assist in deterring issues.

Cllr. Barron welcomed progress on Convent site in Kilmacthomas enquiring when construction will commence.

I.Grimes, DoS, outlined that the government has provided a number of mechanisms to tackle vacant properties and the local authority is committing resources to progress. Old Pike and garda barracks are being reviewed to see how can progress. Supported issue in Kilmacomma, while outside the remit of the local authority will continue to raise with Uisce Eireann. Working on updated maps for landbank and will discuss with new council. Noted that the IT system doesn't facilitate an automated response to unsuccessful CBL applicants and will look at other options for communicating the information. Zoned lands under remit of planning, will discuss with planning DoS. Outlined that there are significant regulatory issues for local authorities in relation to community CCTV before can progress to ensure not in breach of GDPR and need to investigate. Local authority needs to be data manager and project needs to have approval of garda commissioner. Once necessary structures are in place will support proposal for Portlaw as a priority location for pilot. Convent due to go to tender in Q2 and expect to be on site before the end of the year.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

None

5. NOTICE OF MOTION

None

6. AOB

Cllr. O'Leary raised issue in relation to lack of bus shelters, noting Kilmeaden as an example as only provided on one side, needed in Kill area also.

G. Hynes, SE, NTA providing funding for roll out of bus shelters across the county and take on board areas as outlined and will be developing a programme to address.

Cllr. Clune disappointed that World Rally championship is now not to be held in Waterford noting it is a huge loss to the county.

Cllr. Brazil thanked all for their help over the term of the current council and wished all well in the upcoming elections.

Cathaoirleach thanked press for their coverage of all meetings, meetings administrator, district manager and all staff for assistance, both indoor and outdoor staff and acknowledged Cllr. Barron as his last district meeting outlining all he has achieved for both Kilmacthomas and the Comeragh district. Wished all members the best of luck in the upcoming campaign.

Cllr. Barron thanked everyone for their support, being a councillor has been a great experience, made great friends and enjoyed worked in the Comeragh district and have worked as a team for the betterment of the area. All members acknowledged the work of Cllr. Barron with Cllr. O'Leary paying particular comment to his role in the development of the Waterford Greenway and the Comeragh Wilds festival.

I.Grimes, DoS, thanked all elected members for their work, their constructive meetings and wished all the best of luck in upcoming elections. Added that Cllr. Barron is a gentleman to deal with, an exemplary public representative and wished him luck for his retirement.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Dated: _____