

**MINUTES  
COMERAGH DISTRICT MEETING**

**DÚICHE AN CHUMARAIGH  
HELD ON 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2021 BY ZOOM CALL**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr. Seanie Power, Cathaoirleach
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Cllr. Liam Brazil
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Cllr. John O’Leary
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Cllr. Ger Barron
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Cllr. Declan Clune
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Roll call taken for all present at the meeting

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

Mr. G. Hynes, SE, Roads.

Ms. M. Goff, A/SEE Roads.

Mr. R. Moloney, SEO, Environment.

Mr. D. Ó Murchadha, SEE, Planning

Mr. N. Curtin, Chief Fire Officer

Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator

**VOTES OF SYMPATHY:**

It was unanimously resolved that this Council extends its sympathy to the families of the late:

- Liz Whelan, Bunmahon
- Alice Power, Ballyhacket
- Alice Fitzpatrick, Seskin, Carrick on Suir

**VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS:**

It was unanimously resolved that this Council extends its congratulations to Bridie Griffin on the celebration of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:**

Minutes of District Meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 proposed by Cllr. O’Leary, seconded by Cllr. Brazil and agreed by all.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

None

**3. PLANNING**

- (a) **Planning Lists** – noted.

## 4. REPORTS

### (a) Environment

Cllr. O'Leary enquired about feasibility funding to examine the installation of biomass tank for Mount Congreve. Noted report in the local newspapers regarding reprimand to the council by the Data Protection Commission for the use of CCTV cameras for detection of illegal dumping, enquired about the impact of this on the work of the council as there is a need to use CCTV and drones for the detection of illegal dumping.

Cllr. Brazil outlined his disappointment with the report on use of CCTV as illegal dumping is a reoccurring issue for the district and council needs to be able to tackle the problem. Need to investigate how people are disposing of their rubbish and requested that access gates to forests and trails are kept locked. He enquired about the non-collection of additional bags left with bins and what can be done to address this.

Cllr. Clune supported councillors regarding need to use CCTV to tackle illegal dumping enquiring if council is prohibited in using CCTV what other options are open to tackling the issue. Noted legislation is in place where people have to produce evidence to show method of waste disposal and need to follow up on this. Requested update on Tannery site in Portlaw.

Cllr. Power supported previous speakers, noting that it is a small number of people who are dumping and outlined that there is constant issue with dumping of tyres around the area of Lough Mohra. Huge cost implications for the disposal of tyres and need to follow up on ways to tackle the problem.

R. Moloney, SEO outlined that council has proposals for the redevelopment of Mount Congreve, as part of this the environment section is looking at energy efficiency options for the house. Currently developing a feasibility study for the implementation of a biomass facility for the house and adjoining buildings. Funding has been received from the SEAI to carry out the study and will inform part of the overall development of the buildings. Issue of CCTV is reference to an article in the local newspapers in relation to an audit carried out by the Data Protection Commissioner, report highlighted that an audit carried out by Data Commissioner outlined that the council was not in compliance with the use of CCTV and drones for the enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act and Waste Management Act. There is no legal basis under these Acts for the use of CCTV or video imaging to be used in prosecutions and noted there is a review being undertaken of the legislation nationally with a view to making provision for CCTV to be used. Outlined that the Environmental inspectors and other staff are on lookout for illegal dumping and encouraged members of the public to also report any instances. There is a plan to have an online meeting in coming weeks to progress negotiations with the landowners of the Tannery site. Dumping of tyres is an issue and as part of the RMCEI plan inspections are carried out to check on suppliers and producers of tyres to ensure registration with the tyre recycling scheme and working with adjoining local authorities to ensure similar inspections. He outlined that under the waste collection byelaws that all rubbish needs to be secured within the wheelie bin noting that there is now a requirement for all refuse to be weighed, waste should only be presented in bins.

Cllr. Brazil enquired if recycling waste is also weighed and asked if members can do anything to progress the matter in relation to the CCTV and new legislation.

Cllr. Clune asked if there has been success in getting prosecutions on illegal dumping, enquired if there is a timeline on proposed legislation and if a letter needs to issue to the Minister to have it progressed. Enquired if source of recent contamination problem of water in Kill has been resolved.

Cllr. Power complimented outdoor staff in tackling reports of illegal dumping.

R. Moloney, SEO outlined that all waste is weighed, addressing the CCTV issue is within the work programme for the regional offices for waste enforcement and hopes to see new legislation progressed within 2021. Will request SE in Water Services to respond directly in relation to the water issue in Kill.

**(b) Roads**

Cllr. Clune acknowledged thanks to all staff involved in recent works across the district. Noted previously mentioned issue of parking difficulties at Bunmahon at peak times in the summer and asked if any progress made in addressing the issues before the summer season. Requested traffic calming in Kill from the Kilmeaden side of the school.

Cllr. Barron enquired about additional parking in Bonmahon with need to have additional road markings, also noted issues at Crough Wood and Coumshingaun that need addressing.

Cllr. O'Leary enquired if the programme for treatment of roads in relation to bad weather and icy conditions can be extended, particularly around schools and in rural areas where there are difficult spots and noted that councillors could identify in their own areas.

Cllr. Brazil supported Cllr. O'Leary, requested update on commencement of traffic calming in Lemybrien and raised issue with parking at Greenway in Carroll's Cross where users are blocking the emergency access points.

Cllr. Power noted that parking in scenic spots is an issue that needs to be addressed prior to the summer season.

G. Hynes, SE outlined that works carried out in the latter part of 2020 were as a result of the stimulus project funding, hopeful in getting additional money for 2021 to address issues across the country as limited within own budget. Acknowledged parking difficulties in Bunmahon noting similar problems along the coastline and across amenity areas. In long term need investment to provide additional locations for parking at popular beaches and in medium term need to look at additional outside funding to provide this. Review of beach byelaws has commenced which will deal with some parking issues and in short term additional lining and signage will be put in place. Outlined that there is a controlled pedestrian crossing in Kill and will review need for speed survey for the area. Winter maintenance plan is on website, outlining there is 500km of road network salted with priority 1 and 2 routes and these are based on traffic volumes. When resources allow crews are deployed to problem areas and also respond to the needs of the emergency services, it is not feasible to cover all locations. There are locations where grit can be provided for locals to avail of and can provide salt to schools if bunkers are in place. Informed the members that the Lemybrien traffic calming scheme will be on the February agenda noting that funding is in place. Currently proceeding with design, due to Covid no progress in agreeing with the land owners where need to acquire land and these need to be finalised before progressing, hopeful this will be addressed in coming weeks. Anticipates that scheme will be programmed to start in July. Will review issue of parking at Carroll's Cross Greenway entrance.

M. Goff, A/SEE added that district staff do carry out localised gritting where possible during icy weather and noted that need to identify locations for additional car parking in locations in Bunmahon.

Cllr. O'Leary asked if it is possible to add additional vehicles to the gritting programme or is the cost prohibitive.

G. Hynes, SE outlined that additional vehicles are prohibitive with staffing of additional trucks and associated costs for back up maintenance and repair noting that salting of regional and local roads comes from own resources.

**(c) Housing**

Cllr. Clune enquired about the Gleann Ealach capital project in Dunhill and if not progressing to be removed from the list. Enquired about the amount drawn down from the €260k for housing adaptation

grants, requested inclusion of total amount of void units to be added to report along with number of RAS/HAP properties in area, inspections carried out and how many on housing list with Comeragh area as first choice.

Cllr. Brazil welcomed commencement of houses in Kilmacthomas enquiring about timeframe for completion. Noted number of vacant houses across the area and asked if can review options for having them occupied.

Cllr. Barron welcomed commencement of Kilmacthomas Housing scheme and thanked contractor for facilitating temporary entrance to the river walk during the works. Enquired about the qualification criteria for housing list and review of limits to allow people to be included on the housing list.

Cllr. O'Leary noted need to have issue in relation to supply of adequate water supply by Irish Water in Dunhill addressed, need to ensure viability of small towns and villages.

Cllr. Power supported Cllr. O' Leary in relation to Dunhill and welcomed new houses for Kilmacthomas, requested update on rollout of broadband across the district.

I.Grimes, DoS confirmed that presentation on broadband rollout will be scheduled for the February meeting. Outlined that need to keep the proposed Gleann Ealach development on the agenda. Outlined that site clearance works currently being carried out for the housing development in Kilmacthomas, construction timeframe dependent on future restrictions and hope houses ready for occupation in early 2022. Noted that operate a repair and lease scheme that specifically targets vacant houses to enable owners to avail of an interest free loan if enter into agreement with council to provide as social housing. Encouraged members to bring any vacant properties of note to the attention of the vacant homes unit. Outlined that the Minister for Housing indicated that reviewing income limits for social housing. Hope to have information on the drawdown of grants in 2020 later in the month and will circulate. Will amend reports from February with suggested additional information. Number of inspections carried out have reduced as a result of Covid restrictions and looking at feasibility of carrying out virtual inspections. Number of households on housing list in Comeragh area will be provided for next meeting.

Cllr. Power asked if Occupational Therapists are currently calling to houses for inspections.

I.Grimes, DoS outlined that inspections are being done on a risk assessment basis.

Cllr. Clune noted that only 9 new tenancies in the area for 2020 and want to see how this compares to other areas.

Cllr. Brazil enquired who members of the public should contact for information on housing insulation grants.

I.Grimes, DoS outlined that the 9 allocations in 2020 is purely own stock and does not include HAP. In relation to grants, interested persons should contact the housing grants section who will offer advice.

#### **(d) Planning**

Cllr. Clune enquired about available funding for feasibility of extension of Greenway into areas such as Kill, Bunmahon and Portlaw requesting application to this funding is made.

Cllr. Brazil requested update on the housing development for Lemybrien and if progress has been made with Irish Water, requested update in relation to Roadstone Quarry in Durrow.

Cllr. Power supported issue of need to address needs of rural areas for additional housing and enquired how it is being dealt with under the new Development Plan.

D. Ó Murchadha, SEE will refer query for feasibility of funding to Richie Walsh in Economic Development, the progress of Lemybrien lies between developer and Irish Water and will request details to be issued to members with regard to rural housing in Development Plan and the Roadstone Quarry.

Cllr. O’Leary enquired about the next steps for the Taking in Charge (TIC) of Fan Glas in Kilmeaden and enquired as to how residents are informed and can be supported in the setting up of a residents association.

Cllr. Power noted update on Deerpark and asked if due to be taken in charge.

I.Grimes, DoS outlined that the community section can provide information on the set up of a new residents association.

D. Ó Murchadha outlined the taking in charge process, noting that there will be a public notice with a public display to take the development in charge which is due to commence shortly, this gives residents the opportunity to engage and on conclusion will come back to council for final approval. Have entered into an agreement with the developer of Deerpark to progress the taking in charge process.

**(e) Fire**

Cllr. Brazil welcomed the proposal for a new fire station in Kilmacthomas, enquiring when works will commence.

Cllr. Clune enquired if the issues in Portlaw fire station have been resolved and requested if details on number of days stations are off the run can be included in the quarterly report.

Cllr. Barron welcomed allocation of funding for Kilmacthomas and asked for regular updates at the district meetings.

Cllr. O’Leary welcomed fire station funding stating that cannot underestimate the service provided. Noted recent serious fire in Kilmeaden and complimented all present that addressed the incident.

Cllr. Power acknowledge work of fire station and welcomed new fire station for Kilmacthomas.

N.Curtin, CFO, outlined that have site identified for Kilmacthomas fire station, design is nearing completion and hope to bring Part 8 to the members for approval by the summer. Confirmed that continue to deal with any issues in Portlaw, minimal off the run occurrences noting that have very good coverage throughout the city and county in the event that a brigade is off the run. Will ensure regular updates will issue to the members in relation to Kilmacthomas fire station. Acknowledged comments in relation to addressing fire in Kilmeaden.

**5. CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**6. NOTICE OF MOTION**

None

**7. AOB**

Cllr. Clune raised concern over closure of the St Bridget’s hospital in Carrick on Suir and requested support of the members to issue a letter to the Minister of Health to have the issue reviewed noting it’s a mistake to have the facility closed.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_