

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Westport- Belmullet Municipal District  
held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 in The Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae**

**Present:** Cllr. S. Carey, Cathaoirleach  
Cllr. G. Coyle  
Cllr. C. Hyland  
Cllr. B. Mulroy  
Cllr. P. McNamara  
Cllr. J. O'Malley  
Ms. C. McConnell, DoS  
Mr. P. Walsh, Head of Municipal District  
Mr. K. Lynn, S.E.E.  
Ms. A. Moore, A.O.  
Ms. M. Duffy A/S.O.

**Also in Attendance:** Mr. A. DiLucia, A/Senior Planner, Mr. M. Keating, Head of Environment, Climate Action & Agriculture and Ms. A. Connor, Tourism Officer

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting

**Vote of Sympathy**

Cllr. Carey proposed a vote of sympathy to the family of the late Detective Colm Horkan and a minute's silence was observed.

Cllr. Coyle proposed a vote of sympathy to the family of the late Ms. Winnie Cooney, Doolough, Geesala.

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Flynn  
Seconded by: Cllr. G. Coyle

*"That the Standing Orders be amended to allow for attendance and participation at Westport-Belmullet Municipal District meetings via video link"*

Ms. C. McConnell responded that the Council are awaiting clarification from the Department regarding meeting participation via video link as there may be some legal issues with remote participation and Mayo County Council had to await National Guidelines on the matter.

Cllr. Mulroy queried the status of the County Development plan. Mr. DiLucia responded and advised the Members that the Regional Spatial Strategy had been adopted in January 2020, however, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, work on the Development Plan had paused but it was anticipated that the draft plan would be ready for September.

A discussion regarding planning and development took place with the focus on re-populating rural Ireland.

**01) To adopt Minutes of May Meeting of Westport-Belmullet Municipal District held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

Proposed by: Cllr. G. Coyle

Seconded by: Cllr. J. O'Malley

*"That the Minutes of the May Meeting of Westport-Belmullet Municipal District held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 be adopted."*

**2) To consider report in accordance with Part 8 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001-2013 as amended, in respect of the proposed Greenway Achill Sound to Bunnacurry, Achill, Co. Mayo.**

The Members acknowledged the importance of the Greenway projects in the County. Cllr. McNamara stated that the Greenway was the most valuable piece of infrastructure on the Western seaboard. The Members acknowledged the grant funding provided by Former Minister Michael Ring's Department for the projects.

Proposed by: Cllr. G. Coyle

Seconded by: Cllr. P. McNamara

*"That the Part 8 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001-2013 as amended, in respect of the proposed Greenway Achill Sound to Bunnacurry, Achill, Co. Mayo be approved"*

**3) To consider and adopt by resolution the 2020 Schedule of Municipal District Works for the Westport-Belmullet Municipal District with or without amendment in accordance with Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.**

A discussion ensued regarding budgets for Municipal Districts with some Members feeling the Municipal Districts are underfunded. Cllr. P. Flynn was not in favour of adopting the Schedule of Municipal District Works for the Westport-Belmullet Municipal District. Ms. C. McConnell clarified that the schedule of works could be amended by the Members, but the amount of funding could not be changed as this was already adopted as part of the Budget for 2020.

Proposed by: Cllr. B. Mulroy

Seconded by: Cllr. S. Carey

*"That the 2020 Schedule of Municipal District Works for the Westport-Belmullet Municipal District be adopted without amendment in accordance with Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014".*

**4) To approve GMA funding in accordance with section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by Section 43 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014**

Proposed by: Cllr. G. Coyle

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Flynn

*“That the GMA allocations notified by members be approved “*

**5) Update on Tourism Projects**

Ms. Anna Connor, Tourism Officer, presented the Members with an update on Tourism Projects. As part of the aim to aid the tourism industry in Mayo get back on its feet a Tourism Destination Recovery Task Force has been set up with representatives from the Tourism Trade, Fáilte Ireland and Mayo County Council. A media campaign is under development to promote Mayo as a safe destination and encourage staycations. A programme is being developed to optimise tourism centres such as Belmullet and promote all the outdoor walks in the County and to link up with other regions.

The Members thanked Ms. Connor for her presentation and acknowledged the work of all the staff in the Tourism department in promoting Mayo as a destination and excellent visitor experience.

**6) Update on Blue Flag Beaches**

Mr. Martin Keating, Head of Environment, Climate Action & Agriculture, gave an update on the status of Blue Flag Beaches in the County. In 2020 Mayo was awarded 11 Blue Flags and 6 Green Coasts, with Bertra beach regaining its blue flag status. It is hoped to increase these numbers in future years but unfortunately the weather has hampered sampling in recent years with summer storms and heavy rainfall. A number of beaches that did not obtain a blue flag are being maintained at blue flag status.

The Members thanked Mr. Keating for his update. Cllr. McNamara queried the possibility of extra lifeguards to patrol popular beaches that are currently without lifeguard stations. Cllr. Flynn requested that the Quay area of Westport be considered for facilities to service the users of the area as it has become a very popular swimming destination. He also acknowledged the financial contribution of the former Harbour Board towards the work at the Point.

**7) Update on Carrowholly Flood Relief Scheme**

Mr. Martin Keating gave an update on the progress with the Carrowholly Flood Relief Scheme. A detailed design is near completion and it is hoped to be on site in the next 3 weeks. The work on the barriers has been completed.

Cllr. O'Malley queried whether a programme for river cleaning would be established.

Mr. Keating advised that an assessment of drainage is underway in all districts and it is hoped to put an annual drainage programme in place for districts in the control of Mayo County Council subject to resources.

## **8) Head of Municipal District Report and Progress Updates**

### **i.) Roads**

Mr. K. Lynn advised Members that the roads programme was continuing and that all was on target for completion in August.

The Members complimented those working on the roads for the high standard of work. Cllr. O'Malley enquired if the Executive could review the Rossanrubble to Rosclave road at the point where the Rossow road intersects and change the stop sign to the Rossow road. Mr. Lynn responded that he would review the junction.

### **ii.) Housing**

Ms. A. Moore updated the Members on the housing programme. The Tonragee development should be completed in July and will then be ready for allocating. The allocation process is underway for the units purchased in Louisburgh. Sites are being looked at in the Erris region and in Achill for future development.

## **09) Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the July monthly meeting of Westport-Belmullet Municipal District would take place on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 in Belmullet at 2.00pm.

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**Cathaoirleach**

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**Administrative Officer**