



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT  
held at Dunmanway Municipal Pool and MS Teams at 12.00 noon  
on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

**Members Present:** Cllrs. Joe Carroll, Paul Hayes, Deirdre Kelly, Caroline Cronin, Declan Hurley, Danny Collins, Karen Coakley, Patrick Gerard Murphy, Chris Heinhold

**In attendance:** Noreen O'Mahony, S.E.O. W.C.M.D.  
Jacqueline Mansfield, M.D.O. W.C.M.D.  
John Ahern S.E.E. Skibbereen  
Ruth O'Brien S.E.E. Bantry  
Martina O'Driscoll, Meeting Administrator W.C.M.D.

Cllr. J. Carroll presided.

**Statutory Meeting**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**(a) *Minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024***  
*Proposed by Cllr. Karen Coakley, Seconded by Cllr. Caroline Cronin*

**Resolved:**

"That the minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach."

**MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr. K. Coakley requested an update on the footpath upgrade works from the Community School to the primary schools. Noreen O'Mahony S.E.O. noted that the Council were awaiting a response from the Community School on the matter.

Cllr. P. Hayes expressed his appreciation for the Thrive funding update and enquired about the possibility of the Red Cross in Clonakilty utilising the soon-to-be-vacated old Fire Station on Kent Street as a temporary parking space for their vehicles. Noreen O'Mahony, S.E.O. made a note to review the matter but she cautioned that the progress of the Thrive project was anticipated to be swift which would result in the repurposing of the old fire station.

## **2. STATUTORY BUSINESS /GNO REACHTUIL**

The MDO Jackie Mansfield briefed the members on the Schedule of Municipal Works for West Cork MD and answered the members queries.

In reply to Cllr. J. Carroll regarding an update on Ballineen Toilets, Jackie Mansfield M.D.O. noted that most recent step in the process required an archaeological report. Cllr. D. Hurley advised that a bust of Dick Barrett was proposed to be installed in that area and requested that space be allocated to accommodate this. The MDO noted that there was space on the left-hand side as one looks at the site from the road, and a recent meeting with locals had discussed this matter. Cllr. D. Hurley queried if there were any plans to install a bus shelter beside the public toilets. The MDO noted that this request can be followed up with the Traffic and transportation Section.

Cllr. P. Hayes acknowledged the increase in roads funding of €3.7M following the recent delegation to Dublin and he queried how much of this funding would be allocated to West Cork roads. The members expressed their disappointment with the allocation of €3.7 million which they considered it to be insufficient. They emphasised that Cork County would require an additional €40 million to reach the same level of funding as Limerick County. Cllr. Hurley informed the meeting that the Mayor had written to both the Minister for Finance and the Minister of State, requesting a meeting to highlight the issues faced due to the lack of road funding in Cork County.

## **3. REPORTS & CORRESPONDANCE**

### **(a) Municipal District Officer's Report – 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

#### **1. West Cork MD Official Facility Openings**

##### **➤ Glengarriff Blue Pool Trails**

The Blue Pool Trails was completed as an Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme project, funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, with matching funding from Cork County Council. In total, €595,940 was invested in newly refurbished Blue Pool Trails, with funding coming from the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme. It involved the upgrading of approximately 1600m of existing tracks within the incredibly scenic Blue Pool area.

The improvement works allows those less able, the opportunity to enjoy what was heretofore denied to them. The project has several target audiences, including, but not limited to, residents, domestic and international tourists, walkers, cyclists, people interested in nature, biodiversity and the flora and fauna unique to Glengarriff.





### ➤ **Bantry Peace Park Playground**

This project involved the installation of a playground in the Peace Park, Bantry, funded through the Department of Rural and Community Development, with matching funding from Cork County Council.

€366,000 was invested in the Peace Park which included funding received from the DRCD through both the Town and Village Renewal Scheme for the installation of a new playground, and the Community Recognition Fund Scheme for the provision of wheelchair accessible equipment and carpark works.

The aim of the project being, to enhance the Peace Park Amenity area by providing an inclusive space for all ages, including accessible playground equipment for all abilities, which will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to Bantry. The Peace Park as a whole creates a positive environment for all to exercise, relax, and have fun. With accessible playground equipment, public gym equipment, and a special sensory garden, all needs are catered for. This project will also afford our local Ukrainian visitors a tranquil amenity space.



### ➤ **Gallanes Amenity Area Phase 2**

Further development of an existing Amenity Area at Gallanes, Clonakilty, funded through the Department of Rural and Community Development's Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and Cork County Council with a total spend of €387,450 has greatly enhanced the overall experience for users.

Works include a 4m wide walkway/cycle pathway extension spanning 85m to the existing walkway, and an additional 190m of 3m wide pathway connecting to a parking area within West Cork Technology Park. A hard surface 1km hiking trail with 3 no. circular viewing points at a higher point have also been completed, encapsulating the stunning scenery to be found. In addition, the walls of the existing old stone houses which were in ruins, have been reduced to 1m above floor level. Picnic benches were installed within the floor area to maximise use of the amenity and give appreciation to the former use of the site.

The extension promotes sustainable modes of transportation and fosters a greater sense of connectivity within the community. The completion of Phase II has further highlights the significance of such an attractive open space area, through the provision and expansion of a much sought after recreation and amenity resource, whilst respecting the wealth of biodiversity that can be found at Gallanes Lake Amenity Area.





### ➤ **The Rock Amenity Park Skibbereen**

More than €300,000 has been spent on the Rock Amenity Park project to date. The Department of Rural and Community Development provided €243,000 funding through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022 which is 90% grant funding with Cork County Council providing the remaining 10%. In addition, Cork County Council allocated €40,000 Town Development Fund 2022 together with a further €17,930 from the Council's own resources.

The Rock Amenity Park in Skibbereen underwent substantial upgrades, transforming it into a destination for leisure and enjoyment. These enhancements include development of 850m of footpaths providing both accessibility and connectivity to and from the park, with additional features of interest including an impressive amphitheatre skilfully crafted in a sensitive manner to the surrounding environment.

The park is on an elevated area east of the town at the rear of North Street and High Street, with panoramic views of Skibbereen and the surrounding areas. Notably, it contains the remnants of a number of small stone-cut cottages dating to Famine times, and a circular Famine Memorial honours the significance of the site.

The multi-faceted approach adopted during the development process of this project, has furnished its users with a facility that can cater for the health and well-being of its users, whilst providing an area to host community events.



## **2. Cork County Council Blue Flag & Green Coast Awards 2024**

Cork County has been awarded 11 Blue Flags for beaches, 2 Blue Flags for Marinas & 14 Green Coast Awards. West Cork MD retains its 5 Blue Flag Beach and 8 Green Coast Beach status for 2024.

### **Blue Flag Beaches**

Barleycove  
Tragumna  
Owenahincha  
Inchydoney East  
Inchydoney West

### **Green Coast**

Ballyrisode  
Gallycove  
Garnish  
Dooneen Pier  
Cadogans Strand  
Red Strand  
Silver Strand  
Inchydoney East

This is a very positive achievement with all awarded beaches meeting the standard of “Excellent Water Quality Status” assessed over the previous four years. The success of the Blue Flag and Green Coast campaigns requires a commitment & partnership by both Cork County Council and local communities to care for and maintain the areas.

Cork County Council invests substantial sums of money into meeting the award criteria and many of our beaches continue to meet these high standards. The Blue Flag is one of the World’s most recognised Eco labels and a benchmark for beach quality. These beaches meet a specific set of criteria related to water quality, environmental education, safety and beach management. In Ireland the Blue Flag is operated by An Taisce, with support from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.



## **3. Beach Lifeguards 2024**

Cork County Council’s Beach Lifeguard Team is preparing to resume duty around the county’s coast this June bank holiday weekend. Starting last Saturday the 1st of June, the Beach Lifeguards will raise their red and yellow flags to indicate when they are on duty between 10.30am and 7.00pm. The service will be on duty weekends in June, full-time during the months of July and August and the first two weekends of September, finishing on the 8th of September 2024.

While overseeing the safety of the public in the water, Beach Lifeguards are reminding parents and guardians that ‘Holding Hands Saves Lives’. Last summer the county’s lifeguards reunited five children with their parents. Parental supervision and vigilance are key in keeping children safe on a day out in any water environment.

The Beach Lifeguards are also asking people to always swim at a lifeguarded waterway and not to bring inflatable toys to the beach where it is unsafe to use them. Inflatable



boats, beds and toys are unsafe to use on open water due to our temperate climate together with strong and changeable winds throughout most of the summer.

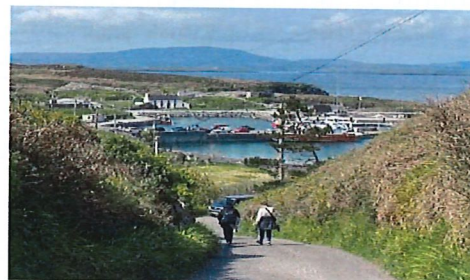
The Water Safety Flag system advises;

- A red over yellow flag means the lifeguards are on duty.
- Swim between the red and yellow flags close and parallel to the shore as this is the area that the lifeguards are patrolling.
- A red flag indicates that swimming is not advised.
- Black and white chequered flags mark the area for surfing only.
- West Cork MD Beach Lifeguard's will be on duty at Inchydoney, Owenahincha, The Warren, Tragumna and Barleycove beaches.
- For further water safety information, daily updates on conditions and flags flying at each beach visit '[Cork Co Co Beachguards](#)' on Facebook



#### 4. Cruise - Seabourne Venture

We were delighted and proud to welcome the first cruise liner of 2024 the Seabourn Venture to Schull and Cape Clear this month. This visit highlights the strong and enduring relationship Cork County Council maintains with cruise operators and is a testament to the dedication of all involved in making it a resounding success.





## **5. Air India Delegation from Royal Canadian Mounted Police**

Deputy Mayor of the County of Cork Cllr. John Healy welcomed members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to Cork County Hall recently, in preparation for next year's 40th anniversary commemoration of the 1985 Air India crash.

On the morning of Sunday 23rd June 1985, a bomb exploded on board an Air India flight from Canada to India, killing all 329 passengers and crew on board. Many families of the deceased arrived in the village of Ahakista, and threw wreathes into the sea, and a memorial was unveiled by Cork County Council on 23rd of June 1986.

A commemoration is held each year on 23 June at 08:00. A sundial, designed by Cork sculptor, Ken Thompson, is the focal point of the garden and the sun hits the dial at the time the explosion occurred.



## **6. THRIVE Funding Approved for Clonakilty**

Cork County Council successfully applied for and was granted Strand 1 €200,000 from Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme (THRIVE) funding, which was awarded under Ireland's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Regional Programme. THRIVE was developed by the Southern Assembly and the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, working in close partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It aims to allow Local Authorities and citizens to reimagine and revitalise town centres through the renovation and reuse of publicly owned vacant or derelict heritage buildings.

Funding approval is for Kent Street, Clonakilty to develop an integrated urban strategy for all of the council owned buildings/lands on this street. Kent Street is a richly historical street situated in the heart of Clonakilty. Cork County Council own's a number of properties on the street, therefore presenting a unique opportunity, within the Town Centre First framework, to transform the urban centre of Clonakilty, enhancing it as a vibrant place for people to live, play, work, and visit. To successfully realise the societal value of this street and surrounding public infrastructure, it must seamlessly connect with the entire ecosystem of businesses and attractions within Clonakilty. Within the confines of the existing built heritage, Cork County Council will work with the community to develop a new Integrated Urban Strategy for Kent Street.



## **7. RRDF Funding approved for Skibbereen**

Cork County Council has also secured €1,855,945 for Skibbereen Public Realm Enhancement. The investment is being provided under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), which is specifically aimed at revitalising rural towns and villages through planned and sustainable regeneration in line with the Town Centre First Policy, that will drive greater economic activity and footfall, address vacancy and dereliction and ensure the re-use of heritage and other existing buildings.

As part of the national Town Centre First Policy initiative, Skibbereen Town has been identified as a 'pathfinder' town and a regeneration plan has been developed by Cork County Council in partnership with local stakeholders and a dedicated Town Team. The vision for Skibbereen, aligned with the Town Centre First Policy is to regenerate the town centre as a viable, vibrant and attractive location for people to live, work and visit, while also improving its capacity to function as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community.

The recently developed Town Centre First Regeneration Plan for Skibbereen outlines 35 projects, objectives and principles, agreed between the Skibbereen community and Cork County Council, which aim to realise this vision. This RRDF funding directly supports 11 of these objectives and principles and includes substantial public realm improvements to transform the fabric of the town, to support accessibility and sustainable travel and to complement other initiatives being undertaken by Cork County Council in the town.

This project will deliver a co-ordinated approach to improving the public realm and re-animating the streetscape in Skibbereen town centre. Specific measures include public realm works, paving of footpaths, urban greening, accessible street furniture, undergrounding of cables, new street lighting, along with the design, development and installation of a new wayfinding scheme in the town centre to improve legibility and navigability for visitors and new residents, enhancing overall visitor experience and supporting sense of place, culture and history for existing residents and businesses. It also includes plans for a new raised paved area which will function both as a social seating area and an area for community and cultural events at Levis Quay/The Bridge area.

## **8. Town Centre First Team Support Fund**

Three County Cork towns. Bantry, Macroom and Mitchelstown will each benefit from €10,000 in funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Town Centre First Town Team Support Fund to help address challenges such as vacancy and dereliction.

The funds will be used to further develop Town Teams in each location. The teams are supported by Cork County Council's Town Regeneration Office and play a vital role in helping communities access the wide range of departmental funding available under various schemes.

The national Town Centre First Policy is a joint strategy by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and aims to create town centres that function as vibrant, viable and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit while also serving as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community.

The latest funding announcement follows the recent publication of the Town Centre First Plan for Skibbereen, and the pathfinder town under this scheme for County Cork.



Further information on the Town Centre First Town Team Support Fund for can be sought by emailing [townregenerationoffice@corkcoco.ie](mailto:townregenerationoffice@corkcoco.ie)

## **9. Pride of Place 2024**

Cork County Council has confirmed that five community groups will represent County Cork at the 2024 IPB Pride of Place Awards, in association with Co-operation Ireland. Now in its 22nd consecutive year, the competition acknowledges the work undertaken every day by communities all over the island of Ireland.

The Cork County nominees are Milford Community Council, Durrus Community Council, Mallow Castle Community Development Committee, Together at the Castle Committee (Mallow), and Passage West Creates.

The village of Durrus is nominated in Category 2 for populations of 300-1000 people. Durrus community hall serves as a vibrant focal point, hosting a range of activities such as parent & toddler group, Foróige, indoor bowls, men's group, and men's choir. The sensory garden on Phillips Green provides a haven for relaxation and socialisation, hosting events like drop-in-mornings, chess club, yoga, and art classes that promote wellbeing and creativity.

Judges will visit communities during July and August before the announcement of winners at the IPB Pride of Place Gala Dinner and Award Ceremony 2024 in the Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan on the 2nd of November, 2024.

## **10. Cork County Council's Innovative Cultural Development Initiative on West Cork Islands**

Cork County Council has announced the continuation of an innovative community project to strengthen creative opportunities for the residents on West Cork's islands.

"Creative Places West Cork Islands", a three-year project, which is funded by the Arts Council and Cork County Council, is now entering its second year. It aims to redefine the cultural landscape of West Cork's islands, transcending traditional boundaries to foster connections, nurture creativity, and uplift communities through sustained investment in the arts.

Local artists such as Kirsty Affleck and Nigel Towse exemplify the diverse talents supported by this important cultural programme. Kirsty Affleck is renowned for her exquisite hand-knitted garments crafted from wool sourced from her self-shedding sheep on Cape Clear, while Nigel Towse is a master of preserving traditional rope-making techniques on Sherkin Island.

The initiative also supports programmes such as the 'Bere Island Arts Festival' and the 'Festival of Music on Heir Island' which returns this year from the 4th to the 8th of June, welcoming musicians from the Irish and European Doctors Orchestras to perform on the islands of Heir and Sherkin. Creative Places West Cork Islands has a diverse partnership representing the island communities, including Comharchumann Chléire, Sherkin Island Development Society, Bere Island Projects Group and Uillinn – West Cork Arts Centre.

## **11. Gallanes Conservation Project**

A conservation project has commenced to raise awareness and provide protection for the Smooth Newt at Gallanes Lake, Clonakilty. The Smooth Newt, a species protected under the Wildlife Act, is one of only three amphibian species native to Ireland.

Monitoring on site commenced in late Spring to establish the status of the population and plan to build winter shelters and carry out other habitat enhancement works this Autumn. The shelters will provide space where Newts can overwinter safely away from disturbance and predators.

Funding is provided through the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Fund, administered by the NPWS Ireland and implemented in conjunction with the Herpetological Society of Ireland.



### **12. Castletownbere Remote Working Hub**

Agreement has been reached to rent and develop an existing office building in Castletownbere for the provision of a flexible working hub. The facility will be managed by a local group and will provide quality remote working space on the Beara Peninsula, affording local people the opportunity to live and work in their local community, reduce the need for commuting and increase footfall and expenditure in the town. It will also be available for tourists and visitors who wish to work remotely while on the peninsula and extend the time they spend in the area.

The Hub will provide quality office and meeting space and an impetus for the development of local business and entrepreneurship, where the co-location of remote workers, small local businesses and start-ups, will be able to collaborate and network for the benefit of the businesses and the local economy.

The tender process for the fit out and painting of the building will begin soon, and it is anticipated that the facility will be open for business after the completion of the works.

### **13. Outdoor Dining**

Cork County Council has been advised by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, that under Planning Circular PL 03/2024, Planning and Development (Street Furniture Fees) Regulations 2024, that the fees for 2024 have been waived.

### **14. Dursey Cable Car**

Options to purchase;

- an annual or half yearly pass for those who own a second/holiday home on the island;
- avail of student(16+) /OAP (65+) rates, for Dursey are now up and running. These fares are available on production of valid identification.

### **15. Bantry Flood Relief Scheme**

Members of the public are being invited to have their say on the emerging options for the Flood Relief Scheme for Bantry town and surrounding areas. A series of flood mitigation options have been developed following extensive investigations.

A public participation day took place at the Maritime Hotel, Bantry on May 30<sup>th</sup>. The project team gave an overview of the emerging options and feedback, comments and observations were welcomed on the options presented. The feedback from the event will be considered, with all other relevant assessment items, to identify the preferred scheme of flood mitigation measures.



The event marks the second in a series of Public Participation Days which will be held over the course of the delivery of the project, the first of which was held in May 2022 during the early stages of the scheme development. A final avenue for comment from the public for the development and design stage of the project will be available at a later date when the Preferred Option will be presented at a third Public Participation Day.

Members of the public can submit comments in writing to [info@bantryfrs.ie](mailto:info@bantryfrs.ie) or by post to Bantry Flood Relief Scheme, JBA Consulting, Unit 24 Grove Island, Corbally, Limerick. Information posters and a feedback questionnaire will also be available on the project website [www.bantryfrs.ie](http://www.bantryfrs.ie) after the event.

## **16. Cruinniú na nÓg 2024 Programme**

Cork County Council's Library and Arts Service has announced the 2024 Cruinniú na nÓg programme, with over 30 creative events planned across the county on Saturday the 15th of June. This year's programme is unique in that it was almost entirely programmed by the children of Cork themselves.

Through the 'My Creative Wish' arts initiative, children and young people were invited to submit their creative wishes late last year. Over 30 wishes have since been granted with workshops on art, design, animation, comic books, song writing, circus and fashion delivered in schools and libraries throughout County Cork.

The creative workshops will culminate with events on Saturday the 15th of June as part of Cruinniú na nÓg - Ireland's National Day of Creativity, with a host of free creative classes on offer in library branches across the county.

Cruinniú na nÓg is a flagship initiative of the Creative Ireland Programme's Creative Youth Plan to enable the creative potential of children and young people. Ireland is the first, and only country in the world to have a national day of free creativity for children and young people under 18.

'My Creative Wish' is a Cork County Council initiative through the Creative Ireland Programme which is supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. For further information, please visit the 'Events' section at [Events | Cork County Council \(corkcoco.ie\)](https://www.corkcocouncil.ie) or visit your local library.

## **17. Cork County Council's Heritage Grant Scheme 2024**

Cork County Council has awarded €44,600 in grant funding under the Council's Heritage Grant Scheme. A total of 26 projects and initiatives across all eight of the county's Municipal Districts will benefit from this year's funding.

Cork County Council's Heritage Grant Schemes, supported by The Heritage Council, have been in operation for a number of years and have resulted in excellent projects focusing on a variety of natural, built, archaeological and cultural heritage. The growing appeal of the scheme is illustrated by a notable rise of 20% in the number of applications compared to the 2023 programme. Successful projects include Heritage Week initiatives, video documentaries, podcast series and conservation reports for important local heritage buildings, exhibitions, heritage festivals, natural heritage projects and a range of heritage publications.

Awarded projects include the Ellen Hutchins Festival in Bantry, featuring workshops titled 'Magnificent Moss' which will engage the public with the significance, importance and

beauty of mosses. Many of the projects will culminate in events for National Heritage Week 2024, which takes place from Saturday the 17th to Sunday the 25th of August. For more information on these schemes, email [corkheritage@corkcoco.ie](mailto:corkheritage@corkcoco.ie)

### **18. Sports Capital & Equipment Programme 2023/2024**

A minimum of €250 million has recently been confirmed for the latest round of Sports Capital Grants. The funding available represents a 50% increase on the funding allocated in early 2022 under the 2020 round of the Sports Capital and Equipment Programme.

This announcement follows the confirmation made earlier this month by Ministers Martin and Byrne that over €26m in equipment-only grants had been awarded to over 900 sports groups, see list below.

This represents the largest-ever allocation of equipment-only grants under the Sports Capital and Equipment Programme to date which will be of practical benefit to multiple sports organisations, their members and athletes across Ireland.

Further individual allocations, including those for capital works and capital works with an equipment component, will be announced in the autumn for all valid applications under the current 2023 Programme.

The 2023 round of the SCEP closed for applications on 8 September 2023. The 2023 round contained a number of changes from previous rounds. The “Guide to Making and Application” and “Scoring System and Assessment Manual” outlined a number of new commitments and changes including:

- An increase in thresholds for capital grants at both local and regional level to €200,000 and €500,000 respectively. The previous thresholds were €150,000 and €300,000 respectively.
- Specifically rewarding projects which include adaptations for persons with disabilities.
- Prioritising applications from areas witnessing significant population growth.
- Rewarding projects which incorporate climate action measures.
- Expanding the SCEP remit to include applications for upgrades to swimming pools.
- Greater interlinkage between the amount of own funding being used for the proposed project and the amount allocated.
- The guide to making an application also made it clear that the achievement by the relevant National Governing Body of Sport of the 40% board gender balance target will be a consideration when individual grants are being allocated.
- Changes were also made to ensure that all proposed facilities would have to provide access on similar terms to females and males.

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### ***End of MDO Report***

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Cllr. J. Carroll thanked all the team involved in the project at ‘The Rock’ in Skibbereen and expressed that it was a wonderful amenity for the town. He queried the maintenance plan in place for this location and he also requested paving be installed at the entrance to ‘The Rock’ amenity from behind the hair salon in North Street.

Cllr. P. Hayes highlighted the importance of a safe walkway from Inchydoney to Clonakilty as part of the greenways project. He also reported to the meeting that the beach wheelchair is currently up and running in Inchydoney and the key for the chair is available from the Inchydoney hotel while the chair itself is stored in the beach lifeguard station.



Cllr. Hayes requested that the Council install signage to notify the public about the beach wheelchair.

Cllr. P. Hayes reported that the water refill fountains in Clonakilty were not turned on at Emmet Square and Astna Square and he requested that progress on providing these facilities be prioritised.

Cllr. K. Coakley reported that some residents at High Street, Skibbereen were disappointed that they were not included in the official opening of 'The Rock' and she requested that they be included in any further official gatherings at 'The Rock' in Skibbereen. Noreen O'Mahony advised that an open invitation was not extended for the official opening of 'The Rock' but it is a public open space and everybody was welcome on the day.

Cllr. K. Coakley queried what measures would be taken to prevent anti-social behaviour at 'The Rock' in Skibbereen. Noreen O' Mahony S.E.O. advised that the council will monitor the situation in relation to antisocial behaviour and that the additional public lighting should assist.

Cllr. D. Collins welcomed the news that the Durrus walkway had secured funding from the Department and noted that the groups involved in progressing this project had great vision when it was first proposed 5 years ago.

## **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr. K. Coakley reported that a serious head-on car accident had occurred on road to Baltimore involving a foreign driver driving on the wrong side of the road. Cllr. Coakley queried if road markings and road signage advising motorists of the correct side of the road could be installed on busy tourist routes.

Cllr. J. Carroll reported a complaint regarding the smell of sewer emissions at the Warren beach in Rosscarbery and he requested an update on the measures that Uisce Éireann have taken to address this issue. Noreen O'Mahony S.E.O. noted that Uisce Éireann would carry out increased de-sludging over the summer months. Cllr. Hurley requested a letter be sent to Uisce Éireann to request the programme of works that they had in place for the summer months.

Cllr. D. Hurley reported parking issues at the turn off from the N71 to the Warren beach and requested some inset parking be installed at the green area on the lefthand side of the road. John Ahern S.E.E. noted the matter for review.

John Ahern S.E.E. provided an update to the members regarding Castlelands Bridge in Enniskeane. He noted that the pedestrian bridge was a project for the long term, and the NTA suggested exploring 2 options on a trial basis in the short term before committing to any funding. The first option involved reducing the road carriageway to single lane traffic, similar to Ardcahan Bridge in Dunmanway, while the second option was to install a traffic light system on the bridge. Mr. Ahern emphasised that if neither option proved effective in the short term, they could consider pursuing a pedestrian bridge as a long term solution. Members expressed their concerns that the short term solutions were not adequate and would cause further potential traffic issues. They also questioned the rationale behind the short-term trial. Mr. J. Ahern S.E.E. explained that the OPW needed consents and permits for a footbridge, making it a lengthy process. Members were worried that reducing the

roadway to single lane traffic would rely on the goodwill of road users to yield to oncoming traffic. The traffic light system was discussed, and although it could lead to traffic flow problems into the village, the members agreed it was the preferred solution. Mr. J. Ahern acknowledged the members' agreement on implementing a traffic light system for Castlelands Bridge.

Noreen O'Mahony S.E.O. advised the members that an information session would take place on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024 in relation to the public consultation of the Skibbereen sections of the Skibbereen Greenways. Members agreed to hold an information session on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

Cllr. J. Carroll acknowledged that this marked the conclusion of the 2019-2024 term and expressed his gratitude for serving as Chair of the West Cork Municipal District. He extended his thanks to his colleagues for their cooperation and sensible approach to matters. On behalf of all members, he expressed appreciation to the MD and engineering staff, as well as the MD management, for their support and collaboration. Cllr. Carroll wished all members success in their election campaigns and extended his best wishes to Cllr. Paul Hayes on his retirement after a decade of dedicated service. Cllr. Hayes acknowledged the kind words from his colleagues and thanked all council departments and staff for their assistance throughout the years. He also expressed gratitude to his family and friends for their unwavering support, highlighting his 20-year involvement in politics and commitment to continue contributing to community projects behind the scenes. Noreen O'Mahony on behalf of the Executive, conveyed best wishes to all members for their election campaigns and extended well wishes to Cllr. Paul Hayes on his retirement.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**CATHAOIRLEACH** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_