



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
held in Dunmanway Municipal Pool Meeting Room and on MS Teams
at 11.00am on Monday 7th October 2024**

Members Present: Cllrs. Patrick Gerard Murphy, Joe Carroll, Caroline Cronin, Danny Collins, Deirdre Kelly, Finbarr Harrington, Noel O'Donovan, Isobel Towse, Daniel Sexton

In attendance: Aoife Power, A/S.E.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. PG Murphy presided.

Statutory Meeting

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

(a) *Minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 6th September 2024*
Proposed by Cllr. D Sexton, Seconded by Cllr. D. Collins

Resolved:

"That the minutes of Municipal District meeting (as circulated) of 6th September 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach."

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Cllr. P.G. Murphy requested a suspension of standing orders and the members agreed, to allow for a discussion on the flooding in Bantry town. Cllr. Murphy reported that the businesses in Bantry had been badly affected by flooding last Saturday and it has underscored the pressing need for flood relief and culvert improvements. Bantry had flooded four times between 2018 and 2020 and neither the tide or prevailing winds played a part in this flooding event, and that the existing infrastructure was inadequate to manage the 50mm of rainfall experienced. He advised members that the current plan for the Part 8 for the culvert was due to be advertised in Q4 2024, but it would be 2026 before any construction could take place. He noted that the visit from Minister Kieran O'Donnell to witness the devastation caused by the floods was welcomed and he expressed appreciation for any assistance with emergency packages that central government can offer businesses.



The members all complimented Cork County Council and the Fire Brigade on their response to the flooding event. Members highlighted that the IPP Scheme was being rolled out in Midleton and requested that a replica scheme be rolled out in Bantry.

Cllr. D. Kelly reported houses were flooded at Ardcahan Bridge in Dunmanway and roads had been washed away. Members queried if more could be done by addressing the staffing levels of outdoor staff to clear gullies etc. Individual flood barriers were also requested for the businesses in Bantry affected by flooding. Members were advised that a meeting between the OPW and Cork County Council and Uisce Éireann was due to take place on Wednesday morning.

Cllr. D. Collins queried the options report for the houses affected by flooding in Ballylickey, and Ruth O' Brien S.E.E. noted the OPW was due to issue a response regarding the options identified at Ballylickey in 2 weeks' time.

Cllr. F. Harrington queried if a short-term solution could be investigated to alleviate the flooding in the town, and Ruth O'Brien S.E.E. advised that the culvert takes up the whole street and the only option available was the new culvert to deal with the issue.

Members agreed that an update on the Bantry Flood Relief Scheme should be on their monthly agenda for every meeting going forward.

Members asked for a letter to issue to the OPW seeking property protection barriers for premises in Bantry.

Following a proposal by Cllr. D. Collins and seconded by Cllr. F. Harrington, a Notice of Motion to Full Council was agreed by the members calling for a rates waiver for the businesses affected by the flooding in Bantry town on Saturday 5th October 2024.

2. REPORTS & CORRESPONDANCE

Municipal District Officer's Report – 7th October 2024

1. Cruise Calls 2024

Cork County Council welcomed a total of 9 no. cruise calls to the West Cork Harbours in 2024 – 4 different ships operated by 4 different cruise companies. Visits to Kinsale accounted for 7 of these, with one visit each to Schull and Bere Island. These ships brought a combined total of 1280 passengers into the area.

The ultra-luxury, purpose-built, expedition cruise ship, **Seabourn Venture** made its inaugural call to Cork County Council's Schull Harbour on **Tuesday, May 7th** and visited Kinsale Harbour on **Wednesday, May 8th**. The ship, carrying **264 passengers**, was launched in 2022 and is built to Polar Class standard, which enables it to operate in Antarctica and the Arctic. Cllr. Caroline Cronin, deputising for the Mayor, was welcomed onboard by Captain Sasha Skladnoi.

Some passengers were taken directly from the ship to Cape Clear Island for tours. They had an opportunity to experience island life, history, and culture on Cape Clear Island. Birdwatch Ireland experts were on hand to point out the island's bird life, a dry-stone wall builder demonstrated his art and guests also enjoyed samples of the island's Cape Clear Distillery gin. Others were taken on bus tours to Bantry House, Mizen Head or Skibbereen Heritage Centre.

The Kinsale stop came at the end of a 28-day itinerary so, in Kinsale, guests were afforded a leisurely day, enjoying guided walks of historical Kinsale, a culinary tour and a visit to nearby Timoleague. Many chose to stroll around the town, enjoying its unique atmosphere and browsing through its shops on their last day in Ireland.

Luxury, small expedition ship, **Le Dumont d'Urville** returned to Kinsale for the third time on **Saturday, May 25th**. One of French cruise company Ponant's fleet, it has capacity for **184 passengers** in 92 suites, and 118 crew members. Onboard were guests of prestigious U.S. travel company, Smithsonian Journeys, whose tours offer clients unique opportunities to combine learning with travel by immersing themselves in a destination to grow knowledge and cultural awareness.

On **Wednesday, 31st July**, **Island Sky** visited Kinsale with **118 passengers** onboard. Guests travelled to Clonakilty in the morning for a tour, with many visiting Michael Collins House. They were brought directly to the Bullman in the afternoon for a walking tour of Charles Fort and enjoyed a drink in the Bullman afterwards. Island Sky returned for two further visits on **Monday, 12th and Friday, 30th August**.

On **Wednesday, 28th August**, Island Sky made its inaugural visit to **Bere Island**. Once ashore, guests were treated to a range of activities. A 5km guided walk out to the Lonehort Battery or a shorter one to the Martello Tower. A visit to the Heritage Centre and the standing stone and scenic drives around the island. Local guides mingled with the guests and chatted about the island's history. The trip concluded with a visit to the pub for drinks and traditional music.

Luxury, five-star cruise ship, the **Hebridean Princess** arrived in Kinsale for the first time on **Saturday, August 3rd**. One of Hebridean Island Cruise's fleet, this ship has capacity for **48 passengers** in 28 cabins, and 38 crew members. The Hebridean Princess made a further visit on **Sunday, 11th August**.

Cork County Council remains actively engaged in promoting the Cork region and works closely with cruise companies and their tour operators to showcase what the destination has to offer. This summer, we hosted site inspections by two cruise companies which will result in more new itineraries and tours in the future.



Seabourn Venture outside Schull



Cllr. Caroline Cronin making a presentation to the ship's captain Sasha Skladnoi

2. Music Scheme Event 2024

Cork County Council's Special Music Event Scheme made its return to West Cork this summer, offering complimentary musical performances in Bandon, Kinsale, Skibbereen, Clonakilty, and Dunmanway. This initiative is community-oriented, designed to enhance tourism in West Cork, and represents a collaborative effort among the Council, local businesses, and the community.

Marking its seventh year, the program has previously showcased numerous talented musicians. This year continued that tradition, featuring skilled local ensembles performing a diverse array of brass and reed music, alongside traditional music, song, and dance presented by local community music groups. In total, 15 musical events were held throughout the summer across the five towns in West Cork.



Clonakilty Brass Band



Dunmanway Comhaltas

3. Michael Collins House

The museum had a very successful summer season bringing the visitor numbers to almost 18,000 for the year to-date. Michael Collins House will remain open for the Winter months, Tuesday to Saturday 10.00am to 5.00pm.

4. Beach Life Guards

The 2024 season has now concluded, and West Cork Municipal District wishes to compliment the Beach Lifeguards on doing a fantastic job during the season.

Following are statistics for the 2024 season:

MD Area	Total Rescues	Assists	Non-Fatal Drowning	Rescues due to rips	Surf Rescue Boat	Personal Water Craft	Rescues Craft	First Aid	Advice Given	Accidents Prevented	Missing Adults	Missing Children
West Cork MD	4	22	0	7	1	9	10	136	6162	2136	0	15



Lifeguards on duty at Inchydoney

5. Barleycove Pontoon

The pontoon in Barleycove was removed on Saturday 28th September, as the bathing season has concluded for 2024.

6. Town Centre First Policy – Bantry Town

Funding has been made available to Cork County Council to support the development of a Town Team for Bantry, and to conduct research to identify the key priorities for the Town.

Cork County Council has just launched the public survey which is available both online and via hard copy at Bantry Library.

Cork County Council are encouraging participation in this survey as this will guide the Bantry Town Team in collaboration with Cork County Council to make Bantry a better, more vibrant place to live, work and visit.

- https://corkcc-dash.achieveservice.com/service/Town_Centre_First_Survey_Bantry

7. Culture Night 2024

The ever-popular 2024 edition of Culture Night took place on 20th September 2024. Skibbereen Heritage Centre played host to Comhaltas Ceolteóiri Éireann in its courtyard.



Skibbereen Heritage Centre – Culture Night



Skibbereen Heritage Centre – Culture Night

Dunmanway Swimming Pool hosted the Stories of the Revolution Exhibition and Margaret Murphy, Skibbereen Heritage Centre gave a talk on the exhibition. The story boards remained in the pool for the following week and were visited by students from Maria Immaculata Community College.

Michael Collins House held an open evening and provided free guided tours.

8. Community Sports Facilities Fund

The Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin T.D., and the Minister of State for Sport, Physical Education and the Gaeltacht, Thomas Byrne T.D., recently announced 1,996 grants with a total value of €230m for new and improved sports facilities and equipment throughout the country under the Community Sport Facilities Fund, formerly the Sports Capital and Equipment Programme.

The €230m allocation announced follows May's allocation of €26m for sports equipment which brings the total investment in community sport and recreation in 2024 to an unprecedented €256m. This is a 50% increase on the funding allocated in early 2022 under the 2020 round of the Sports Capital and Equipment Programme.

Allocations are split into 3 categories.

<p>a) Equipment Applications</p> <p>Applications submitted as capital but discovered at assessment to be equipment only (funded at 100% as per equipment grants announced in May)</p>	127	€3,791,906
<p>b) Local Projects</p> <p>Typically, sports clubs and groups seeking up to €200,000</p>	1708	€179,000,000
<p>c) Regional projects</p> <p>Typically centres of excellence such as GAA county training centres or synthetic running tracks applying for up to €500,000</p>	161	€47,500,000
<p>TOTAL:</p>	1996	€230,291,906.00

Issued by Press and Information Office An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media – 25th Sept 2024.

West Cork Leisure Centre Dunmanway

To Celebrate National Fitness Day, free gym inductions were offered to the public at the gym in Dunmanway, on Monday, 23rd September. 19 no. people availed of it on the day.

Cllr. P.G. Murphy reported to the meeting that Clár Funding allocations had just been announced and he wished to acknowledge the demanding work that goes into the communities' applications.

Cllr. J. Carroll queried if there was any update on Skibbereen playground. John Ahern S.E.E. noted that 50k funding had been allocated and Damien Murphy was currently working on the plan for the playground.

Cllr. N. O'Donovan queried if the Town Teams had been set up. Ruth O' Brien noted that Town Teams was linked to a survey in the report and following that a Town Team would be established. Aoife Power A/S.E.O. noted the matter for an update at the November MD meeting.

3. STATUTORY BUSINESS /GNO REACHTUIL

(a) **Declaration of a public road - Fernhill Drive and Wayside Park, Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty**

That, being satisfied that a public right of way exists over it, and the road is of general public utility, Cork County Council hereby declares pursuant to Section 11(1) of the Roads Act, 1993 the following road to be a public road: -

ESTATE NAME	LOCATION	LINEAR METRES
Wayside Park/Fernhill Drive	Tawnies Lower, Clonakilty	251

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Sexton, seconded by Cllr. D. Kelly, members approved the above declaration of a public road at Wayside Park/Fernhill Drive.

4. NOTICES OF MOTION/ FOGRA RUN

(a) **Proposed by Cllr. F. Harrington, seconded by Cllr. P.G. Murphy**

"That this Council would carry out much needed line painting as a matter of urgency and Safety at Gour on the R572 Castletownbere to Allihies main road". This is the main R572 road along the Wild Atlantic Way and is a noted location for thick fog especially in Winter time. Currently there are no road markings on this road. That this stretch of road especially at the top of Gour would be considered for cats eyes or road studs retro reflective safety devices".

Response from Ruth O'Brien S.E.E.

R O'Brien stated that it would be considered under the 2025 road lining programme, subject to funding.

(b) **Proposed by Cllr. F. Harrington, seconded by Cllr. P.G. Murphy**

"That this Council would give an update as to when the renovation of the public toilets in Allihies Village will commence. Allihies public toilets were granted €50,000 in March 2019 at Municipal district and work has not commenced yet".

Response from Aoife Power A/S.E.O.

The Municipal District Engineer will carry out a site visit to see what can be done there.

(c) **Proposed by Cllr. F. Harrington, seconded by Cllr. P.G. Murphy**

"That this Council would make an application to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, for funding, to carry out much needed repairs and maintenance on Cleandra Pier Ardroom which is owed by Cork County Council. This pier was extensively damaged in the recent storms. There has been no maintenance carried out on this Pier for the past twenty plus years and is badly in need of repair".

Response from Aoife Power, A/S.E.O.

We are currently carrying out inspections of Piers in West Cork. Cleandra Pier will be included in these inspections. Issues will be addressed in order of priority and capital funding is not likely to be available in the short to mid-term. A further update will be provided once Health & Safety and structural inspections have been completed.

The Members discussed the ongoing issue with working piers and harbours which are incorporated into SAC maps and expressed concern how this issue is affecting fisherman and leisure boats. Ruth O' Brien noted that the issue had been referred to Coastal Management section and a response was being awaited from them. Aoife Power advised the members that a Health and Safety review of piers and harbours in West Cork was currently underway and any works required would be addressed in order of priority. She noted the matter for an update at the next available meeting following the Health and Safety inspections.

(d) Proposed by Cllr. I. Towse, seconded by Cllr. J. Carroll

"That this Council will secure a public toilet for Sherkin Island before Summer 2025."

Cllr. I. Towse reported that there was a company in Enniskeane called DRYLOOS which was providing waterless toilets, and these were HSE approved. She noted that there was a waterless toilet in Farran Woods and in Co. Cavan and requested that this option be investigated for Sherkin Island. She also requested that senior management meet with islanders to discuss the issue. Cllr. F. Harrington requested that Dursey Island be added onto the list of islands that require public toilets.

Response from Aoife Power A/S.E.O.

Cork County Council acknowledges the need for public toilets on Sherkin Island and is working to put in place suitable arrangements that would meet the needs of the community. Any arrangements would be subject to availability of funding and value for money.

(e) Proposed by Cllr. I. Towse, seconded by Cllr. N. O'Donovan

"In relation to the €200,000 THRIVE funding for Kent St, and other potential funding options for this street, that this council will share any plans or ideas that the council has for its redevelopment, will explain what the process is for constituents to have their say in this development, and when this will be available to them."

Response from Aoife Power A/S.E.O.

Consultants have recently been appointed to deliver this strategy for Cork County Council. They will be responsible for managing all stages of the process, including a community consultation process with co-creation workshops.

(f) Proposed by Cllr. D. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. C. Cronin

"In line with successful measures in Killarney and Dungarvan that this Municipal District would consider and pilot the use of dog waste bins in West Cork".

The members all supported this motion and highlighted instances of dog waste bags being dumped at beaches and walkways.

Response from Aoife Power A/S.E.O.

We are contacting the other local authorities to see how they are managed.

(g) Proposed by Cllr. D. Collins, seconded by Cllr. F. Harrington

"I am calling on the Council to cut the grass and overgrown vegetation at both Maulinward & Drimoleague graveyards, and this to be done at least 2 to 3 times yearly".

Response from Aoife Power A/S.E.O.

In previous years maintenance would have been carried out by CE Scheme Workers at Drimoleague Burial Ground. The workers were unable to provide assistance to Cork County Council in 2024. However, I can confirm Maulinward and Drimoleague are on a programme to be cut again in 2024.

Cllr. D. Collins called for the graveyards to be maintained 3 times a year. Cllr. F. Harrington noted that members should set aside money at budget time for all graveyards, and he also highlighted that access paths need to be maintained and called for a plan to fix paths over time.

(h) Proposed by Cllr. D. Collins, seconded by Cllr. C. Cronin

"With the shortage of graves in many graveyards such as Kilcrohane, Glengarriff, Goleen and Schull, I am calling on an urgent plan to purchase or use council land for new grave sites, plus I am looking for the amount of graves left in these graveyards today".

Response from Aoife Power A/S.E.O.

Cork County Council acknowledges the limited availability of these burial grounds. And in that regard:

- WCMD invited expressions of interest from landowners in 2023.
- Cork County Council recently identified and developed additional plots in both Schull & Glengarriff within the confines of the existing burial grounds.

Cork County Council continues to actively explore options with a view to identifying suitable locations on both Council and third party owned lands.

- Glengarriff: 17 plots available.
- Kilcrohane: 8 plots available.
- Schull: 30 plots available.

All of these plots are sold on interment only. The burial ground in Goleen is in ownership of the church.

The members expressed their concern that they used to get a report on graveyards previously, but they hadn't received any report of late. Cllr. D. Collins queried the Council owned land in Goleen which had testing done and he requested an update on this land. The members requested a report on all graveyards which should not capacity and land availability, which graveyards are maintained, and which ones are not. Aoife Power noted that members request for a report for the next MD meeting.

(i) Proposed by Cllr. D. Collins, seconded by Cllr. P.G. Murphy

"I am calling on the council to find a suitable site in Bantry town for the Odyssey Sculpture which featured on the Railway Pier for many years and was taken down during construction works to the Marina".

Response from Ruth O'Brien S.E.E.

The Bantry Bay Port Company /Port of Cork are carrying out public realm works within the Green Area at Harbour View and intend to install the Odyssey Sculpture as part of those works.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr. J. Carroll requested that civic receptions should be held in the Municipal District to acknowledge the Kickboxing World Champions in Skibbereen and Bantry. Aoife Power acknowledge the request and noted that civic receptions were capped a maximum of 2 annually and were held to mark a significant achievement.

Cllr. C. Cronin requested an update on the NTA funding of 50k for the Supervalu junction in Castletownbere. Ruth O'Brien S.E.E. noted that it had been surveyed and a few options were being considered and a design was being finalised.

Cllr. F. Harrington reported an issue with Uisce Éireann in Castletownbere regarding water outages which were affecting local businesses. He noted that planned works in the town were giving less than 24 hours' notice before cutting off water supply for 1 or more full days. He requested that a letter issue to Uisce Éireann to highlight the issue. Members agreed that this could be discussed at their meeting with Uisce Éireann on 15th November.

Cllr. N. O'Donovan requested an update on the Baltimore parking report that was discussed at the last meeting. Cllr. O'Donovan highlighted that it was in the Development Plan that new parking was required in Baltimore. Cllr. J. Carroll reported that the ongoing issue with the carpark in Baltimore being almost full all year round could be addressed with parking permits, and he also suggested the Council provide both short term and long-term parking facilities. Aoife Power advised that no update was available and noted the matter for the next MD meeting.

Cllr. D. Sexton alerted the members that there had been a discharge into Clonakilty Bay on 20th September and this required an investigation.

John Ahern S.E.E. notified the members that there would be road resurfacing by the TII on the Schull Road Roundabout in Skibbereen and the Maxol Roundabout in Clonakilty and these works would be carried out at night. He also noted that it would be necessary to undertake some of the resurfacing works on North Street, Skibbereen over a few nights next week. Cllr. N. O'Donovan queried the cost of the works for the roundabouts and John Ahern S.E.E. noted the matter for follow up with the TII.

John Ahern S.E.E. advised the members that funding had been received to resurface the road from Marsh Road to the Civic Amenity Site in Skibbereen, and east of Enniskeane village.

Cllr. J. Carroll requested an update on the Enniskeane footbridge. John Ahern S.E.E. noted that the Roads Design Office were dealing with the NTA on the issue and a full options report was being prepared.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH _____ **DATE** _____