



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

Cork County Council

Minutes of Proceedings at Meeting of Cork County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Cork and by Microsoft Teams on Monday 24th February 2025.

I LATHAIR

Comhairleoir Seosamh Ó Cearbhaill, Méara Chontae

Comhairleoiri: Uí Bhambaire, Ó Colmáin, Ó Coileáin S, Uí Chochláin G, Ó Foghlú, Uí Shúilleabháin M, Ó Coileáin D, Ní Chróinín, Ó hArrachtáin, Ó Murchú PG, Uí Bhuachalla A, Donnabháin, Ó Fathaigh, Ní Charthaigh Ú, De Faoite, Barra, Mac Iorlla, Ó Finn, Ní Cheallacháin, Rasmussen, Sheppard, Mac Coitir, Dawson, Uí Bhriain, Ó Donnchú, Ó Floinn, Ó Laoghaire, De Brún, Ó Dubhghaill Ó Muineacháin B, Ní Murchú T, Ó Cochláin M, Críod, Ó Luanaigh, Ó Luasa Ní Mhuineacháin G, Ó Haodha, Ó Madaoin, Ó Murchú G, Ó Sé T, Ó Síocháin, Ní Heachthigheirn, Ó Buachalla S, Cocking, Ó Héigheartaigh, Ó Hargáin, Léineacháin Uí Foghlú, Ó Maolchathaigh, Ó Cearbhaill, Ní Cheallaigh, Ó Seasnáin, Towse

PRESENT

Councillor Joe Carroll, County Mayor, presided.

Councillor: Bambury, Coleman, Collins J, Coughlan G, Foley, O'Sullivan M, Collins D, Cronin, Harrington, Murphy PG, Buckley A, Donovan, Fahy, McCarthy U, White, Barry, Curley, Finn, O'Callaghan, Rasmussen, Sheppard, Cotter, Dawson, O'Brien, O'Donoghue, O'Flynn, O'Leary, Browne, Doyle, Moynihan B, Murphy T, Coughlan M, Creed, Looney, Lucey, Moynihan G, Hayes, Madden, Murphy G, O'Shea T, Sheehan, Ahern, Buckley J, Cocking, Hegarty, Horgan, Linehan Foley, Mulcahy, Carroll, Kelly, Sexton, Towse

Chief Executive, Divisional Managers, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services.

[a] CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1/2-2

*Proposed by Cllr. Michael Hegarty
Seconded by Cllr. Pat Hayes*

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Meeting held on 10th February 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

[b] VOTES OF SYMPATHY

2/2-2

TO: Ethel Wallace and family on the passing of husband and father Danny Wallace.

TO: Bernie & William O'Sullivan on the passing of son Michael O'Sullivan

TO: Finbarr O'Driscoll on the passing of his wife Marian O'Driscoll

TO: John Duggan on the passing of his brother Jerry Duggan.

TO: Sean O'Donovan on the passing of his mother Teresa O'Donovan.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

To discuss the recent flooding in Kilbriain and Ballinascarthy Village over the weekend.

Proposed by Councillor John Michael Foley

Seconded by Councillor Daniel Sexton

Members agreed to discuss this matter at 1 pm.

[c] STATUTORY BUSINESS

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:

3/2-2

The SEO advised members that under the Local Government Act 2011, Paragraph 18 of Schedule 10 group voting applies when 2 or more members are to be appointed to a body.

Members confirmed they did not wish to form groupings.

Appointment of 1 member to the Environment, Climate Action & Biodiversity SPC

Position 1: Councillor Pat Hayes proposed Councillor Patrick Donovan for a position on the Environment, Climate Action & Biodiversity SPC, seconded by Councillor Deirdre Kelly.

Appointment of 1 member to the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC

Position 1: Councillor Michael Hegarty proposed Councillor Aileen Browne for a position on the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC, seconded by Councillor Tony O'Shea.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART XI OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000, AS AMENDED AND PART 8 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001-2021

4/2-2

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WEST CORK:

Members resolved to approve the Part 8 Chief Executives Report on Bantry Mill Culvert Upgrade Project. The proposed development comprises of the following:

- Reconstruction of a new Mill River Culvert along Bridge Street and New Street and Wolfe Tone Square and connection to the existing Mill River Culvert at chainage 80m. This includes:
 - A new Mill River Culvert of internal dimensions 5.2m wide, 1.5m high which will be constructed from tie in at Wolfe Tone Square, at Chainage 80m, to the Scart and mill culvert overflow connection from William Street, at Chainage 242m.

- A new Mill River Culvert of internal dimensions 3.6m wide, 1.5m high which will be constructed from William St. junction at Chainage 242m to the Mill on Bridge Street at Chainage 452m.
- Connect to existing drainage/services at William street and Main Street.
- Repair/upgrade works to be carried out to the Mill River Culvert from Chainage 0 to 80m.
- Road and footpath reinstatement works.
- Removal and reinstatement of the central section of Wolf Tone Square architectural feature will be required to facilitate the tie in of the New Mill River culvert.
- A short extension (approximately 4m) of the Alley River culvert will be required so that it ties into the line of the new Mill River Culvert.
- Construction of new service and utilities including foul water drainage. Surface water drainage, watermain infrastructure, gas, electricity and communications will be required at Wolfe Tone Square, New Street and Bridge Street.
- Including modifications to existing services including foul, surface water and services generally to facilitate the proposed scheme.
- Construction of 2 No. surface water pumping sumps in Wolfe Tone Square.

Proposed by Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy, seconded by Cllr Danny Collins

[e] **REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES**
TUAIRISCÍ AGUS MOLTAÍ Ó CHOIS

5/2-2

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF COBH

“Can consideration be given to making the grates on roads bigger in any areas to deal with the volume of water flowing due to heavy rain as it appears some of the grates at present cannot handle the volume of water”

Proposed by Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen, seconded by Cllr Sile O’Callaghan

During this discussion, the Members made the following points:

- Gully sizes should be based on the risk of flooding not just on the flow of traffic.
- Grate alignment and capacity of our piping system needs to be reassessed.
- Need to look at increasing the size and capacity of grates across the county.
- Issue should be brought to the roads SPC for further discussion.
- Further and ongoing maintenance of drains are needed.
- Larger grates and drainage to be considered in all planning going forward.
- Pipes size should be increased from 9 to 12 inches.
- Could Cork County Council should look at putting a pilot scheme in place to upgrade to larger pipes in problem areas.
- Queried if Cork County Council has a maintenance programme in place for gullies.
- Further maintenance of Water Courses are also needed to aid issue.
- Consultation with the farming community to plough with the road was advised.
- Council to refer back to SPC for discussion and what recommendations we can make to the National Framework Plan.
- Jetting in East Cork and Middleton has worked in tackling flooding.
- Where do members of the public seek permission to remove ditches?

- If ditches are illegally removed, what are the correct channels to report such an incident?

Members noted the response from Niall Healy, Director of Services as follows:

RESPONSE:

Road gullies are typically provided in standard sizes as prescribed by national guidelines, specifically the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and the Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS). These national Design Manuals set out the general requirements for drainage systems, including gully sizes, based on traffic flow and expected rainfall. These standard sizes are designed to meet the drainage needs in urban and rural locations which are effective. These standard sizes have proven to be cost effective. When roads are being designed and constructed the number of road gullies can be increased depending on location, gradient and local circumstances and this can provide for increased run-off and all road designs will certainly provide for the impacts of climate change. The solution therefore in many locations may be to improve local drainage or to increase the number of road gullies rather than to provide larger gully pots.

The design of road gullies is based on the area and topography of the site to be drained as well as the volume of water to be managed. The advantages of using standard gullies are as detailed above. In locations where localised flooding or drainage issues persist, improvements to the local drainage network or an increase in the number of gullies may offer a better solution and these areas are reviewed on a case by case basis having regard to the available funding for the proposed works.

Niall Healy, Director of Services responded as follows:

- This is an issue that the Council is aware with recent intensive rain fall making it more difficult to control in both rural and urban areas.
- There is a differentiation between ponding and flooding. Ponding being the run off of rain fall pooling at a stagnant location.
- We have received 2.26 million for drainage works to be carried out across the county. This will enable progress however it is not the funding sought.
- All new roads are in line with current standards.
- A maintenance programme is in place and the jetting of drains and gullies takes place once or twice on an annual basis. Heavy rainfall can undo any previous works instantaneously.
- The gluten machine has proved to be effective in some areas.
- Run off of farming lands from intensification of agricultural activities such as ditch removal and ploughing is one factor that is increasing incidents of flooding.
- Increasing the number of gullies proves more successful in tackling flooding then increasing gully size.
- Landowners in most cases do not need to seek permission to remove ditches, this would work upon a case by case basis.
- No particular channels are currently in place to report the removal of ditches where permission is required. The most appropriate route would be the planning enforcement section.

CLLR. FINBARR HARRINGTON

6/2-2

Cllr. Finbarr Harrington proposed, seconded by Cllr Danny Collins.

“That this Council would write to the Minister for Arts, Media, Communications, Culture and Sport, Patrick O Donovan and ask him to intervene in the ever deteriorating Mobile Phone coverage in many parts of County Cork”

During this discussion, the members made the following points:

- Areas that once had good coverage have deteriorated in recent months.
- Calls are dropping and affecting businesses.
- Phone service should be available to all communities.
- Acknowledged that the West Cork topography can make coverage more difficult to control but it should not be taken as an excuse.
- Engagement with the regulator should be looked at and begin conversations around the sharing of mast towers between companies.
- Invitations should be sent to phone company representatives to attend a Development Committee Meeting to provide insight into the matter.
- This has been brought up many times before and is an ongoing issue that needs to be solved.

CE responded and agreed that it would be an appropriate step to invite phone company representatives to attend a Development Committee Meeting. Cork County Council will map the areas where coverage is failing prior to any meeting.

Councillors agreed to would write to the Minister for Arts, Media, Communications, Culture and Sport, Patrick O Donovan and ask him to intervene in the ever deteriorating Mobile Phone coverage in many parts of County Cork.

Councillors agreed to write to representatives of phone companies and invite to an upcoming Development Committee Meeting to address concerns over the deteriorating Mobile Phone coverage in parts of County Cork.

CLLR. AUDREY BUCKLEY

7/2-2

Cllr. Audrey Buckley proposed, seconded by Cllr. Gillian Coughlan

“I am asking today that Cork County Council would write to the Minister for Health seeking an update on the legislation passed regarding FREE HRT and a timeframe for its roll-out to the public”

- Roll out of free HRT was due from January 2025, this did not happen.

- Dispensing fees vary across pharmacies.
- The health insurance amendment in November provided funding however no action has been taken yet.
- The rising cost of living is placing a pressure on women to choose between vital HRT medication or household costs.
- Pharmacies must reduce dispensing costs.
- This is an important health issue and pressure needs to be continued until the programme is expedited.
- Focus should also be placed on a free menopause scheme where women can attend their GP for free and have longer appointments for a holistic approach.
- Private menopause clinics are now being turned to due to lack of public services which add to further expenses for women.
- This is seen as a failure by the current government.
- Women are disproportionately affected by health costs, all women who are waiting for the programme to begin should be reimbursed for any spend between the proposed start date and its launch.

Councillors agreed to write to the Minister for Health seeking an update on the legislation passed regarding FREE HRT and a timeframe for its roll-out to the public.

[k] VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

8/2-2

TO: Cobh Nature Based solutions pilot project for winning the award for Best Environmental/Ecological Project at this years LAMA awards.

TO: Mayor Joe Carrol & Cllr Ian Doyle for their attendance at the Clonmult Commemoration.

TO: Goleen GAA for reaching the Munster Final

i] ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RATES

9/2-2

Members asked why some business owners have received an increased rates bill.

CE responded and said it is a scheme for the abatement of rates, once paid a separate grant scheme will provide reimbursement. It was agreed to send a note on this to confirm the process.

POWER UP GRANT

10/2-2

Members asked if there was any update on the issue reported with the power up grant forms? The appeal process is set to close at the end of this week.

CE responded and said they had raised the issue with the Department however no update has been received to date. CE to revert back with any additional information if received and finance will offer an update in tandem.

ROTTEN TREES

11/2-2

Members asked what are the correct channels for removing a rotted tree from private land that bats are currently inhabiting.

CE responded and said that the best course of action was to approach the NPW.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

12/2-2

FLOODING AT KILBRITTAIN & BALLINASCARTHY VILLAGE

To discuss the recent flooding issue in Kilbritten & Ballinascorthy

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- On the R603 road from Bandon to Kilbritten the stream burst its banks and left portions of the road impassable for hours.
- Members commended Council staff for the prompt response on the ground.
- Ballinascorthy Village was severely flooded, community and fire brigade prevented damage to the newly refurbished community hall.
- Called for an urgent review of the Artificial Drainage Act.
- A letter should be sent to the minister, OPW and IFI requesting a review of the Arterial Drainage Act over the possibility of allowing more dredging of streams and rivers to reduce flood risk.
- This is a cross county issue, Halfway Village is another high flood risk area.
- Department needs to look at how we interpret and work within European regulations and work towards better implementation.
- Members need to write to IFI and OPW with an invite to a Development Committee Meeting.
- Members queried what type of Nature Based Solutions are being implemented by the Council?
- This matter should be brought to the Environment SPC.
- Is it time to update the National Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme?
- The Drainage Scheme of our rivers need to be re-introduced.
- Lobbying may be needed to amend the Artificial Drainage Act which has not been updated for 30 years.
- Thanked the County Engineer for support in the Rathcormac area.
- Is the level of criteria imposed by the IFI the same for smaller rivers?
- The freshwater pearl mussel cannot be taking priority over the safety of our local communities and their homes.

Chief Executive, Moira Murrell responded as follows:

- Acknowledged the hard work of the County Council and communities on the ground across the weekend.
- Severe weather is resulting in more areas experiencing flooding that did not in the past.

- Progress has been made across the county over the past 5 years. We have 3 schemes as part of CFRAM, ongoing in Skibbereen, Bandon & Clonakilty.
- 15 minor work projects ongoing with the OPW.
- Will look at new minor schemes that we can put in place with the OPW going forward.
- A lot can be done within large and minor schemes and we will continue to explore all options.
- The pearl mussels are a protected EU species.

County Engineer, John Slattery responded as follows:

- It is the land owners responsibility to keep the channel clear and engage with IFI on related matters.
- Engagement with the IFI representative on the Coastal, Marine & Flood Policy SPC is encouraged.
- The CFRAM report is not out of date at this time. There is no approval given to any local authority for the tranche two schemes. That is an area will focus on progressing.
- Middleton flood scheme is the first major scheme in Ireland to include a Nature Based solution approach.

Councillors agreed to write to the Minister of State Kevin 'Boxer' Moran with responsibility for the Office of Public Works, the IFI and the OPW with a request to review the Arterial Drainage Act to consider the dredging of streams and rivers where possible to reduce flooding risk.

Councillors agreed to write to the IFI and OPW with an invite to attend a Future Development Committee Meeting.

~ THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING ~