

**MINUTES OF THE MAY MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CASTLECOMER HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021 AT 11.00AM.**

**In the chair:** Cllr Michael McCarthy

**Present:** Cllrs John Brennan, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Michael Delaney, Pat Fitzpatrick and Denis Hynes

**In attendance:** Mr Martin Prendiville, Mr Philippe Beubry, Ms Anne Maria Walsh, Ms Nancy Byrne, Ms Annette Fitzpatrick and Mr Michael Leahy

**Vote of Sympathy:** proposed by Cllr Michael McCarthy, seconded by Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh to Ms Mary Mulholland on the death of her mother Elizabeth Stephenson, Ringwood, The Rower, Co Kilkenny

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of:**

**(a) April Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh, seconded by Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick and agreed.

**2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations:**

**(a) Broadband**

Mr Martin Prendiville advised that there has been no significant progress with Cellnex since the April Municipal District Meeting.

**(b) Town and Village Scheme 2021**

Ms Annette Fitzpatrick provided a presentation to members on the 2021 Town and Village Renewal Scheme announced on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Ms Fitzpatrick confirmed:

- Objectives of the 2021 Scheme are refocused to align with commitments in “Our Rural Future” launched by Government earlier this year.
- The 2021 Scheme will place particular emphasis on projects (a) supporting remote working (b) enhancing town centre living and (c) addressing vacancy and dereliction.
- Details of grant levels as follows – the minimum grant which is available is €20,000 and the maximum grant funding available is raised to €500,000. A maximum of €250,000 will apply in respect of 2 applications, €100,000 in respect of 4 applications and €500,000 in respect of 1 application and introduction of a new Project Development Measure up to €50,000.
- Two applications must be in respect of Towns/Villages that have not previously received funding under the Standard Town & Village Renewal Scheme.
- Funding at a rate of 90%.
- Projects to be delivered within an 18 month timeframe and Kilkenny County Council have advertised for expressions of interest.

- Introduction of Connected Hubs Call with the aim of adding additional capacity to the existing remote working infrastructure; applicants must be BCPs or existing hubs; BCPs to be provided in Glenmore and Dunbell; details of grant levels available provided and applications directly to the Department with relevant dates provided.

Members raised the following queries / observations:

- Request for the provision of a Hub raised during recent Health Check workshop in Johnstown and Urlingford.
- The need for the provision of a Hub in Castlecomer.
- Clarification on priority for activities supported under the Scheme.

Ms Annette Fitzpatrick responded to members queries as follows:

- Application for the provision of new Hubs can be made to the Council by completing an expression of interest and forwarding to the Council before 18<sup>th</sup> June under the standard Town and Village Renewal Scheme.
- Details of priority A1, A2 and B projects were provided.

Ms Fitzpatrick was thanked for her engagement and withdrew from the meeting.

#### **(c) New Housing Application Form**

Mr Michael Leahy provided a presentation to members on changes to the application process for social housing support brought about by the Social Housing Assessment (Amendment) Regulations 2021 including:

##### **- Household Means Policy**

Changes to the list of income disregards and the determination of whether an applicant household meets the income criteria will now be based on a calculation of their preceding 12 months net average income.

##### **- Social Housing Application Form**

Mr Leahy provided details of changes to the Social Housing Application form comprising inclusion of medical and / or disability information form (HMD-Form 1); changes to documentary evidence required associated with shared custody; more accurate recording of personal details and form is GDPR compliant

##### **- Removal of the cap on percentage increases in respect of each household member aged less than 18 years**

Eliminate the anomaly whereby a large family solely in receipt of social welfare payments exceeds the income threshold.

Members raised the following queries / observations:

- Will the new regulations put a burden on already stretched resources.

Mr Leahy confirmed that the Housing Team are endeavouring to simplify the process for both staff and applicants and old application forms are still being accepted.

Mr Michael Leahy was wished every success in his new position, thanked for his presentation and withdrew from the meeting.

3. **Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District for transaction at such meeting**

None

4. **Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting**

None

5. **Notices of Motion**

(a) **Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh received 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

“That Kilkenny County Council be allowed to name and shame those found to be littering or dumping waste”.

Cllr Cavanagh introduced her motion stating that those caught littering should be named and shamed including dog fouling. Cllr Cavanagh requested that a letter be sent to the Minister for the Environment asking that the legislation which prevents local authorities naming and shaming offenders be amended.

It was: Proposed by: Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh  
Seconded by: Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick  
And agreed by all

“that the Motion be passed”

Members:

- Acknowledged that there has been a number of recent successful prosecutions by the Environment Team.
- Acknowledged the work completed by Community Groups to keep their areas clean and litter free.
- Complimented the Dunmore Civic Amenity facility.
- Raised harmful effects of dog fouling.
- Raised a query in respect of a private bin service passing approximately 925m from a private residence and refusing to collect household rubbish.

6. **Correspondence**

None

7. **Matters arising from minutes**

(a) **Grangefertagh and Clonmantagh Church**

Mr Martin Prendiville referred to the update circulated from Mr Thomas Brennan, Environmental Services under Historic Graveyards and advised that Mr Sean McKeown and the Environment team are trying to establish priority for funding. Mr Prendiville acknowledged that making the structures safe alone was not a longterm solution and advised that he would follow up with Mr Sean McKeown and the OPW. The necessary works will require a budget.

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh highlighted the significance of these two invaluable and irreplaceable structures and requested that the matter be pursued with the OPW and grant aid and guidance be provided to the Clonmantagh Community Group.

**8. Any other business**

**(a) Community Enhancement Scheme**

Ms Annette Fitzpatrick confirmed that the Community Enhancement Scheme was announced last week, details of the Scheme are expected this week and will be advertised by Kilkenny County Council as soon as the details are received.

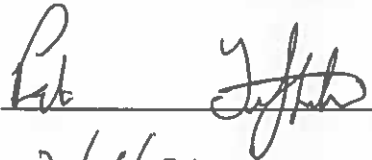
**(b) Cyber Attack**

Mr Martin Prendiville spoke of the recent HSE Cyber Attack and reminded all those present of the serious threat to all agencies and the need to be vigilant in the use of all IT Systems and emails.

The media present were asked to raise awareness to the general public on the issue.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Chairperson:



Date:

