



**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE TEMPLEMORE-THURLES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT WHICH WAS HELD IN THE ANNER HOTEL, DUBLIN ROAD, THURLES ON MONDAY, 21st DECEMBER, 2015.**

**Present:**

Councillor John Hogan, Cathaoirleach, presided.

Councillors Joe Bourke, Jackie Cahill, David Doran, Seamus Hanafin, Willie Kennedy, Micheál Lowry, Jim Ryan and Michael Smith.

**Also Present:**

Matt Shortt	District Director.
Michael F. Hayes B.E.	Senior Engineer.
Ruairi Boland B.E.	District Engineer.
John Jones B.E.	Executive Engineer.
Michael Tierney B.E.	Executive Engineer.
Michael Ryan	Meetings Administrator.
Deirdre O'Shea	Staff Officer.

**1. Adoption of Minutes.**

It was proposed by Councillor J. Ryan, seconded by Councillor M. Smith and resolved:

"That the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting which was held on the 25th. November, 2015 be adopted as a true record of the business transacted at the Meeting."

**2. Liberty Square Upgrade.**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Eoin Greene, Principal Engineer, Aecom to the Meeting to give an update on the refurbishment of Liberty Square, Thurles.

The District Director explained that URS Ireland Ltd, which was taken over by Aecom last year, were appointed in 2013 to prepare plans and specification to upgrade Liberty Square and he outlined the extensive consultation process that has taken place to date with the Members of the former Thurles Town Council, the Municipal District Members, Thurles Chamber and the public since July 2013.

Eoin Greene summarised developments to date and he gave a comprehensive presentation on the proposals and the Part 8 Plans which were circulated at the Meeting.



He responded to Members' queries / comments as follows:-

- It is proposed to commence the Part 8 Process after Christmas.
- The new car park off Liberty Square is included in the Part 8 Plans.
- The traffic counts undertaken for the proposed link road from Clongour to Mill Road and the traffic modelling carried out recently by Roughan & O'Donovan Ltd, on behalf of the Council, confirmed that the proposed upgrade will not impact on traffic in the Square.
- The elimination of "nose in" parking at the eastern end of the Square will lead to an improvement in traffic flow.
- The provision of approximately 100 car parking spaces in the new car park off Liberty Square will more than compensate for the loss of approximately 40 spaces in the centre of the Square.
- It will be a matter for the Council to decide on the need and location of loading bays.
- The carriageway outside "Le Chateau" will be widened as part of the works.
- The proposals provide for uncontrolled pedestrian crossings with clearly delineated raised surfaces.
- There is provision for a pedestrian access to Thomond Road from the new car park.
- The walls at the entrance to Slievenamon Road car park will be lowered to improve sightlines.
- The Part 8 Plans are limited to the upgrade of the eastern end of the Square and it is not possible to implement major changes to the western end due to the circulatory movement of traffic and crossing of lanes. The decision not to proceed was also taken as a result of the significant number of concerns raised during the public consultation process.
- It is anticipated that the construction phase will commence in mid 2016 and take 4 to 6 months to complete.
- Effective liaison arrangements will be put in place to ensure businesses are briefed and updated on a regular basis during the construction period and the improvements will be undertaken on a phased basis to minimise the level of disruption to traders and traffic.
- The works will cost in the region of €2.5m to €3m depending on the grade of materials selected.

The District Director confirmed that:-

- Minor improvements (i.e. road resurfacing and rekerbing) can be undertaken to the western end of the Square subject to the availability of funding which would not require Part 8 approval.



- Significant improvements could only be effected to the western end if parking was completely removed and further proposals can be considered when the link road is developed which will lead to a significant reduction in through traffic in the Square.

It was agreed that:-

- Long term proposals to develop the western end of the Square in the future should be highlighted during the Part 8 process.
- A record of the buildings which are of historical interest (i.e. Sinn Féin Hall) within the site of the proposed car park be taken prior to demolition.

The Cathaoirleach and Members thanked Eoin Greene for his presentation and he left the Meeting.

### **3. Community & Enterprise - Áine McCarthy.**

Áine McCarthy, Tourism Officer and Julia Walsh, Outreach Officer were in attendance for this item.

Áine McCarthy circulated a report on Community & Economic Development and in the course of her presentation:-

- Outlined the functional areas of the Community & Enterprise Department as follows:-
  - Local Economic Community Plan and Local Development Strategy.
  - Economic Development.
  - Local Enterprise Office.
  - Heritage.
  - Tourism.
  - Tipperary Sports Partnership.
  - Arts.
  - Social Inclusion.
  - Strategic Projects Unit.
- Summarised the activities under each area that related to Templemore-Thurles Municipal District.
- Advised on staff responsible for the functional areas.

Julia Walsh gave an update on the Tipperary County Museum and advised the Members that the 1916 Roadshow which takes place in The Source Arts Centre on 23rd. January, 2016 will be the first event to be held in the County marking the commemoration of the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising.



Members made the following points in response to the presentation:-

- The need for a facility to store family history records relating to past generations.
- Provision of a tourist office in Thurles.
- The Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon should be held in Thurles each year as it attracts greater numbers than Clonmel.

Áine McCarthy undertook to refer the issues raised to the relevant parties for consideration.

The Cathaoirleach and Members acknowledged the excellent work being undertaken by the Community & Enterprise Staff and expressed appreciation to them for the grants awarded to organisations within the Municipal District during the year.

Áine McCarthy and Julia Walsh left the Meeting.

#### **4. Moyne / Templetuoehy Parish Forum - Lisheen Windfarm Trust Approval to Payment of Grants.**

The Meetings Administrator advised that Lisheen Windfarm Trust provides funding for payment of grants to community / voluntary groups in the area towards capital expenditure incurred by them. He indicated that John Jones, Executive Engineer has confirmed the projects have been completed. The following grants have been recommended by the Trust:

Moyne Athletic Club	-	€10,000.00
Moyne Community Centre	-	€10,000.00
Moyne Templetuoehy GAA Club	-	€10,000.00
Templetuoehy Community Centre	-	€10,000.00
Moyne Church Group	-	€7,750.00
Templetuoehy Coursing Club	-	€6,180.00
Templetuoehy Graveyard Committee	-	€1,500.00

It was proposed by Councillor M. Smith, seconded by Councillor D. Doran and resolved:-

"That the following Grants be paid as recommended:-

Moyne Athletic Club	-	€10,000.00
Moyne Community Centre	-	€10,000.00
Moyne Templetuoehy GAA Club	-	€10,000.00
Templetuoehy Community Centre	-	€10,000.00
Moyne Church Group	-	€7,750.00
Templetuoehy Coursing Club	-	€6,180.00
Templetuoehy Graveyard Committee	-	€1,500.00"



## 5. Update on 2015 Work Programmes + Proposed Programmes for 2016.

The District Engineer asked that Members submit details of roads they wish to have considered for the new 4 Year Roads Programme which is currently being prepared.

Michael F. Hayes, Senior Engineer, confirmed that the 4 Year Roads Programme must be submitted to the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport by February 2016 and that it is a requirement roads are rated on an annual basis based on their condition.

Members raised the following matters:-

Issue	Response
Funding to repair damage to roads as a result of the prolonged heavy rainfall in recent weeks.	An application has been submitted to the Department for funding.
Flooding outside Doyles, Galbertstown, Thurles.	The Council is in tentative discussions with a landowner to resolve the issue.
Inspection of inlets in upland areas with a view to identifying where pipework is inadequate to deal with surface water.	The matter will receive attention.
Creation of a contingency fund each year to deal with emergencies such as flooding.	The funding would have to be provided from within existing Budget.
Staff who provided assistance in a speedy manner during the heavy rainfall and those involved in the completion of the 2015 Roadworks Programme and replacement of Gurteenabarna Bridge were complimented.	The comments were noted.
Concern that there is inadequate outdoor staff to maintain services to an acceptable level.	The comments were noted.
Provision of a flashing speed display sign at Rahealty School, Thurles.	The results of a recent speed survey confirmed that the average speed is 52kph which is considered acceptable given that the school is located in an 80kph zone and therefore does not warrant the installation of flashing speed display signage.
Provision of traffic calming measures in Clonmore Village.	Speed checks undertaken on two occasions this year indicate that the average speed is 52.5 kph.



	Incidents of speeding should be referred to the Gardaí. It is accepted that local residents are the most frequent offenders when it comes to speeding.
The timeframe given on advertisements for road closures should be adequate to complete the works.	The suggestion will be implemented.
Members do not have the same level of discretion / involvement in decisions pertaining to the Roadworks Programme as they had prior to the establishment of Tipperary County Council.	The Discretionary Improvement Grant which afforded Councillors a greater level of input and flexibility was discontinued 3 to 4 years ago and the Discretionary Maintenance Grant is always spent by year end.
Deplorable condition of the road on the Roscrea Road, Templemore and at Kennedy Park, Roscrea, both of which are on the N62 and other areas on national secondary routes which were raised by Members at a recent meeting with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland.	Transport Infrastructure Ireland advised that the 2016 Budget for national secondary roads has been significantly reduced but it is anticipated that the road surface at Kennedy Park, Roscrea will be improved in 2016.

## 6. Update on Projects.

Thurles Town Park.

The landscaping of the soft areas in the Town Park is being undertaken on a phased basis as the weather permits.

Liberty Square Refurbishment and development of a carpark.

This was dealt with under Item No. 2 of the Agenda.

Extension to and Refurbishment of the Offices at Castle Avenue, Thurles.

The contract is progressing very well and a site visit will be organised for the Members early next year.

Repairs / Improvements to Templemore Town Hall

A Contractor will be appointed in the coming months to carry out the priority works identified by the Conservation Architect.



Templemore Town Park  
Extension.

A number of layouts for the additional land purchased are currently being prepared 'in-house'.

Village Enhancement  
Works.

Footpath improvements have been completed in Borrisoleigh and Templetuohy. Extensive preparation works have been undertaken on the extension of the footpath in Littleton.

Roscrea Enhancement  
Scheme.

The closing date for receipt of tenders for the procurement of a Landscape Architect led Design Team is today at 12noon and the tenders will be assessed in the coming weeks.

Carpark at St. Patrick's  
Cemetery.

A draft layout plan for the carpark has been completed. Detailed plans and specification for the Part 8 Process will be prepared 'in-house' when the technical staff become available.

2015 Painting Scheme.

Payments are currently being made to applicants who submitted the required documentation and contact has been made with the applicants who have not done so.

## 7. **Notices of Motion.**

The Notices of Motion in the names of Councillor M. Lowry, Councillor J. Ryan and Councillor J. Cahill were taken together as they relate to pay parking in the towns located in the Municipal District.

### **(a) Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor M. Lowry.**

Councillor Michéal Lowry formally moved the following Notice of Motion in his name:

"That Templemore-Thurles Municipal District examines the viability of providing up to 30 minutes free parking in the towns of Templemore, Thurles and Roscrea in an effort to encourage more business to be transacted in our town centres."



**(b) Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor J. Ryan.**

Councillor Jim Ryan formally moved the following Notice of Motion in his name:

"Due to our town centre shops and businesses struggling to survive I am calling on this District Council to introduce 30 minute free parking in the town centres of Thurles, Templemore and Roscrea."

**(c) Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor J. Cahill.**

Councillor Jackie Cahill formally moved the following Notice of Motion in his name:

"That free parking on Liberty Square be extended to 30 minutes to help boost business on the Square."

Councillor M. Lowry proposed that 30 minutes free parking be introduced in Thurles on a trial basis to ascertain if it contributes to an increase in retail sales in the town centre.

Councillor J. Ryan, in supporting the Motion, pointed out that he had counted 51 vacant premises in the town centre and adjoining streets. He suggested that increasing free parking to 30 minutes may act as an incentive to the re-opening of these units.

Councillor J. Cahill indicated that the 15 minute free parking is not adequately publicised.

The District Administrator summarised the contents of a report on pay parking, copy of which was circulated at the Meeting, as follows:-

- The 2016 Budget includes for anticipated income to be derived from parking charges and the implementation of 30 minutes free parking will have a significant negative impact on the Council's income.
- The income from pay parking decreased from €411,466 in 2012 to €379,746 in 2013 when the former Thurles Town Council introduced the 15 minute free parking in 2013.
- Surveys do not support the frequently put forward thesis that reduced parking charges or free parking increases footfall and business.
- Proximity to destination is 60% to 80% of the annual short stay parking decision and price ranks sixth to eighth on a menu of ten items.
- Short stay parkers are generally price insensitive and prefer to pay in preference to walking more than 150 / 200m from their car to their destination.



- The costs of developing, maintaining and enforcing proper use of public parking spaces is covered from parking revenue and any deficit will fall on local authority tax payers.
- Free parking can lead to a reduction in retail sales as staff and traders tend to park in prime spaces that should be retained for shoppers.

He added that:-

- The introduction of 30 minutes free parking would have a significant impact on parking income as most of the revenue is generated from short stay parking.
- The negative comments made by contributors on Tipp FM recently against the Traffic Warden in Thurles were unacceptable and there were no positive comments made about the town to encourage people to shop locally.
- Retailers in the town centre need to consider opening evenings and weekends as a large number of the working sector shop within this timeframe.

The District Director advised that he did not think it was possible to implement 30 minutes free parking as the Budget for 2016 has been adopted and he pointed out that the Council may have discretion to consider the request under the General Municipal Allocation.

It was agreed that clarification would be sought on whether the request can be considered within the 2016 Budget and that the item be placed on the Agenda for the January Monthly Meeting.

**(d) Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor J. Cahill.**

Councillor Jackie Cahill formally moved the following Notice of Motion in his name:

"A pedestrian crossing is urgently needed at Monadreen exit to facilitate the many estates in the area."

The District Engineer pointed out that the location was unsuitable for a pedestrian crossing and that the request is premature in advance of the development of the link road from Clongour to Mill Road which provides for pedestrian crossings at appropriate locations.

**(e) Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor J. Hogan.**

The Council agreed to take the following Notice of Motion from the Cathaoirleach:



"I am calling on the Templemore Thurles Municipal District to give permission to Aisling Hassett to construct a bug hotel in Templemore Town Park. This will be constructed with the assistance of local school students in order to develop a better understanding and appreciation of the environment and the creatures that share it with us."

Councillor J. Hogan referred to the success of the Fairy Trail that Aisling developed some time ago and maintains on a regular basis in Templemore Town Park.

Councillor D. Doran supported the Motion.

The District Administrator confirmed that the Council would have no objection to the proposal provided that it did not adversely affect Templemore Town Park.

## 8. Correspondence.

### a) St. Bridget's & St. Joseph's Residents Association.

Councillor J. Cahill confirmed that he had received a request for financial assistance from St. Bridget's and St. Joseph's Residents Association who represent residents in the vicinity of Semple Stadium, Thurles.

It was proposed by Councillor D. Doran, seconded by Councillor S. Hanafin and resolved:-

"That a grant of €500.00 be paid to St. Bridget's and St. Joseph's Residents Association from the remainder of the General Municipal Allocation 2015."

### b) Tipperary 2016 Community Grant Fund.

The District Administrator advised that:-

- A new Community Grant Scheme is being introduced by the Council for community and voluntary groups / organisations towards the cost of organising projects / events to commemorate the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising and an advertisement will be placed in local newspapers after Christmas inviting applications.
- €10,000 has been allocated to each Municipal District under the Scheme and the maximum grant payable will be €1,000.



c) Boundary Issue - Ballysloe Village.

Councillor D. Doran pointed out that Ballysloe Village is in a disadvantaged position as it is divided between Carrick on Suir and Templemore-Thurles Municipal Districts and that the division is causing upset to residents living in the area.

The District Director undertook to discuss the matter with Carrick on Suir Municipal District to ensure that a uniform and joined up approach is adopted by the Districts for the village.

**9. Vote of Congratulations / Sympathy.**

Councillor S. Hanafin proposed a vote of sympathy with Councillor J. Cahill on the death of his aunt-in-law.

Councillor J. Hogan proposed a vote of sympathy with Councillor W. Kennedy on the death of his father-in-law.

**10. Any Other Business.**

The following issues were raised:-

Issue	Response
Issues with the communal septic tank serving houses at The Rock, Ballycahill.	Discussions have commenced with a landowner in order to address the issue.

**THAT CONCLUDED THE OFFICIAL BUSINESS OF THE MEETING**

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE: 27th. January, 2016.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR

DATE: 27th. January, 2016.