



## MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING OF THE THURLES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT WHICH WAS HELD IN THE DISTRICT CHAMBER, THURLES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OFFICES, CASTLE AVENUE, THURLES, ON 20<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

**Present:** Councillor Seán Ryan, Cathaoirleach, presided.  
  
Councillors Noel Coonan, Seamus Hanafin, Shane Lee, Micheál Lowry, Eddie Moran, Jim Ryan, Peggy Ryan and Michael Smith.

**Also Present:** Eamon Lonergan Director of Services  
Thomas Duffy District Engineer  
Jim Ryan Executive Engineer  
Enda Walsh Executive Engineer  
Sharon Scully District Administrator  
Susan Scally Asst Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Liam Brett Senior Engineer

### 1. **Disclosures/Conflicts of Interest.**

There were no Disclosures/Conflicts of Interest raised at the Meeting.

### 2. **Adoption of Minutes.**

It was proposed by Councillor S. Lee, seconded by Councillor S. Hanafin and resolved:

"That the Minutes of the Thurles Municipal District October 2023 Monthly Meeting which was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023 be adopted as a true record of the business transacted at the Meeting."

#### Matters arising from Minutes

Councillor S. Hanafin raised the issue of public lights at Abbey Road/Railway Road, Thurles which are not working despite the problem being highlighted at the September Meeting. Councillor M. Lowry advised that Michael Tierney Roads had confirmed to him that the lights at this location were to be fixed this week.

Councillor J. Ryan advised that there have been a number of burglaries in the Childers Park area of Thurles in the past couple of weeks and the issue of lights not working and not being repaired in a timely fashion was leaving the area unsafe for residents.



Councillor M. Lowry requested an update on the public lights at Orchard Court, Templemore which are not working for some time. The Director of Services confirmed that he had spoken with Kieran Ladden and work has been carried out at this estate in the last week.

### **3. Section 38 of Road Traffic Act, 1994 - Public Consultation for Traffic Calming Measures N75 Thurles for noting.**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Michael Woulfe Senior Executive Engineer and David Fahy Executive Engineer, Roads and Consultants from Midwest National Road Design for this item and advised the Members that this item was for noting only.

A presentation was given by the consultants from Midwest National Road Design detailing the objectives of the scheme, existing and improvement issues pertaining to pavement and safety. The scheme falls under the Pavement Asset Repair & Renewal (PARR) process and the site will run from the gateway at Boomerang on Dublin Road to Circle K on Kickham Street. The proposed improvements will include traffic calming measures, installation of 2 no pedestrian crossings – one at Aldi and the other at Centra - narrowing of carriageway, provision of single and double yellow lines and upgrade to drainage to alleviate flooding.

The Members welcomed the scheme as the need for pedestrian crossings at this location has been requested from some time. Queries raised by the Members were:-

- Timeframe for work – commencement date and length of time for work to be completed.
- Type of pedestrian crossings to be installed?
- Removal of on-street parking.
- Timing of this project should not clash with the Slievenamon Road project as both roads are major routes into the town. It is very important to keep traffic flowing.
- While build-outs are installed to slow down traffic, the effect of them makes it much less safe for cyclists.
- Where parking is being removed outside houses, will the kerb be dished to allow residents to park off street.
- Is it possible to ensure that the bulk of the work is carried out during the summer months when schools are closed?

Replies to queries raised as follows:-

- The scheme is currently at design stage with commencement of work not due to commence until Summer / Autumn 2024.
- This scheme will be completed before the commencement of work at Slievenamon Road. There was a procurement issue with the



Slievenamon Road project and it is not anticipated that this project will commence until 2025.

- There will be a traffic management plan in place to keep traffic moving.
- The expected timeframe for the work is 3 / 4 months.

The Members raised the issue of the road surface outside the AIB, Liberty Square and on the River Bridge, Thurles. It was confirmed to Members that the surface at the River Bridge would be temporarily repaired this week and that the issue of the road surface at the AIB will be brought to the attention of the TII.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all in attendance for this item and they left the Chamber.

#### **4. Housing.**

Kieran Malone Executive Engineer, Shane Grogan Administrative Officer and Helen Butler, Acting Administrative Officer, Housing were in attendance for this item. A Housing Services Report for the period 01/01/2023 to 31/10/2023 was circulated to the Members, along with the Agenda, in advance of the meeting and taken as read.

The Members raised the following queries:-

- Affordable housing – there is a site for sale in Roscrea that is available for affordable housing sites. What is the next step for landowners interested in selling land to the Council for sites?
- Update requested in relation to Glencarrick, Roscrea
- Cardens Court, Templemore - the former Templemore Town Council had long term leases on all 10 houses in this estate which are now vacant. Can a letter be issued to the owner regarding clean-up of the site?

Vacant Property Scheme – the former Council Area Office on the Birr Road Roscrea has been vacant since 2014. A plan for the future use of this building needs to be a priority and Members requested that this item would remain on the Agenda.

The depot for the outdoor staff in Roscrea is also located here. It was pointed out that a new depot in the centre of the town was needed.

- Are retrofit works checked and signed off by Housing staff on completion.
- Do the 32 turnkey houses at Stradavoher, Thurles include the derelict houses located at the back of the estate.
- Loose chippings on the pathway at Dun Muilleán, Mill Road, Thurles have not been removed.



- Update requested on traffic calming measures at The Glebe, Thurles which were promised when Dun Muilleán housing estate was being built.
- Update regarding an estate of 35 unfinished houses in Gortnahoe and the proposal that the Council would acquire the estate and finish same which would be two-fold – (i) would provide much needed housing and (ii) would deal with an area of dereliction.
- Can an inventory of houses which did not have work carried out under the Midlands Retrofit Scheme be prepared with a view to getting the work carried out.
- What is the number of houses in this District acquired under the Tenant in Situ Scheme?
- Who do the newly appointed tenants at Ard Aláinn, Moyne contact regarding issues to be addressed?
- Anti-social behaviour in Kennedy Park Roscrea needs to be addressed. Children from other estates engaged in ASB in this estate at Halloween. The TLO and the Gardai are aware of the names of these children and action needs to be undertaken.
- Derelict property on Grove Street, Roscrea is very unsightly with a tree growing out of the chute of one of the apartments.
- There is a long time delay in turning around vacant houses in the District.
- Are all houses available for letting appearing on the Choice Based Letting system?
- There is a need for more private estates to be constructed – there have been none in Thurles since 2009.
- It is more expensive for property owners to operate under the guidelines of the Derelict Property Grants Scheme.

Replies to queries raised as follows:-

- Any site that is identified as a possible site for affordable houses should be submitted to Housing by using the specific email or by contacting Shane or Jonathan Cooney directly. Funds are designated by Central Government and given on a case by case basis. Consideration will be given to any site identified with a developer in line.
- There is a small 'Ready to Build' scheme in Boherlahan with 4 sites for people to build their own homes.
- Housing are finalising drainage drawings for Glencarrick Roscrea at the moment which is required under Section 718. Following Part VIII it will proceed to tender in the new year.
- Discussions are ongoing with the solicitors for the owner of Cardens Court regarding clean-up of the site. Housing will liaise with Environment on this issue.
- Housing repairs and retrofit works are ongoing. It is a matter for the District to identify houses requiring retrofit works.



- Issues regarding houses where retrofit works have been carried should be reported to Housing who will speak to the contractor.
- Four or five houses in Lacey Avenue / Railway View Templemore have had retrofit works in the last few years.
  - Repairs under long term voids can be a slow process.
  - The derelict properties in Stradavoher are part of the turnkey project.
  - Clean up of pathway in Dun Mulleann is no longer part of the contract and it is a matter for the District to decide if they will carry out the works.
  - Housing will attend at The Glebe to establish what traffic calming measures are required.
  - Housing staff will talk to Jonathan Cooney, Senior Engineer, regarding the unfinished estate at Gortnahoe and establish if there are any proposals for it.
  - Housing staff will liaise with the relevant engineer to include outstanding houses under the Midland Retrofit Scheme.
  - Application regarding derelict property on Grove Street has gone to the Department for approval and once approval is given, works will be tendered in the new year. Overgrowth will be cleared in the meantime.
  - Entrance to former Council Area Office on Birr Road Roscrea also serves as an entrance to a depot for the outdoor staff. Sale or alternative use of the property is therefore limited. Thomas Duffy to liaise with Roads Section in relation to same.
  - There are a number of houses on Church Street Templemore that are derelict but they are not owned by the Council. Housing will check position regarding application under Vacant Unit Scheme.
  - There were 76 homes purchased County wide under the Tenant in Situ Scheme. Housing will revert to the Members directly on the number of homes purchased under this Scheme in the District only.
  - All vacant units are advertised on the Choice Based Letting Scheme however there are special categories that are not i.e. units for disabled and older persons.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Kieran, Shane and Helen for their attendance and they left the Chamber.

## **5. District Engineers Report.**

An updated District Engineer's Report for the MD was circulated to the Members in advance of the meeting and taken as read.

The Members raised the following queries:-

- Acknowledged work carried out on erection of Christmas lights in Thurles over the weekend.



- Update on new smart lighting which had been sold as colour changeable.
- In some instances extra lining will be required in housing estates due to junction layouts etc.
- No 'Stop' or 'Yield' sign within the Monadreen housing estate.
- Pedestrian light at Castlemeadows Thurles not working.
- Public lighting required within 50 to 60 km zone areas.  
Better public lighting and footpath needed for road out to Dew Valley Meats, Abbey Road, Thurles – this has been brought forward as a notice of motion on a couple of previous occasions but no progress to date. There had been a commitment that funds would be set aside for this project.
- Contact should be made with landowners to have trees cut which will alleviate the number of falling trees during storms.
- Update on provision of road markings outside doctor's surgery on Bank Street Templemore.
- Update on proposed works to R498 Junction Borrisoleigh?
- Update on road markings/signage at the top of Liberty Square, Thurles as road users are not clear on who has right of way.
- New policy at St Patrick's Cemetery Thurles whereby the opening / closing of graves is now carried out by private contractors. Changes in policy should be notified to the Members so they can answer questions from the public.
- Extra lights needed in Kennedy Park Roscrea to decrease level of anti-social behaviour – advice given by An Gardaí at recent public meeting.  
Brophy Terrace, Roscrea is a hot spot for youths congregating and adequate lighting is required at this location.
- Accident took place last Christmas on N62 Rosslands – the pole has been replaced but there is still no lighting on the pole.
- Safety measures required at St Cronan's Church, Roscrea – very busy street and issues need to be addressed for safety of parishioners and residents in the area.
- Traffic Plan for Roscrea – need to engage with businesses in the town centre as there has been a lot of investment recently.
- Update on N62 Derrymore national road which is in poor condition. Inlets on the road need to be cleared as there are pockets of storm water on the road.
- Is there a timeframe on when work will be completed on the R445.
- Update on work at The Mall Templemore from the OPW – concerns with the residents that the area will flood if the culverts are not cleaned. There is a footpath closed for the past while due to the works; when will this footpath be open back to the public.
- Flooding at Rosemary Square Roscrea – flooding has continuously occurred at one particular house and works are urgently needed.
- New fencing / bollards have been erected in Templemore Town Park which has impeded parking in the area. Will local clubs be facilitated with parking when running events?



- Are there any submissions under the Active Travel this year – could footpath in Gortnahoe down to doctor's surgery, which is in very bad condition, be included?
- Update on work at the N8 Littleton to Horse & Jockey which is deteriorating.
- White line at Drish needs to be renewed urgently – currently the white line has worn away and drivers think it is a broken white line and are overtaking at this location.
- White line at the Turnpike has been installed however the yellow line has not.
- MD should write to contractor for public lighting due to the long length of time it takes for repairs.

Replies to the Members' queries are as follows:-

- A written response will be requested from Michael Tierney regarding repairs to public lights.
- Public lighting infills were carried out in Horse & Jockey and Borrisoleigh earlier in the year.
- Lining programme completed for 2023. Extent of programme for 2024 will depend on funding
- The issue of the white line at Drish will be referred to the TII.
- An application for remedial works to the road surface on the old N8 has been submitted.
- Funding under the Active Travel has dried up – priority will be given to projects in larger towns.
- The District will facilitate controlled parking for clubs in Templemore Town Park when they are holding events during the summer time only.
- Flooding at the corner at Rosemary Square Roscrea will be examined.
- The OPW have been invited to attend District Meetings but so far have not replied. A formal response from OPW on work at The Mall including the closed footpath will be sought.  
Work at the Abbey Road Bridge is a joint venture between OPW and the Council and is programmed to commence in June 2024.
- Work at N62 Derrymore will be included as a geoapp application.
- An update will be sought from Active Travel Section on the current works on the R445
- The junction at Church Street will be examined.
- Footpath at Childers Park is on the Footpath Programme.
- The Council cannot change any road markings on a national route without the consent of the TII. District will write to the TII regarding top of Liberty Square – have identified issues with this area.
- Road markings outside doctor's surgery on Bank Street Templemore have not been carried out but will be once the Parking Byelaws are adopted. The Byelaws will be brought before the Members in early Q1 2024.



- Work is being carried out on a Section 38 notice which is required for works on the Borrisoleigh R498. Funding can then be sought as a priority.
- In certain instances additional lining will be required in estates such as stop bars and junction lining – this will be on a case by case basis reviewed by the engineer.
- Pedestrian light at Castlemeadows which is not working will be referred to contractor for repair.
- An update from Liam Brett, Senior Engineer, Roads in regard to public lighting in 50 & 60 Kph zones will be sought.
- Traffic management plan in Roscrea does warrant discussion and will be discussed with local Councillors.
- Following consultation with Unions, it was agreed that outside contractors, who are fully competent to carry out the work, would be engaged to open & close graves in St Patrick's Cemetery Thurles.

## 6. Update on District Project Pipeline Plan.

An updated Report on the Capital Projects for the MD was circulated to the Members, in advance of the Meeting, as outlined in the table below and taken as read: -

Project Name & Details	Next Phase Works/Actions
Liberty Square Enhancement Scheme Phase 2 - Thurles	The 'preferred' design solution and option assessment is being agreed with the prescribed statutory stakeholders, prior to finalising the design detail and presenting to all stakeholders and the Elected Members Meetings and Workshops with the MD Elected Members and the public stakeholders is planned for October/November 2023. A Part 8 planning application is expected to be lodged in Q4 2023. Subject to planning approval the final design and tendering stage could commence in mid-2024.
Market Quarter - Thurles	Finalise Detailed Design by end of October 2023. Procurement of Main Works contractor. Construction to commence Q1 2024.
Littleton Labyrinth Walkway and Cycleway - Phase 1	Bord na Mona employees to construct the 7.8km of new track. Construction commencement in September of lifting of the rail tracks with completion in Q1 2024.





Littleton Bushcraft Centre	Procurement for external consultants to prepare a detailed Feasibility Study of Bushcraft Centre located on Bord na Mona Lands. Feasibility Study to be completed for Q1 2024.										
Templemore Town Hall Cultural and Enterprise Centre and Civic Plaza	Construction works commenced May 2023. It is planned that construction works will take 13 months to complete.										
Gantly Road in Roscrea - <i>An Age Friendly Neighbourhood</i>	Awaiting written contract from the Department in regard to requirements for this approved project to proceed on a phased basis. A Design Team to be procured once approval to proceed has been obtained from the funding Dept.										
Roscrea Town Centre First Masterplan	Agreed that a Final Draft of the Roscrea TCF Masterplan will be submitted to TCC at the end of June and complete by July. Official Launch of TCF Master Plan to be arranged for Q4 2023.										
Vacant Housing Units	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>MD Awaiting receipt of keys to property</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>At Inspections/Costings Stage</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In Progress</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Awaiting Budget Approval</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td><b>15</b></td> </tr> </table>	MD Awaiting receipt of keys to property	2	At Inspections/Costings Stage	7	In Progress	4	Awaiting Budget Approval	2	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>
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In Progress	4										
Awaiting Budget Approval	2										
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>										

There were no queries raised.

## 7. Notice of Motion.

There were no Notices of Motion for the October Monthly Meeting.

## 8. Correspondence.

The Cathaoirleach read out a response from the Safety Officer of TII regarding issues previously raised. He also confirmed that he would be representing the Members in a meeting with the TII on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

Councillor J. Ryan queried if a reply has been received from Minister Eamon Ryan regarding the by-pass for Thurles and was disappointed to note that no reply has issued to date. The Cathaoirleach confirmed that he would raise this issue with the TII at their upcoming meeting.



## **9. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations.**

There were no Votes of Sympathy extended.

Votes of Congratulations were extended to:

- John Hogan, former Councillor, who has been appointed Chairman of the IPB.
- Local camogie players and in particular Karen Kennedy Sarsfields and Cáit Devane Upperchurch/Clonoulty who have been announced in the 2023 PwC Camogie All Star team.
- Drom & Inch Camogie Team who have reached the 2023 Munster Final.
- Anthony Graham who is taking up a new role in the HSE's National Ambulance Service.
- The Stanwix Village Thurles on winning the Public Choice Award at the Irish Council for Social Housing Community Housing.

## **10. Any Other Business.**

- Can the litter surveys which had been carried out by Environment to ascertain proper disposal of rubbish by households be resumed. There is a huge issue with rubbish being dumped on private property. The Director of Services confirmed that these surveys have resumed and there is a targeted approach being taken by Environment on this problem. Problem areas should be reported to Environment for attention.
- Was a reply received from Offaly County Council regarding the condition of the graveyard in Birr. The District Administrator advised that a formal letter had not issued rather correspondence by email but she would follow up on the matter.
- The Cathaoirleach advised the Members that the December Monthly Meeting will take place on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December in the Muintir na Tire Hall, Littleton.

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

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE: 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2023

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

MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR

DATE: 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2023