

Minutes of Special Meeting held on 11th January, 2016

Chair: Cllr. M. H. Cavanagh

Cllrs: M. Shortall, J. Brennan, P. Millea, P. Fitzpatrick, M. McCarthy, M. Doyle, M. Doran, M. Noonan, J. Malone, A. McGuinness, E. Aylward, T. Breathnach, F. Doherty, P. Dunphy, P. McKee, D. Fitzgerald, M. O' Neill, P. Cleere, B. Gardner, P. O' Neill, D. Kennedy.

Officials: C. Byrne, S. Walton, M. Melia, M. Mulholland, D. Malone, K. Hanley and A.M. Walsh.

Apologies: Cllr. G. Frisby

Cllr. M. H. Cavanagh requested clarification on the salting of roads as KCLR had reported it has not been done.

Mr. Walton confirmed that salting has been carried out the previous night.

1. Flooding Issues

Ms. Byrne advised that she had made contact with OPW and they agreed to attend a meeting in February. There are a number of schemes with OPW and all of these can be discussed at a Special Meeting.

Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr. P. Millea, seconded by Cllr. P. McKee and agreed: - "That a Special Meeting be held on 8th February, 2016 at 3.45p.m. and OPW will be in attendance. Cllr. Cavanagh advised that the CPG scheduled for 8th February, 2016 will now commence at 2.30p.m

Cllr. Breathnach requested that Councillors be given information on each scheme in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Walton agreed to prepare report for members on each scheme and the CFRAM Programme. He will also outline the statutory responsibility of the local authority and OPW.

Queries in relation to flooding were raised by Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, P. Dunphy, P. McKee, P. Cleere, J. Brennan, M. Doyle, T. Breathnach, M. Noonan, M. Shortall, B. Gardner and D. Kennedy.

The issues raised by members are as follows:-

- Condition of bridges – audit needs to be carried out on the structures, cost of any repairs, who will fund it.
- Staffing level of the outdoor staff – capability in responding to floods, dealing with repairs to roads, clearing drains etc, request approval of Department to employ more staff.
- Responsibility for cleaning and maintaining the rivers, dredging of rivers etc.
- Responsibility of land owners, allowing surface water to run off the road.
- Funding for Flood Relief Schemes, positive impact visible from the Minor Flood Works
- Consultation with members on CFRAMs Report
- Consider increasing the size of drainage pipes to 18" for householders.
- Damage to the road network- seek additional funding from the Department.
- Burst water mains – difficulty contacting Irish Water, pipes needs to be replaced, need to be advised re reductions/cuts in supply.
- Early warning text to Councillors re weather storms, floods etc.
- Repairs to wall at Council yard in Graiguenamanagh.
- Develop Strategic Plan for flooding, locations to be identified, need to avoid building on flood plains.
- Relief from rates for businesses that are flooded
- Explore environmental friendly measures to prevent flooding, develop local led community projects, engage with National Parks/ Wildlife/OPW on alternative solutions. e.g. Dinan River Action Group.
- Public opinion that flood relief works in Kilkenny creating problems further downstream.

Mr. Prendiville advised that any business that has difficulty in paying rates will be dealt with on an individual basis as is the procedure throughout the years.

Mr. Walton advised that the number of outdoor staff have reduced over the years. In order to increase staff numbers, additional budget will be required and this is a matter for the elected member to consider during the budget process i.e. increase rates and or property tax.

He further advised that the Council will be carrying out inspections on all roads and bridges to assess the damage and assess the cost. Contact has already been made with the Department of Transport.

He clarified that the roads grants are allocated on the basis of length of road network in each County.

There is ongoing engagement with the OPW in relation to the Minor Flood Works and also the Major Flood Projects in Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh.

It is essential that the local streams are cleaned, however, there are consents required where streams are in special areas of conservation. Approval of Inland Fisheries and National Parks and Wildlife is required.

Mr. Walton suggested that a scheme similar to the Community Involvement Scheme could be devised to deal with works to areas which flood.

Meeting concluded.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE