

***MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL ROADS MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ARAS AN CHONTAE, TRALEE ON MONDAY,
14th MARCH 2011.***

***MIONTUAIRISCÍ AN CHRUINNITHE SPEISIALTA BÓITHRE DE CHOMHAIRLE
CONTAE CHIARRAÍ A TIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN
CHONTAE, TRÁ LÍ, AR AN LUAN, 14 MÁRTA 2011.***

PRESENT/I LÁTHAIR

Councillors/Comhairleoirí

R. Beasley	J. Brassil
T. Buckley	M. Cahill
B. Cronin	PJ Donovan
T. Ferris	J. Finucane
S. Fitzgerald	N. Foley
D. Healy-Rae	P. Leahy (Mayor)
P. McCarthy	A. McEllistrim
M. Moloney (Deputy Mayor)	T. O'Brien
P. O'Donoghue	M. O'Shea
L. Purtill	J. Sheahan

IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR

Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Director of Services
Mr. G. MacNamara, S.E. Mr. M. Corridan, S.E.
Mr. P. Teahan, A/S.E.E.
Mr. J. Flynn, Director of Corporate Affairs
Mr. G. O'Brien, S.E.O. Corporate Affairs
Mr. J. O'Connor, Head of Finance
Ms. Angela McAllen, Financial/Management Accountant
Ms. M. West, A.O.
Ms. K. Doody, S.O.
Ms. G. Collins, A.S.O.
Ms. K. Condon, C.O.
Mr. P. Corkery, Customer/Communications Relations Officer

ABSENT/AS LÁTHAIR

Cllr. P. Connor-Scarteen
Cllr. M. Gleeson
Cllr. B. O'Connell

The meeting commenced at 12.15pm.

Cllr. P. Leahy, Mayor of Kerry, commenced the meeting.

Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Director of Services, outlined the Programme of Works for National Primary Routes, National Secondary Routes and for the Non-National Road Network as set out in the Roads Programme 2011, which was circulated to members.

The total sum available for roadworks in 2011 is €5,383,545, which does not include Public Lighting, or Administration and represents an overall increase of 34.6% from the 2010 allocations. Mr. O'Sullivan highlighted the increase in Own Resources Funding (+9.4%) and thanked the Members for their contribution in securing this increase. He then outlined the key elements contained in the Roadworks Programme.

Mr. O'Sullivan outlined that 90% of the funding for the 2011 programme was provided through grants. There was a large increase in funding provided by the NRA, however, the Department of Transport allocations have decreased. Overall, there was a 34% increase in funding in 2011. The severe weather over the winter period of 2010/2011 had significant impact on the road network in the County. €7 million has been allocated for Pavement and Minor Improvement Works. A large number of roads have been identified in the 3 year road maintenance programme. It was noted that the "Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads" issued by the Department of Transport in December 2010 has impacted on the roads programme. There will be a limited number of temporary staff taken on to ensure the roads programme will be carried out.

Mr. O'Sullivan welcomed the allocation of €18.85m for National Primary Routes and €15.79m for National Secondary Routes. It was noted that the Compulsory Purchase Order for the Tralee Bypass has been approved. A substantial amount of lands have been acquired for this project. There has been a decrease in the allocation for Winter Maintenance due to the revised policy of the NRA for the procurement of salt. Funding has also been received for the construction of a salt barn. Under the National Secondary Routes allocations, funding has been allocated to 17 projects. Three projects have been funded under the Major Improvement Works allocation, namely Listowel Bypass, N86 Tralee to An Daingean and N69 Rea to Tullig improved realignment. Mr. O'Sullivan stated that the allocation for Ordinary Maintenance equated to €1,900 per kilometre, whereas the average cost of maintenance should be €3,300 per kilometre, therefore this funding is not adequate.

The allocation for Non-National Roads has decreased by 5.6% from the 2010 allocations. €5.5m of this funding has come from Own Resources, of which €553,500 has been allocated to loan charges due to works at Inch on the R561. The allocation for Restoration Improvement has decreased to €7.29m since the adoption of the 3 years road programme. As a result, 13 roads have been moved to the 2012 list. An allocation of €2.84m has been received for Restoration Maintenance. This funding is for surface dressing – Regional Roads should be resurfaced every 8 years and Local Roads every 10 years. However, it is not possible to carry out maintenance on all roads that require it due to the level of funding. Pothole repairs and edge strengthening must now be carried out from Own Resources funding. The funding allocated for Specific Improvement Grants are now at pre 1998 levels. 9 schemes will be funded this year, as selected by the Department. €8.16m has been allocated for Regional and Local Road upkeep. This includes pothole repairs, footpaths and signage. €150,000 has been allocated towards bridges on non-national routes. It was noted that of the €6.39m allocated for Local Roads Upkeep, €4.48m came from own resources. County Councillors Allocations have been maintained at 2010 level of

€29,000 per Councillor. Mr. O'Sullivan reiterated that this funding can only be used for roads related activities. There has been no change to the Local Improvement Scheme funding. 15 schemes were carried out in 2010, and this list will be continued with in 2011. €220,000 has been allocated for Community Involvement Schemes, and €150,000 for CIS retro. A new grant allocation of €200,000 for Regional bridge inspections has been included in this years funding. €799,300 has been allocated for public lighting, of which €749,300 will be spent on energy and maintenance. It was noted that there were 11 road fatalities in Kerry in 2010. €372,600 has been provided for road safety works in the 2011 Roads Programme, and it is hoped to hold the Road Safety Roadshow again this year, in conjunction with the I.T.T., RSA and Tralee Credit Union.

In concluding his report, Mr. O'Sullivan stated that the €56,383,545 provided for Kerry County Council's roadworks programme was a significant investment in the County. Mr. O'Sullivan thanked staff for delivering last years programme, especially under difficult circumstances. He thanked the outdoor staff, especially for their hard work during the severe weather conditions, the engineering/technical staff and the administration staff both in County Buildings and in the Area offices for their work throughout the year. Mr. O'Sullivan also thanked the Mayor and members for their commitment and support throughout the year.

The Members discussed the programme at length. The Members thanked Mr. Tom Curran, County Manager, Mr. Charlie O'Sullivan, Director, Roads, Transportation & Safety and his staff for the preparation of the Roads Programme for 2011. Members also wished to acknowledge and compliment the works carried out by the Area Engineers and Outdoor Staff in extremely difficult weather conditions.

The following specific issues were raised by the Members:

- Members welcomed the funding for the 2011 roads programme. Cllr. John Brassil wished to acknowledge the significant increase in funding for National Primary and National Secondary routes. Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae wished to welcome the funding for the Tralee By-Pass, which he felt would be a great help for the proposed GPCE, and Cllr. Jim Finucane noted that it is a critical piece of infrastructure. Cllr. Michael O'Shea welcomed the funding for the N86 Tralee to An Daingean route. Cllr. Michael Cahill welcomed the extra funding of €4m for the Ring of Kerry route, as he feels this is an extremely important route in relation to tourism.
- Restoration Maintenance Scheme – Cllr. Marie Moloney enquired as to why roads that are in seemingly good condition are being repaired whereas roads that seem to need repair are not? Cllr. Brendan Cronin requested that a letter be sent to each Member clarifying the criteria for repairing roads under the Restoration Maintenance Scheme.
- Restoration Improvement Grant – Cllr. John Brassil welcomed the changes adopted at the Listowel Area Meeting.
- Cllrs. Danny Healy-Rae and Brendan Cronin wished to welcome the funding for the Killarney By-Pass. Cllr. Healy-Rae enquired as to when the preferred route will be published as landowners need to be made aware of route.
- Cllr. Marie Moloney enquired as to whether future surface dressing material used will be able to withstand the severe weather conditions as experienced during the last two winters, as it seems that the surface dressing material currently being used doesn't allow for severe weather conditions.

- Members expressed disappointment at the level of funding for Local Improvement Schemes. Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae felt that the decrease in funding in recent years was disappointing. Cllr. Brendan Cronin suggested writing to the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government requesting an increase in funding for Local Improvement Schemes. Cllr. Marie Moloney enquired as to how the local contribution in relation to Local Improvement Schemes is calculated.
- Community Involvement Schemes – Cllr. John Brassil welcomed the funding for CIS retro and asked if the reports made by Area Engineers on these roads could be made available to the Members. Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae asked that the Roads Department ensure that roads previously repaired through this scheme will be maintained.
- Hedgecutting – Cllr. John Brassil brought up the issue of briars on hedges and said that these need to be maintained over the summer months as they pose a danger for people walking on roads and the safety of traffic. Cllr. Brendan Cronin wished to compliment the landowners who complied and cut their hedges.
- Members raised the issue of speed limits and when they are to be reviewed. Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae asked that the speed limit from the roundabout at Lissivigeen to the bottom of Pike Hill, Killarney be reviewed as he felt that a speed limit of 60kph would be more appropriate at this location. Also, could the road at Ballagh be realigned and the speed limit reduced.
- The issue of flooding in certain areas was raised by the Members. Cllrs. Danny Healy-Rae and Brendan Cronin welcomed the funding received for works at Fossa and felt that these works need to be pursued urgently as the flooding is an issue even with mild rainfall. Cllr. Healy-Rae stated that the work carried out over the past 10/11 years has been great, however, roads need to be drained properly. He felt that area works should check roads regularly to ensure inlets are free to allow water to drain off the road.
- Public Lighting – Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae wished to point out that no public lights have been erected recently, except through County Councillors Allocations. He felt that sometimes lights need to be erected at junctions where there are a number of houses for safety, but these are not permitted.
- Cllr. Brendan Cronin wished to state that in an era of extreme competitiveness that Kerry County Council's Roads Department could maximise this in relation to getting better value for money with regard to plant hire, and that this should be examined.
- Cllr. John Brassil felt that staffing levels are of concern. He felt that the Department is stretched with the number of staff available, and that there are a considerable number of temporary staff available and that these employees should be taken on to ensure street/beach cleaning, hedgecutting etc. are carried out.
- Members discussed local issues of concern and requested that these matters be addressed. Cllr. Michael Cahill welcomed the funding for the design of traffic calming measures at Bansha, Killorglin, and hopes that funding will be available very soon to carry out works at this location. Cllr. John Brassil requested that outside taps/showers be provided at the promenade, Ballyheigue for beach users. Cllr. Michael O'Shea requested that the footpath be extended at Boolteens and that the footpath be extended to service the 3 or 4 housing estates on the Killarney Road at Milltown. He also hoped that a roundabout would be provided at Camp Junction, and that a pedestrian crossing be provided at Bridge Street, Milltown. He welcomed the funding for the R561 Inch to Annascaul, Lispole to Banogue and for the Kilderry Bends Safety Improvement Scheme.
- Cllr. Brendan Cronin requested that the Annamore Road, Castleisland be repaired as it is in an appalling condition. He also welcomed the funding made available for street cleaning.

- Cllr. Michael Cahill requested that a bus shelter be provided for Killorglin and that Bus Éireann be contacted regarding provision of same. He also requested that the OPW be contacted in relation to the coastal erosion at Rossbeigh.
- Cllr. Jim Finucane enquired as to whether it would be possible to revert back to the old system of procuring salt during periods of bad weather and not through the NRA.

Mr. Charlie O'Sullivan, Director of Services replied to the key issues raised and thanked the Members for their compliments to the Staff. Mr. O'Sullivan also thanked the Members for their input to the development of the Roads Programme and in particular their commitment at the Special Area meetings.

In relation to surface dressing, Mr. O'Sullivan informed the Members that the purpose of surface dressing is to provide skid resistance and material used is for this purpose.

In response to Cllr. Moloney's query on how the local contribution is calculated for Local Improvement Schemes, Mr. O'Sullivan responded that the criteria is set out in the scheme and costs depends on length of the scheme and the number of landowners on the road.

With regard to speed limits, Mr. O'Sullivan informed Members that a guideline on speed limit reviews was issued recently by the Department and a speed limit review will commence during the year. A report will be presented to Council.

Mr. O'Sullivan informed Members that the issue of funding for coastal protection is separate to the Roads Programme, this is under the remit of the OPW.

Bus Éireann will be contacted in relation to the provision of a bus shelter in Killorglin.

In relation to staffing, Mr. O'Sullivan stated that adequate resources will be provided in order to ensure the Roads Programme will be completed, and a number of outdoor staff have been taken on in the Tralee Area on a temporary basis to ensure this.

Mr. O'Sullivan also stated that Kerry County Council has never returned any funding received, and had in fact secured extra funding last year for projects.

The replies were noted.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr. T. Ferris, SECONDED by Cllr. M. O'Shea, it was agreed to adopt the 2011 Road Programme as presented. All members agreed.

The Meeting concluded at 1.55 p.m.