

LIMERICK CITY COUNCIL

An Adjourned Monthly Meeting of Limerick City Council was held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, on Monday, 1st October, 2012 at 4.00 p.m.

The following were in attendance :

IN THE CHAIR: Cllr. G. McLoughlin, Mayor

COUNCILLORS: M. Byrne, G. Fahy, J. Gilligan, M. Hourigan, P. Kennedy, K. Kiely, J. Leddin, K. Leddin, D. McCarthy, O. McLoughlin, K. O'Hanlon, M. Quinlivan, D. Scully and T. Shortt

STAFF: Mr. C. Murray, City and County Manager
Mr. P. Dowling, Director of Service
Mr. O. O'Loughlin, Director of Service
Ms. C. Curley, Director of Service
Mr. V. Murray, Acting Director of Service
Mr. P. Murnane, Acting Head of Finance
Mr. K. Reeves, Acting Senior Planner
Mr. J. O'Shaughnessy, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. P. Foley, Senior Executive Officer
Ms. E. Creamer, Staff Officer

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Hurley and Cllr. Long

1. MINUTES

On the proposition of Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. J. Leddin, it was unanimously agreed:

“That the Minutes of Annual Meeting of Limerick City Council held on 25th June, 2012, copies of which were circulated, be and the same are hereby confirmed”.

Cllr. O'Hanlon asked that an amendment be made to page 2 of the Minutes. Recorded in the minutes is that he paid tribute to Mayor Long's work since the amalgamation announcement and to his work on retaining the VEC offices in the city. He stated that as no decision has been made on the location of the VEC offices this statement is incorrect and asked that the minutes be amended accordingly.

Cllr. Scully asked that the word proud be used instead of the word pride in the third paragraph of page 2 of the Minutes.

The above amendments were unanimously approved.

2. MINUTES

On the proposition of Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. J. Leddin, it was unanimously agreed:

“That the Minutes of Adjourned Annual Meeting of Limerick City Council held on 28th June, 2012, copies of which were circulated, be and the same are hereby confirmed”.

3. MINUTES

On the proposition of Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. J. Leddin, it was unanimously agreed:

“That the Minutes of Special Meeting of Limerick City Council held on 20th June, 2012, copies of which were circulated, be and the same are hereby confirmed”.

4. MINUTES

On the proposition of Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. J. Leddin, it was unanimously agreed:

“That the Minutes of Special Meeting of Limerick City Council held on 11th July, 2012, copies of which were circulated, be and the same are hereby confirmed”.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION, SOCIAL POLICY AND HOUSING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2012

The Chairman's Report, Social Policy and Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 3rd September, 2012, was noted.

It was proposed by Cllr. Scully, seconded by Cllr. Hourigan and unanimously agreed to approve the following Recommendation from the Social Policy and Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 3rd September, 2012:

SOCIAL INTERVENTION GRANTS 2012

	Name	Group Activity	Amount recommended
1	Our Lady of Lourdes CDP	Community Services	3,600
2	Southill Community Development Project	Community Transport	4,000
3	Southill Family Resource Centre	Senior Citizens Services	2,000
4	Southill Family Resource Centre	Mens Shed Group activities	2,000
5	St. Marys Adult Education	Community Educational Programs	2,000
6	St. Mary's Maritime Project	Boat Building	5,000
7	St. Marys Area Integrated Development	Community Services	20,000
8	St. Marys Mens Shed Project	Mens Shed Group activities	2,000
9	St. Marys Community Development Project	Misc. Community Services	600
10	St. Munchins Family Resource Centre	Community Services	5,000
11	Care & Repair c/o St. Munchin's Family Resource Centre	Care & Repair Services	5,000

Cllr. O'Hanlon enquired if the position of Housing Inspector, which recently became vacant, has been filled. He stressed the importance of this position adding that most people respect the house they get and their neighbours, however, there are others who do not and cause problems in their area. He added that the Rent Allowance Scheme should be administered by Local Authorities as presently it is administered by the Health Boards who carry out no background checks on applicants prior to approving the allowance.

In reply, the Director of Service (Regeneration and Housing Services) stated that the City Council has advertised for the position of Housing Inspector and hope to have the position filled shortly.

Cllr. Hourigan stated that the housing transfer policy should include an option to cover exceptional circumstances. The present Policy does not provide for marriage breakdowns and he referred specifically to a case where violence was involved and the applicant needed her housing transfer urgently. He enquired if people on the RAS Programme go back on to the housing waiting list afterwards. He enquired if there has been any progress on the Draft Housing Strategy with Limerick and Clare County Councils and asked how many houses they provided since it's implementation. He referred to the fact that houses in the regeneration areas get total refurbishment, however, the response to housing repairs is very slow which is causing disquiet among our housing tenants and asked that this be looked at.

Cllr. Scully referred to an individual who took a house under the RAS Programme and cannot get back on the housing waiting list unless they leave the house they were allocated under the RAS Programme and become homeless. He asked that this clause be amended.

In reply, the Director of Service (Regeneration and Housing Services) stated that there is co-operation between the local authorities under the Housing Strategy. He asked Cllrs. Hourigan and Scully to contact him regarding specific cases and he will answer their queries. He pointed out that all policy changes have to come before City Council for approval.

6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10TH SEPTEMBER, 2012

The Chairman's Report, Transportation and Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 10th September, 2012, was noted.

Cllr. Gilligan stated that he put forward a Motion to the Meeting in relation to traffic congestion in Corbally and that a one way system be operated there and enquired why it did not come forward as a Recommendation to the City Council.

In reply, the Senior Engineer (Roads and Transportation) stated that any changes to traffic on Athlunkard Bridge would be premature pending the construction of the Northern Distributor Road. He added that making Athlunkard Bridge one way would cause a lot of disturbance to people living on either side of the bridge. He added that the Northern Distributor Road is being promoted by Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council with Clare being the lead authority. He pointed out that there are representatives from Limerick City Council on the Steering Committee and the letter sent out to Members by Clare County Council, as the lead authority, was on behalf of all three local authorities.

Cllr. Gilligan stated that parking is a major problem in the city centre and suggested that consideration be given to converting some of the loading bays to parking areas as they are restricting parking particularly on Saturdays and added that traders are concerned about this issue.

Cllr. Byrne suggested that these spaces be used for loading early in the mornings and then transferred to parking areas for the remainder of the day.

The Senior Engineer pointed out that there are some loading bays in the city that act as loading bays in the mornings and parking bays or taxi ranks later in the day and the City Council will look to extend this policy to more bays where feasible.

Cllr. Hourigan proposed that free city centre car parking from 2.00 p.m. onwards each day be introduced in the run up to Christmas. This was seconded by Cllr. Scully.

In reply, the Senior Engineer stated that this will be considered by the Management Team who would revert back to Members on the matter.

Cllr. Quinlivan referred to the loss of revenue from parking fines due to reduction in the number of traffic wardens and asked if a reply has been received from the Department on Limerick City Council's application to recruit more traffic wardens.

In reply, the Senior Engineer stated that the City Council has written to the Department of Finance and has got approval to take on six traffic wardens and one supervisor. The supervisor's position has been advertised and should be filled shortly.

Cllr. Quinlivan referred to the announcement last week by Bus Eireann of a number of scheduled changes to the bus services in the city which, in his opinion, are unacceptable. He stated that there is now no bus going up Edward Street and the bus service to Ballynanty has been changed from every half hour to every hour. He asked if Limerick City Council had any meetings with Bus Eireann prior to these changes.

Cllr. K. Leddin expressed concern that there are no bus services from Colbert Station to the city centre and presently the public have to get a taxi to the various bus stops throughout the city.

Cllr. Shortt supported the previous speakers adding that a satisfactory bus service is very important for the elderly and the general community. He pointed out that one of the scheduled changes is the provision of a bus service from the Ballinacurra area straight through to the University eliminating the necessity to get two buses so some of the changes have been positive. He referred to the large number of teenagers waiting for buses to carry them out to schools in the county and appealed to parents to look at the many excellent city schools which these children could go to. The journey out to county schools is making the day longer for such teenagers.

In reply, the Senior Engineer stated that the new bus routes were introduced in Limerick city as a result of almost twelve months of consultation between Bus Eireann, the National Transport Authority, the National Roads Authority and other relevant stakeholders. He confirmed that local authorities, including Limerick City Council, were consulted and the routes now in place are what was approved by the National Transport Authority. He added that in the revised routes at least two bus routes will interconnect with rail and bus services at Colbert Station. He stated that the bus coming from University of Limerick will pass Colbert Station and go down Mallow Street and this bus will also serve bus stops along Childers Road.

Cllr. Hourigan expressed concern that the heavy rain over the last few months could result in flooding adding that some residents have been told that their insurance will not cover their properties for flooding again. He suggested that Limerick City and County Councils meet with the ESB to discuss the releasing of the water at Ardnacrusha. He enquired if Limerick City Council was pursuing developers to take housing estates in charge.

In reply, the Senior Engineer stated that the Office of Public Works operate the Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management Programme (CFRAM). As part of the Programme the OPW have employed Jacobs Consultants who are currently surveying and modelling the river and its tributaries to develop mapping and assess the risk of future flooding. The OPW and Jacobs Consulting have also met with the ESB to develop a Management Policy for the levels of water in the River Shannon.

Cllr. Hourigan enquired if a decision had been made to provide sewage and water infrastructure in the Pass Road and Cratloe Road as part of the development of the Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road.

In reply, the Senior Engineer stated that Limerick City Council has a policy for taking in charge of housing estates, however, the City Council does not pursue developers to take their estates in charge. He added that there are provisions in the Local Government Act 2001 for residents groups in relation to this matter.

Cllr. Hourigan congratulated all involved in the excellent job recently carried out in John's Square.

In reply to Cllr. Hourigan, the Senior Engineer stated that the mains sewage and surface water infrastructure will be provided for in the proposed Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road and residents will have an opportunity to connect to these public sewers if they so wish, however, Limerick City Council would not be providing connection to private houses as part of the Scheme. He pointed out that it is hoped to have the work completed within two years.

Cllr. Hourigan referred to two derelict sites in his area and asked that the City Council get active against the owners of derelict sites.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

Submitted list of tenders opened in respect of the following :

- Pre Qualification Submissions for Limerick City Traffic Control Equipment Maintenance Contract;
- Refurbishment Works to Rathbane Municipal Golf Course, Limerick;
- Limerick City Regional and Local Road Resurfacing Contract 2012;
- Contract No. 1 RTP1 Phase 1 Limerick City and Environs Civil Contracts;
- Panel for Civil Engineering Services in relation to Limerick Smarter Travel Infrastructural Works Suitability Assessment Submission;
- Expressions of Interest for Operation, Maintenance and Management Services for Grove Island Leisure Centre Limited;
- Coonagh / Knockalisheen Distributor Road Scheme Civil Engineering Works to facilitate advanced ESB Diversions;
- Gully Cleaning Services;
- Limerick Riverside Improvement Strategy City Quays – Electrical Package;
- Limerick Riverside Improvement Strategy City Quays – Paving Supply
- Limerick Riverside Improvement Strategy City Quays – Tensile Fabric Canopy;
- Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road – Works Contractor and as PSCS;
- Limerick City and Environs RTP1 Foundation Construction;
- Limerick City Traffic Management CCTV Maintenance and General Works;
- Waiver Scheme for Refuse Collection for Low Income Households;
- Limerick Traffic Management Mobility and Operations Consultancy Services;

Submitted letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Finance in relation to Limerick City Council's letter dated 11th June, 2012 regarding the amalgamation of VEC Headquarters.

Submitted letter of acknowledgement from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning in relation to the headquarters for the amalgamated City and County VEC to be located in the city and said she would be happy to meet the City Council to discuss the issue and and that she would also contact Minister Quinn directly in relation to the matter.

Submitted letter from Richmond Rugby Football Club thanking Limerick City Council for the Civic Reception accorded to them in June adding that it was indeed a great honour to be bestowed upon the club in recognition of it's achievements in the previous season.

Submitted letter from the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport thanking Limerick City Council for it's letter recommending a number of resolutions in relation to Shannon Airport. It stated that, while the membership of the Steering Group and Task Force is now settled, arrangements for consultations with stakeholders, including Limerick City Council, are also in place and to maintain efficiency in the overall process, the formal route for such consultation is through the two Task Forces. He stated that he would arrange with Rose Hynes and John Fitzgerald to meet up with the City Council shortly.

Submitted fifth newsletter for the Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CRFAM) Study

Submitted notification from Women for Election of a Programme for women called 'Inspire' and is open to all women with an interest in public and Private life. This will be held in Dublin on 6th October and in Waterford on 17th November.

Cllr. O'Hanlon wished to raise an issue now under correspondence, however, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. McLoughlin said he could raise it under 'Any other Business'.

However, Cllr. O'Hanlon said he wished to raise it at this stage.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. McLoughlin adjourned the meeting for 5 minutes.

The Meeting reconvened at 5.05 p.m.

Cllr. O'Hanlon thanked Ministers Michael Noonan and Jan O'Sullivan for their efforts in trying to retain the headquarters of the VEC in the city.

Cllr. Gilligan referred to the new water levels introduced by former Minister John Gormley and stated that a report on flooding in St. Mary's Park was requested three years ago, however, it still has not been done.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. McLoughlin asked Members to put their phones on silent.

The Manager advised Members that he has appointed Mr. Tom Enright as the Director of Service, Economic Development & Planning for both city and county. He stated that he will have the Directorates across both authorities appointed by the end of the month and will advise Members accordingly. He stated that there will be a significant number of staff changes over the next twelve months which he will discuss directly with staff.

In reply to Cllr. Scully, the City and County Manager stated that Tom Enright, like himself, will be functioning between both local authorities, however, his address will be County Hall, Dooradoyle.

The Members welcomed the appointment of Mr. Enright adding that it signals the start of the merger between city and county.

8. DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

It was proposed by Cllr. J. Leddin, seconded by Cllr. Scully and unanimously agreed to approve Disposal of Property as follows in accordance with Notices already circulated under Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 :

- (a) Disposal of land (Ground Rent) consisting of an area comprising 0.0471 hectares or thereabouts statute measure situate off Parnell Street in the City of Limerick and shown coloured magenta on Drawing No. AG 3038 to Marine Pine Limited.
- (b) Disposal of land consisting of an area comprising 0.0082 hectares or thereabouts statute measure situate at Aherns Row in the City of Limerick and shown outlined in red on Drawing No. AG 3040 to the Estate of Catherine Mullan.

9. PARTICIPATION BY MEMBERS AT CONFERENCES

It was proposed by Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. Scully and unanimously agreed to approve participation by Members at the following conferences :

Diploma in Local Government Studies with The Institute of Public Administration supported by five tutorials held regionally

Tutorials held in Clare County Council Offices, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare

September 2012 – March 2013

Estimated Travel and Subsistence (per tutorial) € 78.50

Conference Fee : €840.00

Elected Members Training Seminar organised by Esperanza Enterprises entitled:

'Protecting the Public from Dishonest Trading'

Held in The Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Dublin Road, Galway

5th - 6th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €225.95

Conference Fee : €150.00

The Irish Association of Suicidology Annual Conference entitled 'Learning to Listen:

A Suicide Prevention Conference'

Held in The Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow

10th - 11th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €305.10

Conference Fee : € 75.00

Elected Members Training Seminar organised by Esperanza Enterprises entitled:

'Collecting Local Government Revenue, Dealing with households in low incomes'

Held in The Westport Plaza Hotel, Castlebar Street, Westport, Co. Mayo

12th - 13th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €318.10

Conference Fee : €150.00

Elected Members Training Seminar organised by Ace Training entitled
'Michael Collins and the creation of Irish Democracy'
Held in The Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork
12th - 14th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €425.91
Conference Fee : €100.00

IHRC and Law Society of Ireland 10th Annual Human Rights Conference entitled
'Promoting and Protecting Human Rights in Ireland: The Role of the Irish Constitution and European
Law'

Held in The President's Hall, The Law Society of Ireland, Blackhall Place, Dublin 7
13th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €265.16
Conference Fee : Nil

National Rural Development Conference entitled 'Maximising the Use of Rural Resources'

Held in Johnstown House Hotel, Enfield, Co. Meath
16th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €319.28
Conference Fee : Nil

Web Summit Dublin 2012 Political Briefing

Held in The Library Room, RDS, Dublin
18th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €340.54
Conference Fee : Nil

Elected Members Training Seminar organised by Esperanza Enterprises entitled
'Septic Tank Case Studies Solving the Problems'

Held in Westport Plaza Hotel, Westport, Co. Mayo
19th - 20th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €318.10
Conference Fee : €150.00

Seminar organised by TGR Seminars entitled 'Reform of Local Government II.
Key updates, recent developments and implications for county and city councillors'

Held in Bunratty Castle Hotel, Bunratty, Co. Clare
19th - 21st October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €236.88
Conference Fee : €145.00

Training Seminar organised by Kadenza Consultancies entitled 'Publication of the Valuation
(Amendment) Bill 2012. What will it mean for Local Authorities?'

Held in Castle Leslie, Glaslough, Co. Monaghan
19th - 21st October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €525.14
Conference Fee : €145.00

Respond! Jubilee 30th Anniversary Conference entitled 'Better Being: Promoting Well-being within
Communities'

Held in The Rochestown Park Hotel, Douglas, Cork
25th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence : €231.86
Conference Fee : € 60.00

Elected Members Training Seminar organised by Esperanza Enterprises entitled 'Amendments to Social Welfare Acts, Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2012'
Held in The Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Dublin Road, Galway
26th - 27th October, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence :	€225.95
Conference Fee :	€150.00

Association of Irish Festival Events Annual Conference 2012 entitled 'Gathering for the Business of Fun'

Held in The Carlton Shearwater Hotel, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
8th - 9th November, 2012

Estimated Travel and Subsistence :	€259.03
Conference Fee :	€365.00

10. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Submitted Financial Statement for the month of August, 2012 which was adopted unanimously on the proposition of Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. Scully.

11. REPORT ON ADJUSTMENTS TO ADOPTED BUDGET 2012

The Report on adjustments to Adopted Budget 2012 was noted.

Cllr. Kennedy welcomed the fact that the Local Government Fund Allocation 2012, which was initially to be reduced by €812,000, was subsequently reduced by €203,000. He said the Government should be funding Local Authorities more, as the reduction in funding puts a huge strain on the Local Authorities and commercial sector. He stated that additional expenditure is needed for dealing with dangerous buildings which, luckily, has not led to tragic accidents in the city. He referred to the fact that when a building is being demolished the adjoining properties have a right of support and should also be weatherproofed. He asked for further information in relation to the self insurance fund.

The City and County Manager pointed out that the Council will depend on Central Government funding to keep services going, however, he stated that the budget process will be severe.

Cllr. Quinlivan said the reduction in the Local Government Fund Allocation is not as severe as previously anticipated, however, there is still a reduction of €203,000 which has to be catered for. He pointed out that the savings to date are as a result of the reduction in staff numbers and he commended the staff for their hard work, commitment and dedication despite having increased work loads.

Cllr. O'Hanlon pointed out that he had emailed the Mayor seeking to hold a Special Meeting to discuss the proposed cuts adding that there should have been a discussion or debate with Members prior to making the adjustments to Adopted Budget.

Cllr. Gilligan complimented the previous City Manager on reducing the City Council's deficit and also reducing rates on five occasions which no other Local Authority has achieved.

The City and County Manager acknowledged the stewardship by former City Managers in making the City Council a financially sound organisation. He stated that the adjustments in the Adopted Budget were necessary due to reduction in income

Cllr. Scully complimented Mr. Conn Murray and his predecessors Tom Mackey and Kieran Lehane and also Pat Murnane, Acting Head of Finance on reducing the deficit of the Council and he welcomed the increased allocation in front line services. He referred to the fact that the shortfall in income is due

to the reduced number of parking fines issued. He also paid tribute to all the householders who paid the Household Charge. He stated that eventually Local Authorities will be receiving no funding from Central Government and services will have to be provided from local finances including property tax.

The Acting Head of Finance, on behalf of Management and Staff, thanked Cllr. Scully for his kind comments. He confirmed that Members will be consulted nearer Budget time in relation to the Budget Book. He informed Cllr. Kennedy that the estimated liability outstanding on public liability claims was €6.6m. Limerick City Council provide €1.5m to €1.8m annually towards self insurance as part of the annual budget process. There is possibly a need for greater provision to be made and this can be considered by Members at budget time.

12. APPROVE A ROAD TO BE A PUBLIC ROAD AT SHANNONVALE, OFF CRATLOE ROAD, LIMERICK.

It was proposed by Cllr. Hourigan, seconded by Cllr. Kiely and unanimously agreed to approve a road to be a Public Road at Shannonvale, off Cratloe Road, Limerick.

13. AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr. Byrne and unanimously agreed to amend Standing Orders to incorporate a change in the commencement time of the ordinary meetings of the City Council from 4.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. It was also unanimously agreed that the Council shall rise not later than 6.30 p.m. on the day of the meeting unless otherwise decided by resolution of the Council.

14. UPDATED REPORT ON MID WEST AREA STRATEGIC PLAN (MWASP)

It was proposed by Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. Byrne and unanimously agreed to approve updated Report on Mid West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP).

15. GRANT AID TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES 2012

It was proposed by Cllr. Kiely, seconded by Cllr. Byrne and unanimously agreed to approve Grant Aid towards Environmental Improvement Initiatives 2012 as follows :

	Expenditure Activity	Amount Recommended €
Ballynanty Rovers FC, C/o Dermot O'Halloran, 82 Delmege Park	Clean up of Ballynanty area	500.00
Drominbeg Residents Assoc., Rhebogue	Flower & Shrub planting, Tree planting and Clean ups	500.00
Meadowbrook Residents Assoc., Mill Road, Corbally	Grass cutting, weed control, flower & shrub planting & Clean ups	500.00

Oakwood Residents Assoc., Old Singland Road	Grass cutting, flower & shrub planting and Clean ups	500.00
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16. AMENDMENT TO LIMERICK CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010 - 2016

It was proposed by Cllr. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. J. Leddin and unanimously agreed to amend the Limerick City Development Plan 2010 – 2016 as follows :

“To rezone a 1.53 hectare (3.78 acres) site at Southill Area Centre located between Keyes Park to the west, Southill Junior School to the east and the Holy Family Church to the south. The northern part of the site is to be rezoned from 'Public Open Space' to 'Residential' and the southern part is to be rezoned from 'Public Open Space' to 'Education, Community and Cultural' use”.

17. PLANNING PROPOSALS AND DECISIONS

The Meeting noted the list of Planning Proposals under consideration at 14th September, 2012 and Decisions taken from 18th June, 2012 to 14th September, 2012.

In reply to Cllr. Hourigan, the Acting Senior Planner stated that additional details were sought from the G.A.A. in relation to the planning application for the Gaelic Grounds and to date same have not been submitted.

Cllr. Kennedy referred to planning application by Bennett Oil Limited for retention of planning permission for a portacabin office and a solid fuel storage yard to the side of the service station at Roxboro Road, Limerick and pointed out that there is an elderly couple living nearby and the Planner should give consideration to them when making a decision on this application.

In reply, the Senior Planner stated that additional details were requested in respect of the proposed storage shed which were submitted two weeks ago. A decision is due to be made on this application in two weeks time.

Cllr. Quinlivan referred to planning application 12/55 for development of a youth club centre and associated works at Knockalisheen Road/Ballynanty Road and was informed by the Acting Senior Planner that additional details were requested from the applicants on 29th May, 2012 which have not been submitted to date.

Cllr. Shortt pointed out that the planning process is an independent process and canvassing of an application should not affect the decision made on an application.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. McLoughlin stated that how planning decisions are made should not be discussed in the Council Chamber.

Cllr. Gillian welcomed planning application 12/121 by Shannon Foynes Port Company for development at the Bannatyne Mills, Dock Road, Limerick.

18. AN BORD PLEANALA

The Meeting noted the decisions taken by An Bord Pleanala from 18th June, 2012 to 14th September, 2012.

19. ANY OTHER MATTER

Cllr. O'Hanlon stated that the retention of the V.E.C. Headquarters in Cecil Street is vital for the revitalisation of the city. He has been informed that the old labour exchange building next to the V.E.C. offices in Cecil Street has become available and pointed out that the combined buildings could adequately cater for the central V.E.C. Offices. He stated that the customers who avail of the services of the V.E.C. are not in a position to pay for taxis and buses to travel out the country if the headquarters was moved there as most of these people are from disadvantaged areas. He pointed out that Ministers Michael Noonan and Jan O'Sullivan have both indicated that they would meet with the Members of the City Council to discuss this matter and to help in any way they can. He referred to a letter he received from Minister Ruairi Quinn dated 27th September, 2012 which stated that he announced the headquarters for the sixteen bodies and asked if any Member was aware that a decision had been made on this matter.

Cllr. McCarthy, as Chair of the V.E.C. pointed out that he met with Minister Jan O'Sullivan and she undertook to pursue the matter of having the headquarters of the V.E.C. in Cecil Street. However, subsequently the V.E.C. met with the Minister's advisors who stated that the matter of the location of the headquarters for the V.E.C. is a matter for the new Committee and the Chief Executive Officer.

Cllr. Hourigan supported what Cllr. McCarthy said as he was at the meeting when this matter was discussed.

Cllr. K. Leddin stated that she asked about the proposed location for the headquarters of the V.E.C. when she met the Minister recently and she also received a letter from him on the matter. He indicated in such letter that the decision is a matter for the new Committee and the Chief Executive Officer. She said it would be a big mistake if the headquarters was moved out the country leaving it's existing offices which would become a large derelict building. He suggested that the Members work with the local Ministers and Deputies to ensure the headquarters are retained in the city centre.

Cllr. J. Leddin agreed with the previous speakers and said he was disappointed that Minister Quinn did not make a decision on the headquarters of the Limerick V.E.C. as a lot of people made representations to him on the matter. He said he would like to meet with the consultants who are doing the City Centre Strategy.

In reply, the City and County Manager said he would pursue this and ask GVA for dates to brief the Members.

Cllr. Shortt expressed concern at the redeployment of city students to country schools. In his opinion, parents who send their children to country schools should be challenged and asked to attend open nights in city centre schools with a view to bringing their children back to them. He referred to the booklet on the biodiversity plan which was published recently and said it is an excellent production, however, pointed out that the graphic designer and printer were not acknowledged in the book despite doing a wonderful job. He asked for an update on the planning for the forthcoming Year of Culture and stressed the importance of rebranding Limerick. He expressed disappointment that the plans for the temporary relocation of the City Museum to the Opera Centre site have been put on hold. He said he appreciated there was funding restrictions and that City Hall will accommodate the Museum in Istabraq Hall, however said this is not an acceptable or suitable long term location. He suggested that any fit out costs for the relocation of the City Museum in the Opera Centre site could be spread over a ten year period and asked if this was possible.

The City and County Manager agreed to report back to Members as soon as there has been progress in relation to City of Culture.

Cllr. Fahy, supported by Cllr. Scully, proposed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the family of the late Dinny Hayes, Markevitz Drive. Dinny was a former employee for over thirty years of the City Council and was much respected and his untimely and sudden death was very sad.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. McLoughlin proposed the following votes of sympathy :

- Mrs. Elaine Woulfe and family on the death of her husband, Richard;
- Mrs. Joan Toomey and family on the death of her husband, Denis;
- Mrs. Olive Keane and family on the death of her husband, Thomas;

In reply to Cllr. O. McLoughlin, the City and County Manager stated that there is not a budget for Civic Receptions and asked Members to bear this in mind. He pointed out that people can still be honoured with Mayoral Receptions.

THE MEETING THEN CONCLUDED

A TRUE RECORD

CONFIRMED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2012.

MAYOR OF LIMERICK

