

DEPUTATION MEETING REPORT

Date & Time: 28th of May 2025 @ 2.30pm.

Deputation Group: Kilcronan Residents Association.

Deputation Group Attendees: Glen Cunningham, Ian Dooley, Ingrid McDonnell, Emma McCarthy.

Elected Members: Cllr Shirley O Hara, Cllr Trevor Gilligan, Cllr Francis Timmons, Cllr William Carey.

Council Officials: David Fennell (Senior Executive Parks Superintendent, Public Realm), Farhan Nasiem (Senior Executive Engineer, Roads Dept.), Laurence Colleran (Senior Executive Parks Superintendent, Public Realm), Lorcan Brennan (Senior Executive Engineer, Roads Dept.), Catherine White (SSO Community Dept.), Alison Somerville (SO Community Dept.), Kelly Fitzgerald (ASO Community Dept.), Abdulaahi Mahamuud (CO Community Dept.).

Cllr Shirley O' Hara presided

Items Discussed

Agenda Item 1. - Play area – This is something we are hugely interested in, again we have had meetings with SDCC and feel this would be a massive and positive addition.

Laurence Colleran replied to the groups query:

Commitment given:

L. Colleran noted the importance of providing play spaces within older, more established residential estates in the county. He highlighted the need for Cllrs to allocate an appropriate budget for these spaces due to their significant positive impact on children's and families' wellbeing. Laurence emphasised that accessible and safe play areas, particularly those within walking distance in estates and not requiring children to cross busy roads, are vital.

Laurence noted a growing demand for play spaces in residential areas—a shift from a decade ago when playgrounds were primarily located in parks. This change is attributed to the success of earlier play space programs, which have led to greater community acceptance.

To address these needs, the Council is currently developing a comprehensive play policy. This includes mapping all existing play facilities county-wide, assessing their quality, and identifying areas that are underserved. Community requests, such as those from Kilcronan, are also being documented to support future planning. Laurence confirmed that approximately 80–90% of the mapping is complete and that the Council aims to present the final play policy to councillors soon. The goal is to guide future

investment in play facilities, with strong consideration given to areas like Kilcronan where both need and community demand have been demonstrated.

Agenda Item 2. – Roads & Paths – Some works started in Kilcronan & the worst of the paths were fixed; however, the rest have not been finished, & the roads badly need to be resurfaced/finished.

Lorcan Brennan replied to the groups query:

Commitment given:

L. Brennan advised there was some footpath repairs done last year and wanted to acknowledge that there is more to do with regards to both footpaths and roads. Regarding the current year, he confirmed that they are currently in the tendering stage for footpath and roadway repairs costings. He advised that once costs are confirmed, an assessment can be carried out as to what can be completed this year within the annual budget.

Agenda Item 3. - Broken wall between Kilcronan & Kilmudhuddrick, this has been raised many times and also raised with Cllr Francis Timmins.

Lorcan Brennan replied to the groups query:

Commitment given:

L. Brennan acknowledged the ongoing concerns regarding the repeatedly damaged wall between Kilcronan and Kilmudhuddrick, noting that it has been knocked down twice following reconstruction efforts. He emphasised the need to reassess the situation and develop a more sustainable, long-term solution. Mr. Brennan referenced suggestions such as a park or walkway as potential alternatives and committed to exploring all viable options. He will work collaboratively with the residents' association and local councillors to formulate an appropriate and lasting plan for the area.

Agenda Item 4. - Zebra crossing is badly needed - there is no safe crossing on St. Cuthberts Road.

Farhan Nasiem replied to the groups query:

Commitment given:

F. Nasiem noted it was discussed recently internally and that they have circulated a proposal, it's in design stage and while he doesn't have the exact commencement construction date but can endeavour that they will be obstructing a zebra crossing. He encouraged residents to send in requests via application in relation to traffic calming so they can see exactly where more priority is and to endeavour to meet the needs.

Agenda Item 5. - Biodiversity garden area – We are really interested in progressing this. We are meeting with SDCC & Living Woodlands and really feel this would be a great addition to Kilcronan Estate.

David Fennell replied to the groups query:

Commitment given:

D. Fennell expressed appreciation to the group for their contribution and provided an update on the current status of the proposal. The documents submitted by the Residents' Association are now with

him. As part of the site assessment process for establishing a mini woodland, a preliminary screening has been conducted. However, this particular site has not yet undergone a full assessment.

Initial findings indicate the presence of a major water mains pipe running through the proposed area, which significantly limits its suitability for tree planting due to potential interference. Mr. Fennell noted that a mini woodland is unlikely to deter anti-social behaviour. Instead, he suggested the possibility of creating a wildflower meadow in the area, supported by a revised grass management strategy, such as a six-week mowing cycle or a once-annual cut. He acknowledged, however, that such approaches can be difficult to maintain, particularly in locations affected by illegal dumping. Nonetheless, he proposed that the meadow concept could be trialled.

In addition, he recommended exploring the possibility of extending the existing biodiversity woodland slightly further up in the Kilcronan Green area, potentially expanding the designated area by one or two metres.

Regarding the implementation method, he explained that while typical mini woodland installations use heavy machinery to reduce soil compaction, their preferred approach involves layering cardboard over the ground, followed by a covering of bark or woodchip. After four to six months, this method enriches the soil, making it suitable for planting.

Mr. Fennell concluded by offering to meet with the group on-site to further discuss and assess the options.

The meeting ended as there was no other business.