

Special Meeting - 15th January 1904.

A special meeting of the County Council, was held in the Council Chamber, Courthouse, Wexford, on Friday 15th January 1904.

Present:- Mr. E. Hore, (Vice Chairman) presiding
Other Councillors:- Messrs W. Browne, C. H. Peacocke, John Bolger, John J. Kehoe, J. Bolger, W. A. Ennis, J. B. Hearn, D. Dempsey, J. Sinnott, W. Murphy, D. Kavanagh, John F. Walsh, and J. E. Maylor.

The Secretary of the Council, Mr. Webster, County Surveyor, and R. W. Elger, Solicitor, were in attendance.

Auditor's Report.

The following report of the Auditor of the Local Government Board, on his audit of the accounts of the County Council, for the half-years ended 30th September 1902 and 31st March 1903, was read.

No. 69.485 : 1903

Wexford County

Wicklow

1st December 1903.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour, to report that I have completed the audit (which had been opened by the late Mr. Calvert) of the accounts of the County Council of Wexford, for the half-years ended the 30th September 1902, and 31st March 1903, and beg to forward Abstracts of the same duly declared and certified.

I ascertained that all sums received were properly brought to account, and that the several items of expenditure were supported by adequate vouchers.

The collection of the rates for both periods has been efficiently carried out, as the arrears returned

as outstanding have been all practically accounted for.

As regards a paragraph in the last Auditor's report, in which attention was called to an error in the assessment of No. 12. Special Charge (Mountgarrett Bridge) the levy for which was omitted on a small portion of one Electoral Division, I have satisfied myself that the matter in question has been since correctly dealt with.

The non-receipt of any sums for either of the Railway Companies, whose systems run through the County in respect of maintenance of roadways on, and approaches to, overline bridges (which was also commented on by Mr. Calvert) has been investigated and Counsel's opinion taken, which was favourable to the claims of the Council. When discussing this question with the Secretary, and also the County Surveyor, during the audit, I strongly advised that an amicable settlement of the case should, if possible be carried out, in order to avoid the costs of legal proceedings.

I had also an interview with the Solicitor of the Council, on the same subject, and he fully concurred with my views. He accordingly brought them under the notice of the Finance Committee at their meeting on the following day and they have recommended that the course suggested should be adopted by the Council.

A Road Contractor in the Rural District of Gorey was overpaid the sum of 6/8. As the amount, however, was duly lodged to the credit of the County, prior to the close of the audit, it is unnecessary for me to make any comment on the matter.

The Bonds of the accounting officers were produced for my inspection, and were found to be correct and in order.

I have only to add that the accounts were in every respect satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most Obedient Servant,

W^m Gibson,

Auditor.

The Local Government Board

Custom House, Dublin

With reference to overline bridges on Railways the following minute of the Proposal Committee was confirmed on the motion of W^r Ennis, seconded by W^r Dempsey:— "W^r Webster reported, I have been in communication with the Chief Engineer of the D. W. & W. Railway, with reference to the maintenance of roads over the railway. I shall lay before you the offer of £30. per annum from the Railway Co., in lieu of maintaining these roads and road diversions I think the offer is a fair one. I am in correspondence with the Engineer of the Great Southern and Western Railway on the same subject with regard to their system in the County."

W^r Webster read the correspondence which had taken place between himself and the Engineer of the Railway Company. There were 23 bridges in all to be taken into account of which 3 were maintained by the Railway Company, thus leaving 20 maintained by the County.

W^r Peacocke proposed:— "That a copy of the letter of the Chief Engineer of the D. W. & W. Railway Co. to W^r Webster, be furnished the Wexford Urban District Council, and that they be requested to inform the County Council as soon as possible, if they will accept £2.10/- per annum for the maintenance of the roadway over the bridge within the Borough boundary."

W^r Ennis seconded the resolution which was adopted.

New Auditor

Under date 12th December 1903 letter No. 155/W/1903. from the Local Government Board, stated that until

further notice the accounts of the County Council would be audited by Mr D. B. Sheehan Local Government Auditor.

Motor Car Regulations

Circular letter No. 57809/1903. from the Local Government Board, under date 23rd November 1903, with reference to the issue by that Board of regulations under section 7 of the motor car Act of 1903 was read.

In this letter the Local Government Board pointed out that the regulations had been framed after conference with the English Local Government Board, and the Secretary for Scotland, and after a careful consideration of the various suggestions received from local authorities and others to whom the draft regulations had been submitted.

The regulations did not materially differ from the Draft the principal alterations being that two shapes of rectangular plates were permitted. Particulars of these were in the Fourth Schedule to the Order.

The index letter "I" would be used only in Ireland.

The Secretary of the County Council and any other Officer duly authorised by the Council are empowered to perform any duty or exercise any power of the Council, for the purpose of putting the regulations into effect.

The Act came into force on the first of January 1904.

Payments of Rate Collectors under Valuation Acts.

Under date November 14th 1903, the following letter No. 63,699/1903, Wexford County, was read from the Local Government Board.

With reference to your letter of the 4th instant relative to the remuneration of collectors of Poor Rate in the County Wexford, for services under the Valuation Acts, I am directed by the Local Government Board for Ireland, to state, that in their

opinion, the collectors are not entitled to extra remuneration for this work, which forms part of their ordinary duties for which they are paid poundage fees." Marked "Read"

Close of Financial Year.

The following letter under date 12th November 1903 and No. 63,561: 1903. Wexford County, was read from the Local Government Board.

"With reference to an entry on the minutes of Proceedings of the County Council of Wexford on the 3rd instant on the subject of the dates for closing the collection of the Poor Rate in that County, I am directed by the Local Government Board for Ireland, to state that in the existing state of the law, the financial half-years must close on the 30th of September and the 31st March."

Mr Peacocke proposed: "That a copy of the resolution of the Council as to the change of the financial half-years, and the reply of the Local Government Board, be furnished Sir Thomas Esmonde M.P. and Mr. French M.P. and that they be requested to have the change asked by the collectors carried out"

Mr Kehoe seconded. Passed.

Electric Light Installation District Asylum.

Under date 4th December 1903 (letter No. 17848/03) the Secretary to the Board of Works, wrote with reference to the loan of £6,000 for the purposes of installing electric light in Enniscorthy Asylum that the instructions of the Treasury rendered it necessary before the case can proceed that the Council should give an undertaking to pay the instalments of the proposed loan at the dates when they became due, viz:- 1st May and 1st November in each year.

On receipt of the undertaking the Board would be in a position to proceed with the ease, provided the financial position disclosed by the particulars furnished by the Local Government Board, be found to be satisfactory.

"On the motion of Mr Ennis, seconded by Mr Dempsey the following undertaking was agreed to:-

"The Wexford County Council hereby undertake that the instalments in repayment of the loan now proposed (£6,500) for the purpose of installing electric light in the District Asylum, Enniscorthy) will be punctually remitted at the dates at which they become due, viz:- 1st May and 1st November in each year."

Arthurstown Pier.

Under date 31st December 1903, letter No. 18,891, '03 from the Board of Works as to repairs to Arthurstown Pier, was read. The communication stated that the Commissioners of Public Works had received the report of the County Surveyor as to the repairs to this Pier, and they regarded it as satisfactory.

Poulduff Pier.

Under date 10th November 1903, the following letter, No. 3637/03. F. from the Department of Agriculture was read.

"I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 4th Inst. embodying copy of resolution passed by the Wexford County Council on the 3rd Inst. in reference to Poulduff Pier; and to state, for the information of the Council, that the execution of works embracing the suggested extension might cost up to £2,400. They will, however, be carried out by contract, on plans to be approved by the County Surveyor, so far as the sum at present available (£2,000) will permit.

If a contractor cannot be found to undertake the whole work for this sum, the Department will

expect the County to take its share of any extra expenditure between £2,000 and £2,400.

Mr. J. Bolger proposed - "That a copy of the letter of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, under date November 10th be forwarded to Sir T. H. Grattan Esmonde, and that he be asked to use his influence with the Department to induce the latter to agree to the terms of the resolution of the County Council, and that such a very necessary work should not be allowed to fall through.

Mr. Ennis seconded the resolution. Passed.

Lights New Ross Bridge.

The following correspondence was laid before the meeting in connection with the question of providing lights for navigation at New Ross Bridge.

Letter from the Secretary of the New Ross Harbour Commissioners, to the Secretary of the County Council, Wexford, under date 5th November 1903.

"At a meeting of my Board on the 4th Inst the application of the Grand Canal Company, re Lights on New Ross Bridge, was before them. I beg to state that I have been directed by my Commissioners to apply to your Council and Kilkenny, the owners of the Bridge to supply the lights required.

I beg to attach copies of letters from the Grand Canal Company."

Letter from the Agent of the Grand Canal Company at New Ross to the Secretary of the New Ross Harbour Commissioners, under date 26th August 1903.

"I have been directed by the Manager of the Grand Canal Company to apply to your Board to have lights put on the New Ross Bridge, same as other Harbours, and the winter nights are now coming on and our steamers and boats will be travelling by night.

Where we require the lights is on the second arch on the County Kilkenny side of the bridge."

Letter from the Agent of the Grand Canal

company at New Ross, to the Secretary of the New Ross Harbour Commissioners under date 25th September 1903-

"With reference to yours of the 5th Inst, I am again requested by the Manager of the G. & C. Co., to apply to you to know when the lights are to be put up. Two lamps on each abutment of Bridge with red panes facing up and down the river. Awaiting your reply."

Letter from the Manager of the Grand Canal Company to the Secretary of the New Ross Harbour Commissioners under date 2nd November 1903-

"With reference to your letter of the 7th ultimo to our New Ross Agent, regarding the matter (lights on New Ross Bridge) I wrote the Secretary of the Kilkenny County Council, and he replies as follows:-

"Your application re lights at New Ross Bridge, came before my Council, at their meeting on 31st Inst. After some discussion the matter was referred to the New Ross Harbour Commissioners, who, my Council, hold are the proper authorities to deal with the matter."

Will you therefore lay the matter before your Commissioners again, and let me hear from you without delay as our vessels are running great risk in passing under the Bridge on these dark nights."

The Secretary said that an application had been made to the County Council, by the Manager of the Grand Canal Company as to the Council providing the lights in question. The matter was considered at the meeting of the Council on the 3rd November, and the following letter sent by him, to the Manager of the Grand Canal Company, would explain the views of the Council.

"I beg to inform you that your letter of the 9th October, with reference to the necessity of the placing of a red light on each end of abutment of way arch of New Ross Bridge, was considered by

my county council at the meeting on the 3rd inst., when it was decided that the matter was one either for the Harbour Commissioners or the Urban District of New Ross, as my county council have nothing to say to the navigation on the river, and are responsible only for the upkeep of the bridge.

Proposed by Mr Peacocke, seconded by Mr Kehoe - "That the Secretary of the New Ross Harbour Commissioners be informed that acting on the advice of their solicitor, the county council hold they are not responsible for providing lights for navigation."

Poor Law Reform Commission

Under date 9th inst. circular letter was received from Mr. G. A. Mahon, Secretary to the Poor Law reform Commission.

The communication was accompanied by a list of queries, replies to which were solicited.

The council were also asked to furnish the names of two witnesses who would give evidence in detail as to the views of the council on the subject matter for inquiry.

Mr Hearn moved - That Mr Peacocke and Mr Ennis be appointed a committee to draft replies to the queries and be also appointed witnesses to give evidence on behalf of the council.

State of the Roads.

Mr. Mahon, General Post Office, Dublin, wrote as follows, under date 19th November 1903 -

It has been reported to me that the Road between Kate's crossroads and Claristown is frequently flooded, sometimes to a depth of three or four feet rendering it impassable for the conveyance of mails except at considerable risk and danger to the postmen employed. I shall be obliged if you will bring the matter before the next meeting of your council in order that steps may be taken to remedy the existing state of affairs."

On the motion of the Chairman

seconded by Mr Walsh, the above letter was referred to Mr Webster, County Surveyor.

Capt Samuel Barrett-Hamilton, Kilmannock House, Athurstown, wrote as follows under date 24th November 1903.

"I should feel so much obliged if you would bring this letter before your County Council. It is a matter, I think, with their high powers they should take serious notice of.

It appears, as I am informed, the Rosslare Railway Company contractors, have been bringing by road a 50 ton locomotive on the public road. Of course I can only speak of my own district, personally I am all in favour for anything that will in the smallest degree benefit our County in any shape or form, but at the same time, I think this is simply scandalous, and I would most respectfully ask your County Council, to use all their powers to prevent a repetition of what I may call the greatest destruction you could do to our County Roads, which are bad enough, and totally unheard of. With this short statement I confidently leave the matter in the hands of the County Council."

Mr Webster said the Railway Company were being prosecuted for the condition of the road referred to by Capt Hamilton.

The locomotive did not do half as much harm to the roads as the traction engine traffic of the contractors.

Mr Henry Bruen junr Coolbawn, Enniscorthy wrote under date, 29th November 1903-

"I would ask you to draw the attention of your Council to the state of some ^{of the} roads - viz:- that between Killanne, and Ballyhyland, also between Kiltrea and Monart. In the latter few

of the stones put on measure less than six inches in the smallest part. The road between Ballyanne and New Ross, is also practically impassable.

There are such good roads in some other parts of the county, that I cannot think the fault is in the material for repairing the roads."

The consideration of Mr. Bruen's letter was adjourned till the quarterly meeting.

State of County Courthouses.

Under date December 15th 1903 the following letter was read from County Court Judge Barry:-

"I trust that the County Council of Wexford will not consider that I am unduly trespassing upon their time, if I write to call attention to the condition of the courthouses in the several Quarter Sessions towns of the county.

None of these seem to have been painted or looked after for years, and are in a very neglected state, the heating appliances consisting in Gorey and Enniscorthy, of a small stove of very primitive design, placed in the body of the court, and in New Ross of such another placed beside the bench; are quite inadequate in the cold winter or autumn months.

I would also suggest that some effort might be made to give a semblance of comfort to judges' rooms.

For instance in New Ross, I am provided with a miserable apartment, in which the paper did for some time hang in festoons from the walls, but has now entirely peeled off in consequence of the damp, which appears to come from the defective condition of the roof.

The few wretched articles of furniture are mouldering and wormeaten, the floors devoid of carpet or mat, and in fact the whole place most squalid and comfortless.

The same remarks apply though to somewhat

less degree to Enniscorthy.

I wish it to be understood that the several Court-keepers are in no way responsible for this state of things. They are without exception, respectable men, who do their best to keep courts, and rooms, clean and tidy, but of course they are powerless to stay the ravages of time or to cope with mildew in the buildings, which I presume have not been papered, painted, repaired or refurnished within the memory of man.

The sanitation of the courts also leaves much to be desired. Trusting that the County Council will give some attention to these matters which so sadly need reformation.

Mr. Ennis proposed:- That we refer Judge Barry's letter to Mr. Webster, our County Surveyor for his report as to the cost of carrying out the suggestions contained in Judge Barry's communication, and that the Secretary so inform Judge Barry.

Mr. Walsh seconded the motion which was passed.

Rent of Enniscorthy Courthouse.

Under date 3rd November 1903, the following letter was read from Mr. G. B. Roberts, Agent to Lord Portsmouth.

"The period for which the Enniscorthy courthouse holding was let, viz:- 61 years having expired, I beg to inform you, that his Lordship has re-rented same at £15 a year, clear over all taxes, save landlord's proportion of Income Tax, from 25th March 1903. His Lordship will grant a lease of same to the County Council, for 70 years from the 25th March 1903."

The Secretary stated that he had given this letter to the Solicitor to the County Council who wrote under date 10th November, that he had written to Mr. Roberts for a copy of the lease, and

forwarded copy of the reply which he had received.

The following is a copy of the letter written by Mr. Roberts, to Mr. Elgu, Solicitor, to the County Council, under date, 9th November 1903.

"Replying to your letter of the 7th inst., I beg to say the above holding was let 61 years ago by the Trustees of John Charles, Earl of Portsmouth, and as the lease for same was not taken out it was impossible for you to find the Lessee's portion.

As I mentioned in my letter to Capt. Pigott the period for which the lease would be granted viz: 61 years expired on 25th March last, and his Lordship has now re-rented it from that day at £15 a year.

Should the County Council wish for a lease his Lordship will grant one for 70 years."

The following minute of the Finance Committee in relation to the above was confirmed on the motion of Mr. Peacocke, seconded by Mr. Walsh.

"That having considered the letter of Mr. Roberts of the 3rd November 1903. the Finance Committee are surprised at Lord Portsmouth having re-fisced a rent on the plot of ground in question without making any communication before hand to the County Council. Having regard to the fact that the Courthouse was erected by the County at the expense of the Ratepayers, and that it requires considerable outlay - the County Court Judge having called attention to its dilapidated condition the County Council consider that the rent of £15 per annum asked for, is much too high, but in order to arrive at a settlement of the matter, they would be prepared to pay a rent of £10 a year on the terms mentioned in Mr. Roberts' letter of the 3rd November last.

In view of the fact that his Lordship's predecessor in title let the plot upon which the buildings were erected to the County at of a year the increase to £15

a year would seem excessive.

The County Council would be glad to know if his Lordship would sell the plot, and if so on what terms."

Application for Explosive Licence.

Mr W. Armstrong, Main Street, Wexford applied for an Explosives' Licence for premises at Hopeland Bank, Rosslare; the Secretary explained that Mr Armstrong had had a licence for this place, but through an oversight forgot to have it renewed within the proper time.

On the motion of Mr Ennis, seconded by Mr Kehoe, the application was granted.

Wexford Branch, Irish Medical Association

Dr W. W. Murphy, Hon Sec. to the Wexford Branch, of the Irish Medical Association, forwarded the following resolution for the consideration of the County Council.

"That we, the County Wexford Branch of the I. M. A., desire to call the attention of the County Council, and the various Boards of Guardians in this County, to section 6 of the Local Government Amendment Act 1902, and to ask them in their own interests as representatives of the Ratepayers to agitate for the early repeal of this section, and thus to facilitate a settlement of the grievances under which we, as Poor-Law Medical Officers labour."

Mr Peacocke proposed, Mr Kehoe seconded and it was passed.

That we request our Parliamentary representatives to agitate for the repeal of section 6 of the Local Government Act of 1902."

The Compulsory Education Act.

On the motion of Mr Kavanagh, seconded by Mr Peacocke, the Standing Orders were suspended to allow Mr J. Bolger to move a resolution with reference to

amendments proposed in the Irish Education Act 1892.

Mr Bolger was moving his resolution, when some councillors pointed out that it was liable to lead to a long discussion, and to be opposed.

The chairman then suggested that as no notice had been given of the resolution it would be as well to adjourn it, till the quarterly meeting, and it could be set out in full on the Agenda paper.

This suggestion was agreed to.

New Telegraphic line.

An application was read from the Secretary to the General Post Office, Dublin, for permission to place an overground telegraphic line along the public road between Kilmuckridge and Oulart Post Office. Any damage which would be done in making or maintaining the line would be made good.

Mr Ennis proposed and Mr Kehoe seconded the following. "That permission be granted the Postmaster General, to erect a telegraphic line on the road between Kilmuckridge and Oulart." Passed.

B. H. Penrose

27th Feb 1904