

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**

**MINUTES OF LOUGHREA AREA COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT LOUGHREA REGIONAL OFFICES ON  
MONDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2008**

**ILATHAIR**

**Baill:**

Cllr. P. Feeney, Chairman  
Cllr. W. Burke  
Cllr. B. Willers  
Cllr. P. Hynes  
Cllr. M. Fahy  
Cllr. M. Regan  
Cllr. M. Maher

**Oifigigh:**

Mr. J. Cullen, D.O.S., Environment & Water Services Unit  
Mr. M. Dolly, S.E., Roads & Transportation Unit  
Mr. M. Lavelle, S.E., Roads & Transportation Unit  
Mr. M. Sheil, A/S.E.E., Loughrea Electoral Area  
Mr. J. Costello, E.E., Gort Engineering Area  
Mr. C. Mitchell, E.E., Portumna Engineering Area  
Mr. A. Raftery, E.E., Loughrea Engineering Area  
Ms. A. Power, S.S.O., Loughrea Regional Offices

**DEPUTATION FROM RESIDENTS OF KILLIMOR**

The Chairman welcomed Messrs P. Gohery, Chairman of the Deputation, J. Flynn and Ms. M. Moran and the following matters were discussed:

**Oxgrove Bridge** – They stated that the bridge was still in an unsafe state. They referred to an entrance road to the left hand side of the bridge, on which there were four dwelling-houses and a number of land-holdings and stated that the visibility coming out from that road was very poor and this coupled with the speed of cars coming over the bridge was adding to the danger at this location. They stated that they had approached the land-owners on either side of the bridge and they had indicated that they would be willing to dedicate the necessary land which would help improve the bridge and visibility on either side of the road. Cllr. Feeney informed the Deputation that Members from the Oxgrove Bridge Action Group had addressed a previous meeting and the Members were aware of the situation here.

**Killimor School** – They stated that the Parents Association had approached them regarding the lack of parking outside the school. They said that presently teachers were parking in the Yard of an adjoining shop. They stated that drop-off and collection times led to double parking at this location which was dangerous on a busy national secondary (N65) road. They also referred to the speed at which traffic travels on this road and asked if any measures could be taken to slow down the traffic at this location. He stated that the new footpaths had made the situation worse as cars were now double parking and creating a more dangerous situation. They stated that they were informed that the Council were making an allocation of €35,000 available in 2008 towards the provision of a school pedestrian crossing and they suggested that some of these monies could be put into improving the outside of the school, i.e. provision of a lay-by whereby cars could pull in and drop off and suggested that the footpath would be narrowed at this location.

**Car-Park** – The Deputation requested that a new car-park be provided in Killimor. They stated that the only parking available at present is outside the Heritage Centre and at Concannon's Yard.

**Playground** – the Deputation stated that there was no play area for the Children in Killimor and they requested that Killimor be considered for the provision of a playground in the future.

**Derelict Buildings** – They referred to a number of buildings in the town which were derelict and in a very bad state of repair. They stated that while the matter was raised before with the Council nothing had happened to-date.

**Traffic** – They stated that traffic goes through the village at speed and they requested that some sort of permanent solution needed to be put in place, i.e. signage, traffic islands, etc.

**Public Lighting** – The Deputation looked for a commitment from the Council as to when the public lighting would be completed in the Village.

In relation to derelict sites, Cllr. Burke suggested that this issue be brought up as an item at the next Council Meeting. He stated that they had a similar problem in the towns of Portumna and Eyrecourt. He suggested that possibly some of the derelict buildings referred to in Killimor could be purchased for the purpose of constructing a car-park for the town which in turn may alleviate the parking problems referred to earlier by the Deputation. Cllr. Regan concurred with Cllr. Burke's comments. He queried how many prosecutions had been taken by the Council in relation to dereliction in the past year. He said that it was important for a village of this size should have a play area for the children. He stated that Killimor Village had got a lot of local authority housing over the years and suggested that the Council should be giving something back as a good-will gesture. Cllr. Willers asked the Deputation if the Killimor Development Association had made a request to the Council for the provision of a playground. She suggested that they form a playground committee and put in a request to the Council. In relation to the footpaths, Cllr. Regan requested that the footpaths be narrowed in the vicinity of the school in order to provide more parking there and to alleviate the dangerous situation that now exists.

The Deputation left the Meeting.

In relation to the issue of dereliction, Mr. Cullen stated that he was unable to say how many prosecutions were taken by the Council in the past year but would check it out and get back to the Members on same. Cllr. Burke stated that it was now a huge problem in many towns and they as Members of the Council had to row in behind the Council and see this through. Mr. Cullen advised that seeing it through could involve the C.P.O. process and huge costs and stated that the Council would simply not be able to afford to do that. He said that he would have a full report available for the next meeting.

In relation to the provision of a car-park and lack of parking at the school, Mr. Dolly stated that Killimor was one of many schools throughout the county that had this problem. He said that the provision of parking for teachers and the provision of a drop-off and pick-up facility was a matter for the Board of Management and the Department of Education. He said that for any new schools applying for planning permission, one of the conditions being attached would be that parking and a pick-up/drop-off facilities would be included as part of the development.

In relation to Cllr. Regan's query regarding what measures could be carried out to slow down the traffic, Mr. Dolly stated that they would bring this to the attention of the N.R.A.

Cllr. Regan stated that the Housing Section had purchased land beside the Hurling Pitch in Killimor and suggested that this could be used for the play area. Cllr. Burke suggested that this land could be sold and other land purchased nearer the town. Mr. Cullen stated that contact would be made with the Housing Department in relation to this.

Regarding Oxgrove Bridge, Mr. Dolly stated that any works done to-date had been funded from Councillors Notice of Motion monies. He stated that €105,000 would be allocated for this bridge in 2008 and that would include improving visibility coming out from the side road identified by the Deputation. Also included in these works is replacing parapets, improved signage, road markings, lining and resurfacing. He said that a lot more money was required to widen the bridge and the works being done in 2008 were the medium term solution.

## **DEPUTATION FROM RESIDENTS OF THE GURTYMADDEN/CAPPATAGGLE CROSS ROAD**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. P. Mitchell to the Meeting. Mr. Mitchell referred to the Greenstar Landfill facility based at Kilconnell. He stated that significant damage was being caused to the roads in the area due to their use by heavy refuse lorries en route to the landfill at Kilconnell. He understood this to be in contravention of the landfill licence and/or planning permission as Lorries were required to use a designated route (N6) to the facility. Instead these Lorries were taking a short-cut turning right at Ryan's pub in Gurtymadden (on N65) and taking the Mullagh/Cappataggle Road. He said that there was

## **Loughrea Area Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

a hurling field at the end of this road and it would become a major safety hazard during the summer months when the sporting activities were in full force.

Mr. Cullen advised that they could not enforce a ban on articulated trucks using this route. However, if they were found to be in breach of one of the conditions as part of their landfill licence and/or planning permission, the Council could notify the EPA and bring it to their attention. He advised that the Residents Group for the area should also do this separately.

Mr. Mitchell also referred to a new bridge constructed by GAMA Construction on the Tynagh/Gurtymadden Road that had since been closed off and asked what was going to happen to this bridge. Mr. Dolly stated that GAMA/Tynagh Energy was currently in discussions with the Council in relation to taking this bridge in charge but for the moment it was still a private bridge.

The Deputation then left the meeting.

## **MINUTES OF LOUGHREA AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2008**

Cllr. Feeney explained that although the Members had approved the Minutes of the Area Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008 at the last Meeting, it had been requested that the Minutes be presented again to the Meeting for discussion when Senior Members of staff were present. The following issues were raised:

### **Leitrim School**

Cllr. Maher asked if there was any up-date in relation to the signs for Leitrim N.S. Mr. Raftery stated that the signs were ready for collection and would be included in the programme of works for the area in the next couple of weeks. He advised that new controllers for the School Flashing Lights were also on order. In relation to the up-date on the CPO process, Mr. Lavelle advised that the Board of Management could make a request to the Manager directly, but on the condition that they cover all the costs for the CPO process. Mr. Cullen stated that the request should come directly from the School and they should initiate the process.

### **Bus Stops**

Cllr. Hynes asked for an up-date on the request for front-loading the provision of a pedestrian link from St. Laurences Fields through to the N66 via the proposed Leisure Centre site as part of the swimming pool development. In relation to the swimming pool development, Mr. Cullen stated that they had recently submitted further replies to questions raised by the Department of Arts, Sports & Tourism and they were still awaiting a reply to same. In reply to Cllr. Hynes's request, Mr. Cullen stated that they needed to get approval for the pool first and then they would have to negotiate with the Developer.

He said that this development had already gone through a tendering process and this would be considered as extra. He said that he was unable to give a commitment on this.

### **Outdoor Staffing**

Cllr. Willers asked if there was any up-date on replacing staff that have retired in Loughrea Electoral Area. Mr. Dolly stated that the Council were presently carrying out a review of the staff structure within the organisation. He said that they were looking at numbers for running the core services and also what the Council could afford. He said that if there were extra staff needed to carry out the Roadworks Programme, they would be taken on. Cllr. Willers stated that there was a panel in place and why weren't they being appointed from this. Mr. Dolly stated that there was a panel in place and if extra staff were required to carry out the Roadworks Programme adopted by the Members, they would have to be taken on. He said that the review would determine the staffing and it would be agreed with the Unions as to what is required. He advised that such negotiations could take some time.

## **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF LOUGHREA AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2008**

### **Deputation from Blackwater/Cloonahaha Residents**

Cllr. Fahy asked for an update on the issues raised at the last Meeting. Mr. Costello stated that he had been asked to look at the issues raised and that he would have it checked out for the next meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Willers, the Minutes of the Local Area Committee Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008 were confirmed.

### **ROADS PROGRAMME 2008**

A copy of the Draft Roads Programme 2008 was circulated to the Meeting. Mr. Dolly stated that there were some minor changes to be made to the document before it was presented to the full Council in March. He said that the Programme required the approval of the Members so that job codes could be set up for the works to commence. Mr. Dolly then went through the document with the Members.

Referring to the allocations proposed under Pavement and Minor Improvements, Cllr. Burke requested that the Council apply to the N.R.A. for funding to provide a proper road junction at N65/N6 Junction - Kilmeen. Mr. Lavelle stated that works would be carried out here whenever funds were made available from the N.R.A. and funding for these types of works was not as forthcoming as previously. He said that the main priorities for the N.R.A. were now funding of the major inter-urban routes such as the N6, N18. Cllr.

## Loughrea Area Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Burke requested that a commitment be given by the Council for this road; and he requested a design be put together from the Road Design Section and apply to the N.R.A. for funding at this location. Cllr. Regan expressed his disappointment that there was no major allocation for Loughrea Electoral Area under this funding. He said that roads such as the N65, N66 and the N67 should be included in such funding. He referred particularly to the Seven Eyed Bridge in Kilchreest. Mr. Dolly stated that the roads he referred to were included in the submission forwarded to the Department for consideration. Cllr. Burke referred to a junction off the N6 road, just before the Kilmeen Junction where there are 22 houses and it has no traffic island. He said that it also requires extra signage and he would appreciate if both of these requests could be looked into. In relation to Cllr. Regan's request, for funding for the Seven Eyed Bridge, Mr. Lavelle stated that this bridge was not perceived as a priority by the N.R.A. as the proposed new N18/N6 would by-pass the current N66.

Cllr. Fahy stated that some of the sign-posts that had recently been erected seemed to be of poor quality and he had witnessed that quite a few had been knocked down in recent stormy weather in his area. Mr. Dolly stated that the new National Road signage underway were low level sign-posts which were more sturdy and should not encounter the same problems.

Cllr. Regan stated that where the Conamara area was receiving Gaeltacht/Clar Grants, which had to be backed up by funding from the Roads Programme, the remaining allocation should be divided up equally between the other Electoral areas. This was seconded by Cllr. Fahy. Cllr. Fahy stated that the Conamara area had gotten a lot of extra funding over the years. He said that the general public were complaining about the state of roads in the east of the County and something had to be done. Cllr. Burke stated that this issue was brought up back in 1991 and they were continuing to allow this to happen. He requested that it be raised at the next Council Meeting.

In relation to the proposals for Specific Improvement Grants, the Members expressed disappointment at the amount of allocation for Loughrea Electoral Area. It was again compared to the allocation for Conamara which was double that for their area. Cllr. Hynes expressed disappointment that Earlsparck Junction was not included in these proposals. Mr. Dolly stated that a number of allocations were considered but the allocations approved were decided upon by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

In relation to Community Involvement in Roadworks Scheme proposals, Cllr. Hynes referred to an application made in relation to the Raheen Eighter area, adjacent to Knockauncoora in which the applicant was a wheel-chair user. Mr. Dolly stated that there wasn't a big up-take on the applications in the Loughrea Engineering Area and stated that it might be because such funding was subject to meeting matching funding criteria. Cllr. Hynes asked that this case would be re-examined and revisited on the grounds given by him. Mr. Dolly stated that he would do so. Cllr. Fahy referred to an application that was submitted last year to widen the entrance at Tierneevin Junction. He said that the landowner in question was prepared to give the land but nothing had happened and the people in the area were very disappointed. Mr. Dolly noted the request.

## Loughrea Area Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008

In relation to the Restoration Maintenance (Surface Dressing) proposals for the Portumna Engineering Area, Cllr. Burke requested that the Coolnageeragh Road, Gortanumera (Road No. LS 8765-0) be included in the 2008 proposals. He said that the road was in very bad condition and it was deteriorating on an ongoing basis. He suggested that this road be substituted in for the Raheen/Lisduff Road (L8770/47). On the proposal of Cllr. Willers, seconded by Cllr. Regan, the Members agreed to the alteration of the 2008 Roadworks Programme for Portumna Engineering Area as outlined above.

Referring to Page 19 and to the allocation for loan charges for the proposed new Depot Loughrea Engineering Area, Mr. Cullen advised that the costing on the site for the overall development was extremely high. He stated that they have been advised that the site development costs may not be as significant for the Depot and the Recycling Centre only. Cllr. Burke asked if there were any proposals for a Recycling Centre for Portumna Town. Mr. Cullen advised that he would look at this possibility for Portumna.

In relation to the allocation for General Maintenance for the County, Mr. Dolly stated that this allocation was inadequate. He advised that the costs for material, labour and plant had increased significantly in the last few years. Cllr. Regan queried where the outdoor and admin staff were paid from and queried why the numbers outdoor staff were decreasing and the admin staff was increasing. Mr. Cullen stated that all Council staff were paid from either of two sources, rates from Commercial Buildings and the Local Government Fund Grant. Mr. Cullen explained that it was a question of priority. He explained that by increasing the roads budget to provide the type of service required on the roads it would mean having to reduce the level of service in other areas, i.e. maintenance of water supplies/sewerage supplies, planning, housing, etc. He said that it was not a matter of simply increasing the road maintenance budget. At the Budget Meeting, he explained that the Members were actually determining the priority for the organisation. Cllr. Willers queried the quality of work that the Council provided in relation to fixing of pot-holes. She stated that as soon as a pot-hole was fixed it was gone again in a couple of days and she felt that it was a complete waste of money. She stated that the quality of the material was very poor and the roads were an absolute disgrace. She suggested that the Council should be spending a bit more on the quality of the materials. Cllr. Fahy stated that they had a major problem as the roads were never in a worse condition as they were now. He said that never before was there so much Lorries travelling these road and the roads were not made for this type of traffic. He said that the pot-holes are not getting a chance to set.

Cllr. Hynes asked for approval to spend his unspent "Mayor's Allocation" on the provision of stone name-plates at townland boundaries. Mr. Dolly suggested that if there was a policy adopted by the Roads & Transportation SPC on it, it could be looked at.

On the proposal of Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Burke the Members agreed to the Roadworks Programme 2008 and to include the Coolnageeragh Road, Gortanumera (Road No. LS8765-0) in place of the Raheen/Lisduff Road (L8770/47) under Restoration Maintenance (Surface Dressing) proposals.

## **ALTERATION TO 2008 ROADWORKS PROGRAMME FOR PORTUMNA AREA**

Report dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March was circulated to each Member. Mr. Sheil explained that at the Area Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2007, a discussion took place regarding the request for the Buroge Road in Ballinakill to be included in the 2008 proposals but at the time no decision was made on what road was to be taken out. On the proposal of Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Burke, the Members agreed to substitute the Buroge Road in Ballinakill (L 8226-0-8-15-19) for the Lisheennagat-Moor-Duniry Road (L 4311-0-3-8-29).

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Review of Traffic Management Plan**

Cllr. Hynes asked that when the Traffic Management Plan for Loughrea was being reviewed that Paid Parking be extended out the Gort Road and the Old Galway Road because there were cars being parked outside private houses so they could avoid having to pay parking fees.

**Chríochnaigh an Cruinniú ansin**