

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE CONAMARA ELECTORAL AREA MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 2011 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE.

I Láthair:

Baill Comh. Tomás Ó'Curraoin, Cathaoirleach
Comh. Seosamh. Ó'Cuaig
Cllr. Thomas Welby
Cllr. Eileen Mannion
Cllr. Seán Kyne
Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Oifigh: Mr. Ger Mullarkey, Head of Finance
Mr. Frank Gilmore, Director of Services
Mr. Evan Molloy, Senior Engineer, Conamara
Mr. Tony Kelly, Senior Executive Engineer, Conamara.
Mr. Damien Mitchell, Executive Engineer, Cheathrú Rua
Mr. Feidhlim MacGillycuddy, Executive Engineer, Oughterard.
Mr. Seán Groarke, Administrative Officer, Finance.

1. Toscaireacht ó Scoil Naisiúnta-Tír an Fhia

Comh. T. O'Curraoin welcomed on behalf of the committee the delegation who were representing the Board of Management of Scoil Naisiúnta-Tír an Fhia. The delegation made a presentation in regard to 2 issues which were of major concern to the school-

- 1. The proposed reduction of the current speed limit of 80km in regard to the road outside the school to 50km.**
- 2. The completion of the footpath between the school and the industrial estate.**

They advised the committee that the current speed limit of 80km was too excessive as speeding traffic endangered the lives of the children going to school. They stated that the speed limit outside all other schools was 50km and they requested that 4 50km/h speed limit posts be erected on either side of the school. Comh. S. O' Tuairisg stated that this was a fundamental safety issue and that the procedure should be initiated for another speed limit review. Cllr. S. Kyne advised that he had proposed a full review of speed limits at a Council meeting last year. Cllr. T. Welby stated that the increase in the speed limit from 50km to 80km on many sideroads should be reviewed.

Mr E. Molloy advised the meeting that he was aware of the situation and recommended that the matter be raised at the next SPC meeting in order to initiate the full speed limit procedure-as individual speed limits could not be considered in isolation. The committee decided that Comh. T. O'Curraoin would raise the matter at the next SPC meeting.

The delegation requested the Council to complete the path between the school and the industrial estate as it was considered dangerous for the children to have to walk along the road to the páirc péile. The construction of the path had started but was left unfinished. Mr D. Mitchell advised that the Council had no funding to complete the path. The committee then discussed the various options available to complete the path including the Leader Programme, a local Fás scheme or funding it from NOM allocations. Cllr T. Welby offered to ascertain the rollover schedule of the Fás scheme in Oughterard and whether it could be included on the work programme. It was also decided that Mr D. Mitchell would provide an estimate of the cost of the work. Comh. T. O'Curraoin advised that if the Fás option was not realistic-it could be funded from the NOM allocations.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on the 25th January 2011

On the proposal of Comh. S. O'Tuairisg, seconded by Cllr S. Kyne-the minutes of the meeting held on the 25-1-2011 were adopted.

Matters arising:

Cllr. S. Kyne advised that in regard to item no 4 Quality of pot-hole repairs-he had mentioned that the road materials used on the surface dressing of the Tullykyne, Killagoola and the Spiddal roads had also washed away. Cllr T. Welby requested an update on the surface dressing issue. Mr E. Molloy stated that he had received a report from Mr F. MacGillycuddy on the matter and that it was under consideration at the moment. He reiterated that in his view the unprecedented weather conditions with temperatures as low as -12 to -15 degrees Celsius was a major contributory cause in regard to the surface dressing failures. Cllr T. Welby enquired about the appointment of a caretaker to the Inishmaan water network and the serious problem associated with leaks. Mr T. Kelly advised that he would consult with Liam Gavin concerning the appointment of the caretaker and that a leak detection crew could be sent from Carraroe to Inishmaan. Comh S. O'Tuairisg enquired about the taking in charge of the Inishmaan network and was advised that the matter would have to be taken up with the Water Services Section. Comh. S. O' Cuaig requested an update on the Kilronan Harbour project. Mr E. Molloy informed the meeting that he expected the works to be substantially completed by May and that he was willing to meet with the delegation next week. He provided a breakdown of the estimated annual operational costs of € 200,000 for the new harbour.

Cllr.S. O'Tuairisg raised the matter concerning the provision of a footpath and the set back of walls at Báile na hAbhann in the vicinity of TG 4 and the Irish schools-the committee considered this to be a fundamental road safety issue. Mr E. Molloy advised that Mr P. Clarke, the former Area Engineer had estimated the works in the region of € 300,000 and that the Council could not fund same. Comh. S. O'Cuaig proposed that the Council provide funding for the proposed scheme. This proposal was seconded by Comh S. O'Tuairisg. Mr Molloy agreed to meet with representatives from the area.

3 Draft Road Works Programme 2011

The Draft Roads Programme for 2011 was presented by Mr E. Molloy to the meeting. He advised that in regard to Conamara it was based on the revised Area structure i.e North Conamara which incorporated the former Clifden Area and the northern part of the former Oughterard Area –and South Conamara which incorporated the former Carraroe Area and the southern part of the former Oughterard Area. A map of the revised area structure was distributed at the meeting. He stated that the road network especially the non-national network in the Clifden area had endured considerable damage as a result of the severe winter weather and that the badly damaged sections of the N59 would have to be repaired. The damage was so widespread that the Department of Transport had to depart from the Multi-Annual Road Restoration Programme 2011-2013 which was approved by the Council in 2010 to the system of Improvement Grants for a second year. He informed the meeting that the current funding was inadequate to repair the damage. He drew the attention of the meeting to 3 schemes listed under NS Pavement & Minor Improvement Works on the top of page six.

- 1. N59 Kylebroughlan Moycullen-€300,000**
- 2. N59 Kylemore to Tullyconnor-€700,00**
- 3. N59 Leenane Village-€200,000**

He advised that he would seek discretion from the NRA to use this funding of €1.2 million plus a balance of €361,000 from 2010 for emergency works in 2011-if they could not be funded separately. He then explained the various schemes that appertained to Conamara and how the different categories of road were funded pro-rata in accordance to road length i.e National Secondary-38.28%, Regional-26.64% and Local-19.97% He gave an update on the N59 Clifden-Oughterard and N59 Moycullen Bypass schemes and advised that a list of bridges would have to be drafted for the Bridge Rehabilitation programme.

The elected members requested an update on the Conamara Access Road (Bearna to Ros a Mhíl) for which €500,000 was provided. Mr F.Gilmore stated that he had received briefing documentation from RPS Consultants in regard to a presentation to be made to EC officials on the proposed scheme in Brussels. He advised that assistance was received from the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) on the preparation of briefing documentation and that they would organise a date for the presentation in Brussels. The councillors raised the issue concerning the planning restrictions on the various routes. Mr F. Gilmore replied that it was anticipated that some of the proposed routes could be omitted following the meeting in Brussels. Comh S. O’Cuaig enquired about the numbers of the outdoor staff deployed in Conamara. Mr E. Molloy advised that there were 86 staff including overseers-2 were due to retire this year. Comh T. O’Curraoin complemented the outdoor staff and the Area engineers for their work during the severe winter. The adoption of the Roads Programme 2011 was proposed by Comh S. O’Tuairisg and seconded by Cllr S. Kyne.

4. Firestation for South Conamara

Mr F. Gilmore advised the meeting that he had received a draft report from the Chief Fire Officer in regard to a proposed fire station for South Conamara-this would be considered at the management team meeting the following week. He stated that the case was still tenuous and that it could not be justified from a financial point of view. There was no national standards for providing fire cover and further information was required from CAMP in regard to callouts for the final report in April. He stated that he was aware of a similar situation in the Strathclyde region of Scotland. Comh S. O' Tuairisg stated that Conamara did not have a proper and convenient fire service compared to the east of the county-in many cases chimney fires would have burnt out before the arrival of the fire brigade from Fr. Griffin Road. Cllr S. Kyne enquired about the proposed move from the Fire Station at Fr. Griffin Road. Mr F. Gilmore advised that a request had been made to Galway City Council to provide a site for a new fire station at Liosbaun. The committee decided to await the presentation of the final report.

5. Reorganisation of Area Structure in Conamara

Mr E. Molloy advised the meeting of the proposed reorganisation of the area structure in Conamara-he circulated a map which outlined the changes. He outlined the reasons for the changes in the context of the general reorganisation of Roads & Water Services in the county in accordance with the resources available. This envisaged that Conamara would become a 2 area structure as regards the Roads function and would be a single area as regards the Water Services function. The proposed changes would take effect in April.

He stated that the present 3 area structure would be reduced to 2- the Oughterard Area would cease to exist as the northern section would be incorporated into the Clifden Area and the southern section would be incorporated into the Carraroe Area. The map outlined the areas covered by the roads overseers and their staff. The current Oughterard office would be used by Water Services. He proposed to have it manned initially once a week with an engineer present to provide a service to the public in regards to the Roads function. He stated that D. Mitchell E.E, Carraroe would be transferred to the Water Services section with effect from April and that F. MacGillycuddy E.E would be moving to the Carraroe Area Office. There was a general discussion between the elected members in regard the proposed changes. They affirmed that they were content with the present 3 area structure in Conamara but recognised the the changes were necessitated by the resources available to the council. They expressed their opinion that there was a need for a manned presence as regards the Roads function in the Oughterard office for part of the week. It was proposed by Cllr S. Kyne that the Oughterard office be open to the public as regards Roads matters at least once a week. This was seconded by Comh. S. O'Tuairisg.

Aon Ghnó Eile.

Comh. T. O'Curraoin enquired about the removal of stones from the Rossroe Bridge channel to facilitate families with currachs. Mr D. Mitchell stated that he would raise the matter with Kevin Finn and revert back to him. Cllr E. Mannion enquired about

the proposal to delist the Old Convent in Clifden from the protected list of structures. Mr G. Mullarkey stated that he would raise the matter with M.Doddy in Planning. She also raised issues in regard to the car park at Cleggan, the proposed takeover of the Errisbeg GWS and the opening of the Bus park in Clifden to facilitate the Novena. Mr T. Kelly stated that he would revert back to her in regard to those matters. Cllr. S. Kyne enquired about the proposed Traffic Management Plan for Moycullen. Mr E. Molloy stated that he would revert back to him on that matter.

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú ansin.