

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TUAM HELD AT
THE OFFICES OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TUAM, TUAM, COUNTY GALWAY
ON MONDAY 9th September 2024 AT 2.30 pm.**

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Roche

I LÁTHAIR FREISIN Cllr. Cunniffe, Cllr. Hoade, Cllr. Killilea, Cllr. McHugh Farag, Cllr. Reddington, Cllr. Turner.

AS LÁTHAIR

BAILL OIFIGH: Mr. Michael Owens, D.O.S., SE, Mr. John Coyle – SEE, Mr. Sean Kennedy – EE, Mr. Tom Regan – EE, Mr. Tom Prendergast – SE, Mr. Enda Gallagher – SEE, Ms. Geraldine Byrne, - Meetings Administrator, Ms. Sinéad Naughton – Staff Officer, Valarie Loughnane – Senior Planner, Eileen Keaveney - AO.

Cllr. Roche commenced the meeting and Cllr. Turner gave the members an update on his recent trip to Straubing. He referred to it as a beneficial trip. There was a profound sense of importance of their visit to the Straubing people. He said that the Mayor Marcus Pannomyer has expressed an interest in visiting Tuam Municipal District in 2025. Cllr. Turner requested the Galway County Council reach out to the Mayor either at Municipal District or Plenary level and consider a civic visit and put together a programme of events for same, suggesting a 3–4-day programme in July/August 2025 and that considerations were made when preparing the 2025 budget.

The members all supported this proposal. Mr. Owens advised that subject to approval of a motion and budgetary provisions that it would be possible to put together a suitable programme with a timeline that would allow to reach out and highlight the best Tuam has to offer. He advised that the consideration of the Draft Budgetary Plan for the MD in early October would provide the Members with an opportunity to consider the appropriate budgetary provision to facilitate the issuing of the invitation and preparation of a suitable programme.

MDT2400060

**On the proposal of Cllr. Turner seconded by Cllr. Reddington the following motion was agreed
I propose; -**

That Galway County Council contact the office of Mayor Markus Pannermayr in Straubing, Germany with a view to inviting the mayor and a delegation to Tuam, its twin town in 2025. The Council shall create a programme of events for the visiting delegation and absorb the associated costs.

MDT2400061

1. – Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of Municipal District of Tuam held on 15th July 2024

On the **proposal** of Cllr. Killilea and **seconded** by Cllr. Hoade the minutes of the meeting of the Tuam Municipal District held on 15th July 2024 were **agreed**.

Matters Arising:

Cllr. Hoade sought an update on Systra and the Traffic Management Plan in Headford stressing the importance of public consultation. She informed the members that there was a meeting the previous week and a local group had since provided a copy of all submissions to John Coyle SEE and Paula Higgins, SEE. Mr. Coyle advised that Systra have been awarded the contract and there will be public consultation.

Cllr. Hoade sought an update on Sylane School. Mr Coyle advised that the Councillors had given a commitment for NOM funding. Cllr. Killilea enquired if the issue was resolved, with one landowner not in favour. Cllr. Reddington advised that he had a signed document from 9 out of the 11 landowners involved with two further signatures to be received. It was agreed by the members that the process would not commence until agreement was got from all landowners. Cllr. Hoade requested Mr. Coyle to advise them when this was received, and suggested that, if possible, the works could be carried out during the mid-term break in October.

Cllr. Cuniffe expressed compliments to JFC and Logstrup on their company's expansion and said it casts Tuam in a pivotal place for further expansion. From the previous minutes, he asked if the letter he requested to Action Tuam had been sent and Ms. Byrne advised that they had been in contact with Action Tuam regarding a presentation at a future MD Meeting.

Cllr. Cuniffe enquired if there were any available statistics in relation to the special meeting held regarding the IPAS refugees being housed in the Correlea Court Hotel. Cllr. Roche advised that to his knowledge a number of young Palestinian families had moved in, but they had not received an official confirmation. He said that communication should have issued from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and consideration needs to be made regarding the provision of the wrap around services that are required.

Cllr Reddington advised that he had received confirmation from the Integration Support Co-ordinator to confirm that 7 families had arrived, and the uncertainty associated with new arrivals in Dublin.

Cllr. McHugh Farag stated that a report was expected and had not yet been received with answers to the questions they posed at the Special Meeting. She said that the Department should be more transparent and say that they are dealing with these situations "on a case-by-case basis."

MDT240062

3. – National Speed Limit Review – Local Roads

Tom Prendergast, SE gave a brief background to the Elected Members on the Road Safety Strategy 2021-2023 – Our Journey Towards Vision Zero, advising that a working group formed in September 2023 with 3 specific recommendations identified.

He advised all works are guided by statutory guideline with implementation guidelines which would see Local roads going to a default change from 80 kmph to 60 kmph at end of November 2024.

He advised that Galway County Council had commenced a county wide review which was paused until guidelines for urban areas were received. It is expected that this review will be completed in second half of 2025.

Mr. Gallagher advised that following on from an assessment conducted county wide there were no roads in Tuam MD for 80 KMPH to be maintained and that every road in Tuam will change to 60KMPH. He said there will be some bye laws for prioritisation and will need agreement with the MD, but they will come back at full plenary Council for approval before they finalise draft bye laws.

Cllr. Killilea referred to a delegation from Tuam Cortoon ladies club who had previously sought to extend 50kmph on the Bermingham Road for a further 2 km. He queried if this limit is now to be reduced to a 60km is a further special bye law required there.

Cllr. Reddington echoed Cllr. Killalea's comments saying he had sent in submissions on behalf of Kilcoona national school and concern about the speed. He sought clarity on the issue of all local roads are coming under the speed limit of 60 kmph, do the members need to continue to resubmit where a 50 km limit is requested.

Cllr. Hoade enquired if the submission in relation to Corrandrum NS went to the full council or locally. Cllr. Reddington referred to a NOM he put forward suggesting every national school within the MD was reduced to 50 kmph.

Mr. Prendergast advised the members that there is no need to resubmit the submissions. They hope to resume the review in the second half of 2025 and have all existing submissions on file. He advised that there will be urban speed limit zones from core at 30km and outwards from 50km to 60km , saying they will have to draft maps carry out a review and then special speed limits can be requested to be considered under bye laws. He said currently all schools on the national route are covered by periodic speed limits, but it is expected that all schools will be requested to have same in the guidance expected in early 2025.

Cllr. Hoade enquired if there would be an advertising campaign to inform people of the reductions and said that the current timelines did not seem realistic. Mr. Prendergast said he assumes that the government will have national campaigns in hand. Mr. Prendergast accepted that the initial deadline of end of November may not happen and said it could be February 2025.

Cllr. Roche commented that these measures were welcome, but queried if it would be more effective to also have traffic calming measures in place, because people will breach the limits and often putting in ramps is the only way to ensure adherence to the speed limits.

Mr Prendergast advised that for a large number of schools' assessments were done to change the speed limits but, in many instances, it is not possible and instead engineering measures will be required and hopes this will translate to a programme of works as budgetary input is required. He said it is important that money is made available for such measures to make a meaningful difference. He advised Galway County Council still to have some funding in their own roads programme, but it is limited.

He advised that there will be approximately 3000 signs required in Galway at a cost of €1.2 million and in terms of resources, these will be procured centrally. It is not intended for local staff to complete the rollout and it will be contracted out with the assistance of government funding. Cllr. Cuniffe enquired if all existing signs will be taken down and disposed of or if it is possible to just change the face of existing signage. Mr. Prendergast advised that existing poles will be reused but there will be a need for extra 3 signs and 3 new poles between local and regional roads where they no longer have the same speed limit.

Cllr. Turner enquired in terms of Milltown NS and if it what speed reduction measures can be applied there. Mr. Prendergast advised that Milltown NS currently had a periodic speed limit signage system in operation. Mr Coyle advised that there is a pilot scheme underway under safe routes to schools at N59 Newtown and would be looking to roll out similar safety measures across the county.

Cllr. McHugh Farag commented the national blanket speed limits was another effort to strip away the power of the local councillors as they previously had full ability to review at local level. Mr. Prendergast advised that special speed limits would remain a reserved function where it was possible to amend once assessed within the guidelines.

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Cllr. Reddington asked to be noted on record that the speed limit on the Cong road needs to be reduced to 60kmph referring to it as a lethal stretch of road and said this issue has been brought up at several meetings.

Mr. Gallagher advised there was two additional items that he wished to reference.

1) There were 76 houses where they were looking to reduce the speed limit to 30kmph – 17 of these estates being in Tuam MD

2) 4 schools historically were on national routes and with the M6 and M18 motorways they have now fallen to regional road status and still have motorists travelling more than 91kmph. They are therefore seeking that they each have periodic speed limits installed at each of the schools as they are 4 exceptions. This was proposed by Cllr Hoade and supported by Cllr. McHugh Farag.

MDT2400063

6. - Municipal District of Tuam Director's Business

Ms. Valarie Loughnane wished to update the members on the application made under Section 37E (4)(5)(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) , Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application ABP Reference 320089 submitted to An Bord Pleanála by Clonberne Windfarm Limited to develop 11 no. Wind Turbines and associated development in the townlands of Killavoher, Gortagarraun, Cloonarkan, Lomaunaghroe, Clonberg, Ballagh West, Carrownryla and Lissybroder.

Ms Loughnane, Senior Planner informed the meeting that the Chief Executive (CE) report on the application for 11 wind turbines by Clonberne Windfarm Ltd would be presented to the Plenary meeting on Monday 23rd September 2024. She explained that there were 2 SID applications made to ABP in relation to this development . One application for aGas insulated switchgear building under section 182A of the Planning & Development Acts does not provide for any input from the members.

This one for the 11 wind turbines under section 37E of the Planning & Development Act allows for members to make comments on the proposed. She explained that part of the area the subject of the application was deemed to be open for consideration for wind farm in the County Development Plan and part was not for consideration.

The members raised the following queries-

- How close is the proposed site to what is permitted for windfarm development.
- Concern re hub height
- Unwelcome intrusion on an area where people are living.
- People are powerless against large European companies and feel left to their own devices to oppose such developments.
- Same concern as Laurclavagh proposal previously – minor road not capable of taking large volumes of traffic, trucks etc
- Effect on Aquifers/underground water sources would be a concern.
- Windfarm guidelines are out of date and need updating.
- Noise levels & shadow flicker.
- Very visible from the Dublin Road as shown on photomontage.

Ms Loughnane confirmed that the report would be presented to the Plenary meeting on the 23rd of October and the members views would be appended to the final report being sent to An Bord Pleanala.

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Mr. Owens advised the members that culture night was taking place on Friday 20th September with 11 events in total across the Municipal District, 1 in Kilconly, 2 in Headford and 8 in Tuam Town to include a late-night event with artistic outdoor projection feature with local artist Jennifer Cunningham, the Cathedral Choir and Tuam Chanters involved. He encouraged attendance and promotion and acknowledged and thanked Sharon O’Grady, Arts Officer, and her team for securing the funding for this late-night event.

Cllr McHugh Farag welcomed the events for culture night, said it will be a fantastic event and commended the works of all involved in organising. Cllr. Turner welcomed the works of Lumina and said it would be a show of support for all the members to be present on the night, will be a poignant occasion at Tuam Cathedral at 9.30p.m.

Mr. Owens advised that he had circulated details regarding the commencement of a survey to profile the demand and needs for affordable housing across the county. He advised that the information captured would help generate a profile to ensure affordable housing delivered is appropriate. He said that the survey was open until Friday 4th October and encouraged promotion, with over 200 replies recorded to date. Cllr. McHugh Farag welcomed the survey for Affordable Housing but said she hoped it would not give people in the areas selected a false sense of hope.

Cllr. Reddington welcomed the survey and asked Mr. Owens where he saw the issues were in relation to affordable housing. Mr. Owens advised that a sub-group of the Galway Housing Delivery Taskforce had been formed to focus specifically on Affordable Housing and they are seeking to identify the barriers and difficulties. A proposal was put forward relating to linking the density of the scheme and the level of subsidy available with a need to achieve a minimum of 15% discount on the market value of the property in order for an affordable scheme to be deemed viable.

He said the survey result would give an indication of the level of subsidy required and they then could engage with the department and hoped they would have an idea of the profile by end of October.

Mr. Owens advised that the National Disability Persons Organisation (NDPO) had contacted the Municipal District of Tuam and sought an opportunity to present at a meeting which was agreed by the members.

Cllr. Cunniffe advised that he has spoken to Mr. Coyle and Mr. Kennedy in relation to investing in further street cleaning and said that with LPT increasing locally it would be prudent to have a budget submission for investment in equipment which would improve the appearance town.

He also raised an issue brought to his attention by the residents of St Enda’s Avenue, regarding Brownsfield, where he said there are ongoing issues with horses and vermin. He said that residents made enquiries and were told it was the council’s fault, that the addition to the stadium was given in good faith to the GAA and it is not being used for its purpose. He requested Galway County Council write to the GAA in Galway on resolving the issue. Mr. Owens stated there was a Section 183 in place regarding Brownsfield, a lease agreement, stipulating that the lands were to be used as a warmup area and lands made available to the public. Mr. Owens said he will follow up the matter with the GAA and have an update at the next MD Meeting.

Cllr. Cunniffe enquired if the Courthouse had been transferred to the ownership of Galway County Council and referenced the parents of the Educate together School using it as a car park when taking their kids to school and it required substantial repair works.

On the proposal of Cllr. Cunniffe seconded by Cllr. Roche the following motion was agreed

I propose; -

That we write to the Courts Service in relation to the surface of the car park that is in need of repair. This is a very important drop off/pick up point for ETWS primary students. It is very important that this car park is not closed or put out of action.

Cllr. Roche advised that he and Cllr. Reddington visited Tuam Educate together school 2 weeks ago and that Galway County Council should write to the Court services on the car park surface.

Cllr. McHugh Farag congratulated Cllr. Roche on receiving nomination to run for general election and wished him luck in the future.

Cllr. McHugh Farag referred to the traffic lights that were out of action at Blackacre which she said had happened a few times lately and asked when they would be repaired and asked that improvement works were done to improve the public realm of Tuam town, such as painting of bollards and chains and weed control. Mr. Coyle advised that the traffic lights in Blackacre were impacted in a road collision, and they are awaiting traffic solutions to come and repair.

She referred to the poor water quality in Clough Water Scheme that is causing difficulty for homes referring to difficulties being faced by families with young children. Cllr. Hoade also appealed for any support that Galway County Council could give to Clough Water Scheme to address the issue. Mr. Coyle said he would send a mail to Water Services in relation to the water scheme.

Cllr. McHugh Farag referred to a request received for a streetlight at Friars Walk, Dunmore which both Cllr. Turner and Cllr. Hoade had also received. Mr. Coyle said that Tom Regan EE, will look at the requirements for street lighting in Friars Walk and would revert regarding same.

Cllr. Hoade referred to the plans to increase Galway County Council staff members by 80 in the coming year and asked if the MD's had been asked for their requirements. She hoped there was communication regarding Headford area where they were still down on personnel. Mr. Owens referred to the Strategic Workforce plan which outlined the CE's plan to strengthen staff numbers with 240 over the next 3-year period ,80 per annum, he said that recruitment is ongoing including the recruitment of additional General Operatives.

Mr. Coyle advised that additional works around the town would tie in with the staff increase and hoping to get two additional GO's, one which would be prioritising works around the town and hoping to increase the numbers in Headford. He said the was hoping that shortlisting of GO's will take place next month.

She enquired if the verge trimming had commenced and asked that roads near schools are prioritised where children are currently still able to cycle to school. She referred to an area in Cave, Caherlistrane where a driver reported two burst tyres. Also stating that on a regional road such as this there should be some signage or bollards to notify of the state of the road to make people more aware.

Mr. Regan advised that hedge cutting was commencing on the junctions on the national roads and on local roads this week.

Cllr. Turner expressed huge concerns in relation to Bridge Street, Dunmore where he said the gutters were full of debris. He advised he could organise a cherry picker and locals to clean same but said there was an instance that happened before and sought guidance if locals could do it or would Galway County

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Council organise same as some of buildings involved were in Galway County Council ownership. Mr. Coyle said they are aware of the issues. The Infrastructure and Operations section had ownership of a building and the query has been sent on to the Director of Services to try and secure funding for safety works to be conducted as a priority. He advised that there may be structural issues and that the works should be done by professionals, it is being prioritised by Galway County Council and he is engaging with the Director of Services about it.

Cllr. Reddington said that Ability West have sent correspondence in relation to the Weir Road where there is a small section of road without a footpath. It is listed on the 2025 CIS projects. Stating that it is currently extremely dangerous and requested it is prioritised. Mr. Coyle advised he would try to have it prioritised.

A discussion then took place between the members regarding access of nearby sporting facilities for pupils of the Educate Together primary school and Cllr. Roche said it was a duty to resolve the issue in the interests of children's safety.

Cllr. Reddington referred to an extremely dangerous part of road at Bunehivvly More and put forward a Notion of Motion, that the council apply for a Low-Cost Accident scheme here.

MDT2400065

**On the proposal of Cllr. Reddington seconded by Cllr. Turner the following motion was agreed
I propose; -**

That Galway County Council applies for a Low-Cost Accident Scheme at Bunahevely Closer to Eircode H91F7XF

Cllr. Roche enquired that an issue with a bad bend on the Dublin Road was to be addressed through an approved CIS scheme, however a landowner is not in agreement to let the works begin and asked if there was any way in which this monies totalling €55,000 could be held within the MD. Mr. Coyle advised he would revert with Rachel Lowe, SE. He advised that funding is granted to the scheme next on the list.

Mr. Owens sought agreement that the next meeting would be for the Draft Budgetary Plan 2025 and said it was proposed to commence this meeting at 1.30 pm 14th October 2024 with the Ordinary Meeting following afterwards at 2.30pm.

Cllr Roche asked if the budget for Twinning would come from Galway County Council, or the Tuam MD Mr. Owens advised that the draft budget before the MD will include for twinning including a specific allocation for the twinning between Tuam and Straubing.

Cllr. Cunniffe said that he went to the Garda station to report people drinking in public and guards advised that there was no bye law that prevented same. Cllr. Roche said his initial thoughts was that this would be policing matter. Mr. Owens advised that there were currently no bye laws in place in relation to same by Galway County Council.

Any Other Business

Cllr. Roche referred to the footpath up to the church in Killrerin village and the request from Killrerin community group to have works carried out. Mr. Coyle advised that there are a lot of footpaths that require investment. Previously, Galway County Council were receiving funding under the Active Travel Scheme. He suggested that as public representatives, they submit a motion to the Department and NTA for next year's active travel to allow provision of funds for infills and repairs to footpaths in smaller towns and villages.

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Cllr. Turner referred to an initiative from Blessing Oguekwe, previous election candidate involved with the Local Youth Hub called "Make a Difference." The aim to was to host a talent show for the youth, bringing young people together and recognising their academic, entrepreneurial, and artistic talents. Their wish is to hold a night in the Ard Rí Hotel and asked if Galway County Council has any funding mechanism to help with a budget of €10/ 12k for provision of prizes such as laptops, I pad etc.

Mr. Owens advised that Galway County Council have the annual Cathaoirleach's Community awards and there are also opportunities to apply for funding through the Community Grants Scheme, but the funding would be allocated for 2024 and there would be no separate funding available outside of these schemes and no allocation in the current budget. Mr. Owens suggested that consideration be given to applying for funding for the proposal under the Community Grants Scheme 2025 still allowing for the event to be held within the academic year 2024/2025.

Cllr. Hoade suggested it would be an ideal project for the Cathaoirleach awards for 2025 which was likely to be advertised in January 2025.

Mr. Coyle advised that the 2025-2027 Restoration programme would be drafted over the next few months and asking the Elected members to come forward with a list of roads for consideration in the Tuam MD that may require overlays and they will examine same.

He advised that the Palace Grounds and Ballyglunan Railway station will receive Green Flags for 2024-2025 and thanked everyone for works in achieving same.

Chríochnaigh an cruinniú ansin @ 17.23

Approved by:


Cllr. Roche, Cathaoirleach.

Date: 14/10/2024