



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TUAM

HELD AT THE OFFICES OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TUAM, TUAM, COUNTY GALWAY

ON MONDAY 13th October 2025 at 2.30pm.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Karey Mc Hugh Farag

I LÁTHAIR FREISIN Leas Chathaoirleach Cllr Ollie Turner, Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe, Cllr. Andrew Reddington, Cllr. Donagh Mark Killilea,

I LÁTHAIR ÁR LÍNE Cllr Mary Hoade, Cllr. Siobhan Mc Hugh Ryan

BAILL OIFIGIGH: Ms. Katie O'Connor, Head of Finance, Mr. Michael Owens, Director of Services, Mr. Derek Troy, A/Snr. Engineer Infrastructure, Ms. Aine Fenton, Financial Accountant, Ms. Geraldine Byrne - Meetings Administrator, Ms. Sinead Naughton, Staff Officer.

To consider & adopt (with or without amendment) under Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 a Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Tuam, as prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive (Report attached).

The Cathaoirleach proposed to suspend the standing orders to facilitate remote attendance which was proposed by Cllr Andrew Reddington and seconded by Cllr Shaun Cunniffe. The Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to the meeting convened to consider and adopt (with or without amendment) under Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 a Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Tuam as prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive.

Each of the Cllrs wished Mr. Tom Regan, Executive Engineer, well as he was moving to another position within the Roads Department, and they all acknowledged the excellent service and working relationships they have had over the years with Mr. Regan.

Ms. O'Connor, Head of Finance presented the budget showing an indicative expenditure of €9,014,647 which is an increase on the 2025 expenditure. Budget 2026 has anticipated increased expenditure in roads and housing maintenance expenditure and specific projects as outlined by the MDs.

Ms. O'Connor advised that Galway County Council were informed in July 2025 that the 2026 Local Property Tax allocation for Galway County was €21,609,071 (pending any decision to locally vary the basic rate). In preparing the draft budgetary plan she had taken account of the decision taken at the Council Meeting held on 23 September 2024 to increase the local property tax rate by 15% for five years. This will result in an increase in the LPT of €2,581,838 for 2026.

Ms. O'Connor elaborated on the three main stages of the overall budgetary process being

- (i) Decision on the Local Property Tax,
- (ii) Consideration of the draft Municipal District Budgetary Plan
- (iii) The consideration of the Draft overall Budget for Galway County Council.

Ms. O'Connor advised that the overall process was made more difficult as the full budgetary information is unavailable at the first two steps and information available in mid-September indicated a deficit gap between Income and Expenditure of €11 million.

Ms. O'Connor requested for members to consider by resolution the draft budgetary plan to adopt with or without amendment. The Chair and Members thanked Ms. O'Connor for the presentation.

Cllr. Cunniffe raised a number of points enquiring as to why no income was shown and enquired on the rate of the LPT for the area. He asked if possible to define how much income is generated by parking and other areas in Tuam MD. He asked for comments in relation to the shortfall in the equalisation fund.

In response Ms. O Connor stated that the format of the GMA Budget is set out as per the Departmental Circular. LPT is not broken down on a geographical basis and bad debt provision is made annually. She advised that LPT is calculated centrally by Revenue and this is not made available to local authorities. She advised that parking fees are included in the overall central allocation and there is approx. €123,000 of a surplus to date for whole county including the central allocation of overheads.

Cllr Cunniffe queried how Galway County Council compare to other counties, where other counties have a surplus. Ms. O Connor stated that an increase on the baseline figure with a figure of €24.19 million for Galway County and increase compared to the 2025 figure of €22.68 million. She said some counties have a surplus but Galway County Council is positive as we are receiving money.

Cllr Turner raised the issue of Road Transportation and Safety and the marginal change, with Ms O Connor explaining that the Service B Category 2026 figures are based on the grant allocations received in 2025. The issue of street parking was also raised.

Cllr Killilea proposed that the line item of the D0903 Twinning Fund was increased by €4000, and D50905 was adjusted accordingly to reflect this. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Reddington.

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

To add €4,000 to D0903 Twinning and adjust D0905 to reflect it.

It was clarified that D0903 Twinning codes are not required for the GMA as per the Dept Circular.

Cllr Reddington queried the figure of €23,000 Public conveniences, a legacy contract now no longer operational, which went into Community Grants.

Cllr Killilea asked about the cost of the pay and display machines and the renting of O Toolas Supervalu carpark and the site of the old courthouse was also raised.

In response Director of Services, Michael Owens informed the members that while the site of the old courthouse is currently registered to Galway County Council it is not in outright ownership of site as the Courts Service has the option to exercise the right to vest the property in the Courts Service.

Cllr Killilea enquired on the restrictive nature of the Bring Banks sites and the increase of €20,000 in the allocation for the Bring Centre operations. Ms O Connor replied that the increase arose due the provision of a new site in Gort. Ms. O Connor will request the Director of Services to revert regarding same as these costs are increasing annually.

Cllr Hoade welcomed the increase in the 2026 budget and strongly supports twinning referencing the recent twinning visit by Morgan Hill to Headford and suggested that there should be a separate twinning code. Cllr. Hoade also stressed the importance of provision of Geo Park funding. Ms. O Connor noted that Geo park funding is not in the MD allocation and undertook to review this as part of the wider budget.

The issue of Burial Grounds and purchase of land for same was raised and Ms O Connor acknowledged that the provision made annually in the Capital Account is not sufficient to meet demand.

Cllr Reddington raised the issue of the number of new staff employed. Mr. Ownes stated that 68 staff have been recruited, 36 appointed in 2024, 32 appointed up to June 2025 with 38 sanctioned requests currently with the Department. Thus leading to a total of 106 posts at various stages of the recruitment process.

Staffing of the Active Travel Dept was discussed and Acting Senior Engineer, Derek Troy informing the members that the National Transport Authority (NTA) decide on the numbers and level of grades to be employed.

Cllr Killilea queried Motor Tax office expenditure for 3 offices located in the county and wishes to raise this with the Minister for Transport. Asking for consideration of sub office in Tuam. Ms. O'Connor advised that Motor Tax is looking at moving towards a diskless service in 2/3 years but it could be examined.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms O Connor, Ms. Fenton for their work in preparing the draft GMA budget and she proposed the budget with amendment which was seconded by Cllr Andrew Reddington and agreed.

Chríochnaigh an cruinniú ansin @ 3.30pm.

Approved by:  Date: 10/11/25.
Cllr. MoHugh Farag, Cathaoirleach.