

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**  
**MINUTES OF REMOTE COUNCIL MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 at 11:00am**

- CATHAOIRLEACH:** Cllr. James Charity  
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway
- I LATHAIR FREISIN:**
- Baill:** Comh./Cllr. T Broderick, J. Byrne, I. Canning, L. Carroll, D. Collins, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, G. Cronnelly, D. Ó Cualáin, J. Cuddy, S. Curley, T. Ó Curraoin, Albert Dolan, G. Donuhue, G. Finnerty, D. Geraghty, S. Herterich Quinn, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, C. Keaveney, P. Keaveney, D. Killilea, M. Kinane, G. King, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, A. McKinstry, P. Murphy, Dr. E. Francis Parsons, A. Reddington, P. Roche, J. Sheridan, N. Thomas, S. Walsh and T. Welby.
- Oifigh:** Mr. K. Kelly, Chief Executive (Interim), Mr J. Cullen, Director of Services, Mr L. Hanrahan, Director of Services, Mr. Alan Farrell, A/Director of Services, Mr G Mullarkey, Head of Finance, Ms V. Loughnane-Moran Senior Planner, Ms M Doddy, Conservation Officer, Mr M. Owens, County Secretary/Meetings Administrator, Ms. U. Ní Eidhín, Oifigeach Gaeilge, Ms. B. Ryan, A/Staff Officer and Ms. S. Elwood, A/Assistant Staff Officer, Ms. C. Hannon, Assistant Staff Officer, C. Averrill, IS Project Leader, M. Martyn, Head of IT

**Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.**

Cllr. Mary Hoade was joined by the Cathaoirleach in extending condolences on behalf of all the Members to Cllr. M Connolly on the tragic and untimely passing of his nephew Macdara Connolly RIP.

**ITEM NO. 1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:**

3749

- (a) Minutes of Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 were **AGREED**.

**Matter arising:**

In response to a query from Cllr. Mannion regarding developments on being “summer ready” Mr. Cullen advised that area staff will be implementing measures to avoid inappropriate parking and other issues which occurred last year. He advised Members that there are beach bye laws in place to limit and regulate activities. He noted that the Community Warden will be assisted by the Gardaí to implement the byelaws.

In response to a query seeking clarification on the time frame required to add towns or villages to the County Development Plan the Chief Executive advised there's no time frame set out in respect of the inclusion of town and villages other than the overall work programme. He confirmed there are a number of towns that will be included in the County Development Plan and noted larger towns will remain as individual standalone Local Area Plans.

Regarding the South Galway Flood Relief Scheme Cllr. Byrne highlighted the difficulty of face to face engagement with landowners until after the lifting of current Covid restrictions. Cllr. Byrne raised concern that if restrictions are not lifted on the 5<sup>th</sup> April the engagement with landowners will not continue. He suggested that this should be considered “essential work” and that the consultants and council engineering staff should be on the ground engaging with landowners from 5<sup>th</sup> of April irrespective of restrictions. In response Mr. Cullen advised members that the situation will be reviewed after the 5<sup>th</sup> April having regard to the guidelines in place at that time.

In response to a query from Cllr. Broderick regarding an update on a special meeting to discuss provision of Wastewater Treatment Systems in villages the Chief Executive advised that this was a matter for the members to decide but that this topic would arise in the discussion on the County Development Plan.

In response to a suggestion by Comh. O'Curraoin that developers should make contributions toward the provision of facilities in areas prior to development the Cathaoirleach advised it was more appropriate to consider these issues in terms of the CDP.

**ITEM NO. 2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**      3750

(a) Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McHugh **SECONDED** by Cllr. M Connolly the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021 were **NOTED**.

**Matters arising**

Cllr. Broderick queried party representation at CPG meetings. The Chief Executive advised that the method for selection of the CPG group is set out in the regulations. The makeup of CPG is ultimately decided by the members.

Cllr. Welby expressed his disappointment at the raising of the running order of the Agenda of Galway County Council January plenary meeting in the Dáil with reference to the Mother and Baby Home in Tuam. The Cathaoirleach confirmed that any Member who contacted him were informed of the decision made regarding the change in running order of items on the agenda. He also noted that no national TD had contacted him prior to the January meeting regarding the agenda.

**ITEM NO.3 TO CONSIDER THE AUDIT COMMITTEE 2020 ANNUAL REPORT UNDER SECTION 15 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AUDIT COMMITTEE REGULATIONS 2014).**      3751

*Report published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley the Audit Committee 2020 Annual Report under section 15 Local Government (Audit Committee Regulations 2014) was **NOTED**.

**Matters Arising:**

Cllr. Killilea noted the audit contained recommendations all of which will be implemented, and he requested confirmation of the recommendations be circulated to all Members. He also requested a breakdown in relation to attendance at the meetings.

Cllr. Broderick queried the amounts outstanding in relation to the shared services with Galway City Council and Syrian refugee recoupments. In response, Mr. Farrell advised that in relation to the Syrian Refugee recoupments an amount is still outstanding and confirmed that communication with the Department of Justice to recoup same is ongoing.

The Chief Executive advised that a new Head of Finance has recently been appointed by Galway City Council and he has been assured by the Chief Executive that the arrears

in relation to shared services will be finalised in the next few months. He confirmed that the Heads of Finance from both authorities are working to finalise the issue.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Sheridan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Killilea it was **AGREED** to suspend Standing Orders to bring forward item No. 5 on the Agenda.

**ITEM NO.5 PRESENTATION ON THE NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN. 3752**

Mr Joe Lavin, Chief Commercial Officer from National Broadband Ireland (NBI) made a presentation to Members. He highlighted the following points:

- The National Broadband Plan (NBP) project will ensure delivery of high-speed broadband to all parts of Ireland where services are not available commercially. The network to connect 544,000k premises in the intervention area will be designed, built and operated by National Broadband Ireland,
- NBI will future proofing internet access in rural area by using a full fibreoptic network. They will provide a wholesale open-access service to service providers. Customers will receive up to 1Gb with minimum speed of 500Mb.
- It is a seven-year programme. NBI are currently surveying premises in all 26 Counties. Fibre Network Build works will be initiated in all 26 counties in 2021. The rollout of the NBI network will be across 227 Deployment Areas (DA) in the country each with a local exchange or regional exchange at its core.
- In Galway 38,714 premises have been identified as being without access to High Speed Broadband. It represents 28% of the total premises in the county. The government will invest €153m approx. in building NBP in Galway. There are 8 Deployment Areas covering County Galway. The current status of each and the estimated connection timeline is as follows:

Athenry	Survey Underway	March 2022 - May 2022
Ballinasloe	Network Build in Progress	June 2021 - August 2021
Castlereagh	Survey Planned	January 2023 -December 2023
Galway	Network Build in Progress	June 2021 - August 2021
Gort	Network Build in Progress	January 2022 -March 2022
Inverin	Survey Underway	January 2022 -March 2022
Loughrea	Survey Underway	May 2022 - July 2022
Roscommon	Network Build in Progress	August 2021- October 2021

- The Islands will also get fibre to their homes.
- Broadband Connection Points (BCP) are being rolled out nationally to provide free high-speed internet access. BCP was launched in October 2020. The objective to ensure high speed connectivity for those in the intervention areas in the short term. NBI have identified 20 BCP locations and 57 schools in Galway to connect to high-speed broadband. Some schools have already gone live.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs. Charity Reddington Sheridan, McHugh, Kinane, C. Keaveney,**

- Clarification sought on the situation regarding wayleaves.
- Disappointment expressed on behalf of Constituents in the Tuam electoral area regarding the mapping and planned rollout. Noted the frustration of receiving standard cut and paste replies from NBI when seeking information.
- Queried why properties are currently deprived of access to Broadband when it is on their doorstep.
- In relation to broadband capacity do NBI ensure service providers are not overloading the system. Clarification sought as to whether there is a continuous review of speed after the initial validation of connection speeds.
- Welcomed the location of a BCP point at Craughwell Nursing Home and asked to have the connection progressed as a matter of urgency on compassionate grounds to reduce isolation in light of Covid.
- Expressed disappointment there was no rollout timescale given for the largest town in the County – Tuam. Queried when the survey is planned for Tuam and when will it be completed.

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Lavin:**

- Early in 2020 NBI started the process of engagement with local authorities and the Road Management Office to agree a standard application process for section 254 licences to local authorities. A pilot was carried out in Cavan and it was presented to CCMA in December and agreed. One piece still up for debate is the charging mechanism. LGMA will be sending out their guidance to Local Authorities.
- Regarding mapping and planned rollout, the process was designed as the most equitable way of rolling out the plan nationally. NBI aim is to build in every county in every year. Unfortunately, there are going to be premises that will be towards the end of the programme of works. Information available on the NBI website will give an estimated time for connection.
- Householders seeking connections in Eir coverage area are advised to contact Eir directly. The householders in intervention areas are on the list and NBI will get to them.
- The NBI network will be able support up to 10Gb speeds. 500Mb is the minimum speed provided. To ensure speed all connections will be tested after installation. There is a requirement on the service providers to validate the service is being provided at peak times and off-peak times.
- Regarding the Nursing Home in Craughwell an update will be provided.

- Regarding Tuam rollout timescale he stressed it is progressing as fast as possible in an equitable way but noted there are people who will have service faster than others.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs. Donohue, King, O Curraoin, O Cualáin, Collins, Mac Iomaire,**

- How do we request to get a pole moved where an existing pole needs to be repositioned?
- Connemara in general is an isolated area with a lot of isolated villages and houses. What is the timeline for rollout in the Connemara area? Can ESB lines be used if necessary, to speed up the process.
- Compliment the outdoor workers on this project, who are putting in a huge effort and are often out in bad weather.
- Concerns raised for public health nurses who have huge issues because they have no broadband in HSE centres. Queried the timeline for rollout in the Leitir Móir and Leitir Mealláin areas.
- Suggested NBI need to update their website in terms of timelines for the survey, design and build stages of the process. Communication is key. The information currently provided on the website isn't sufficient.
- Raised concerns about Eir not providing services to premises where neighbours are connected.

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Lavin:**

- Advised Noel Madden Broadband officer will be able provide updates and details on the process to request relocation of poles.
- NBI are engaging with the ESB regarding use of ESB infrastructure. It will be used where it makes sense to do so. He noted in rural areas a lot of poles are medium voltage and there are health and safety issues to be considered.
- Acknowledged compliments to NBI staff. He noted COVID had created challenges for elements of the project. They had caught up in on the surveying, which had fallen behind. In terms of the design phase, they have a plan to get back on track.
- HSE may already be noted on the list of access hubs points identified by Mr. Noel Madden. Will seek clarification and revert back with dates regarding Leitir Móir and Leitir Mealláin.
- The website is constantly being updated to provide the most relevant information.
- Regarding Eir lines and connections he noted that Eir make decisions from a commercial perspective. Eir's plans were submitted to the Department but NBI

have no control over where they build. NBI are responsible to connect premises in the Intervention area. NBI will get to those premises, but it will take time.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs. Mannion, Byrne, M. Connolly Hoade, Cronnelly, Killilea, Thomas**

- Clarification sought on why houses cannot connect to the fibre optic cable running along the N59. Stressed the importance of access to broadband in terms of tourism and housing for people relocating. Requested a copy of NBI's mapping of Clifden area.
- Concerns raised that NBI's mapping of the Gort area is not in line with Eir's mapping of Gort. Need to ensure that when the rollout from the regional exchange is completed there are no gaps between the two.
- Welcomed the proposed rollout of broadband in the Ballinasloe area. In light of Covid the demand for high speed broadband is even greater, housing is becoming more competitive where there is broadband. Is there a way of fast tracking the rollout?
- Expressed disappointment in relation to having no current date regarding a survey of Tuam. Noting we are currently in year two of a seven-year plan, stressed that five years is too long to wait for businesses currently finding it difficult to operate without broadband. Home schooling and remote working arrangement are also depending on access to good broadband. In relation to Eir queried how it could be commercially right to connect ten premises and leave one out noting situations where houses are connected and a business at the end of the same road cannot be connected.
- Homes are not only places of work now but places of education in some rural area you sometimes don't even have a proper phone signal. Can you do something with mobile phones to compensate.
- Stressed that Tuam is open for business and has high speed Broadband. There is ample availability for new business to come and open up in the town.
- Fibre connections to the home is preferable as there are issues using point to point connections. Queried the percentage of homes in the end that will be left without fibre connection

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Lavin:**

- Acknowledged the rollout of broadband will be a factor in property values. Regarding connections along N59 noted it is likely that the cable is a trunk line for Eir and advised that fibre optic is designed to route to a point, it is not designed to break for connections.
- Regarding mapping variations NBI's network is different to Eir's network. NBI's network has 220 exchanges, the fibre routes are restricted roughly 15-20km

from the exchanges. NBI's network routes are designed around good engineering principles which ensure technology upgrades can be put in place in future.

- NBI are acutely aware that people need highspeed broadband for business, education and wellbeing. Noted that the primary school broadband connection is relatively new to the plan since December.
- NBI will not be found wanting in trying to accelerate the rollout.
- Acknowledged that Tuam and all major towns have broadband, NBI's focus is on the intervention areas around those towns.
- NBI are working on the premise that 100% of homes will get fibre connection to the home. However, he noted that there may be situations where it is not good use of taxpayer's funds to provide the service if we can use a cheaper technology. These situations should be few and far between, maybe 1% that are not suitable for fibre connection.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs Reddington, Dolan, Canning, Keaveney**

- Rural areas are suffering the most. we need to move faster on this. Can you revert with a timescale for the rural electoral area of Tuam?
- What is your advice for people who find themselves in an area where people have connections all sides of them?
- Business in Portumna cannot get broadband. Broadband is within 500m of their business, they are willing to fund or part fund and pay for the connection is that an option.
- Clarification sought on schools - will all schools get broadband?
- Queried the process in choosing one area over another for rollout?

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Lavin:**

- In a situation where people are not getting a response from Eir through the normal channels suggest they contact or write to senior management.
- Acknowledged the frustration when broadband is available down the road and people cannot connect. Suggest they present their case to Eir.
- All schools that don't have access to high speed Broadband will be connected in the next 18 months.
- The procedure for deciding the order of rollout in different areas was based purely on engineering factors - identified the exchanges and build out from those areas. NBI treated every individual premises the same. The only issue in terms of equality was that each county should be developed at the same time. Galway fairs reasonably well compared to other counties as here are two regional exchanges situated in the county.



Mr. Lavin noted that the contract with NBI and the government is for 25-years with a possible further 10-year contract to keep pace with technology progress. Once the fibre optics are in place, NBI can increase speeds but it is going to take time to rollout 150,000 km of fibre optic cables. What Ireland are doing in terms of the National Broadband Plan is at the forefront in Europe.

A number of members acknowledged the work of Mr. Noel Madden, Broadband Officer and thanked him for his assistance. Cllr. Killilea acknowledged the work of Mr. Madden and the Chief Executive for meeting with a service provider in 2018 and securing the rollout of highspeed fibre broadband to every house in Tuam.

Mr. Lavin confirmed he will revert with details through Mr. Owens on the rollout timeframes for Connemara and Tuam area.

**ITEM NO. 4 TO CONSIDER THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT ON THE PROPOSED ADDITIONS AND PROPOSED DELETIONS TO THE RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES IN THE GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015-2021 AS PER SECTION 55 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000, (AS AMENDED).** 3753

*Report published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

Ms. Doddy gave a brief overview of the Chief Executive's Report on the proposed additions and proposed deletions to the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021

Cllr. Donohue proposed the deletion of Joe Cooley's House RPS 4102 from the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021. Cllr Hynes Seconded the proposal.

In accordance with the Chief Executive's Recommendation, Cllr. Cuddy proposed the deletion of Mikes Cottage RPS 922 from the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021. Cllr Charity seconded the proposal.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kinane **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning the Members **AGREED** the Chief Executive Report on the proposed additions and proposed deletions to the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 as per section 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) subject to the deletion of Joe Cooley's House RPS 4102.

Subsequently under Cathaoirleach's Business, Cllr. Canning requested the deletion of Oakley Park RPS 496 from the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021. He confirmed it was his understating that it was included in the deletions that he seconded and that were agreed earlier.

The Meetings Administrator referring to Standing Order no. 60, advised that the Cathaoirleach was entitled to take a second vote on the matter, if he considered that through some misunderstanding the first vote did not properly represent the intent of the meeting at that time.

Cllr. Murphy noted his objection to the removal of Oakley Park RPS 496 from the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed the Members agreement to the deletion of Joe Cooley's House RPS 4102 and Mikes Cottage RPS 922 from the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021.

Cllr. Canning proposed the deletion of Oakley Park RPS 496 from the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021. Cllr. Sheridan seconded the proposal.

The Cathaoirleach called for a vote and the following was the result of the vote:

For 9

Cllr. Canning	Comh. Ó'Cualáin	Cllr. Herterich Quinn
Cllr. Hoade	Cllr. Kinane	Cllr. King
Cllr. McClearn	Cllr. Sheridan	Cllr. Thomas

Against 5

Cllr. Byrne	Cllr. Donohue	Cllr. Murphy
Cllr. Reddington	Cllr. Welby	

Abstain 11

Cllr. Broderick	Cllr. Carroll	Cllr. Charity
Cllr. Curley	Comh. Ó'Curraoin	Cllr. Geraghty
Cllr. Killilea	Cllr. Mannion	Cllr. McHugh Farag
Cllr. McKinsty	Cllr. Dr Francis Parsons	

Absent

Cllr. Collins	Cllr. D. Connolly	Cllr. M. Connolly
Cllr. Cronnelly	Cllr. Cuddy	Cllr. Finnerty
Cllr. Hynes	Cllr. C. Keaveney	Cllr. P. Keaveney
Comh. Mac an Iomaire	Cllr. Maher	Cllr. Roche
Cllr. Walshe		

No-Voting 0

Following the vote by roll call, the Meetings Administrator noted a number of Members were offline during the vote. He confirmed he was notified by Cllr. Dolan and Cllr. M.

Connolly of their requirement to leave the meeting. In accordance with Standing Order no. 71 an immediate telephone call was made by the Meetings Administrators to all other Members offline during the vote to confirm they had not lost connectivity. There were no additions to the roll-call vote as previously recorded.

The Cathoirleach confirmed the Chief Executive Report on the Proposed Additions and Proposed Deletions to the Record of Protected Structures in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 as per section 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) was **AGREED** to include the deletion of Mikes Cottage RPS 922 and subject to the deletion of Joe Cooley's House RPS 4102 and Oakley Park RPS 496.

The Chief Executive requested that the update on the vote is circulated to all Members to avoid confusion in relation to the vote taken earlier. He noted some members had left the meeting and may have a different perception on the outcome.

**ITEM NO.6 PRESENTATION FROM IARNRÓD ÉIREANN ON THE WESTERN RAIL CORRIDOR: FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC APPRAISAL REPORT.** **3754**

Mr. Barry Kenny and Mr. Michael Brady from Iarnród Éireann joined the meeting. Mr. Kenny made a presentation to Members on The Western Rail Corridor; Financial and Economic Appraisal Report.

- Outlined the scale of Iarnród Éireann operations pre Covid.
- Highlighted the ambitions under Iarnród Éireann Strategy 2027
  - Building intercity frequency Galway Hourly; improve journey times.
  - Strengthen the role of rail in regional cities including Galway- URDF funding will allow increased frequency with Oranmore investment and enhanced facilities and integration at Ceannt Station.
  - Build rail freight business
  - Long term plans-double tracking Galway to Athenry; Portarlinton to Athlone: plan for electrification as part of climate action goals to decarbonise transport.
- Outlined the process of Western Rail Corridor Ernst & Young Study
  - Department of Transport established the Terms of Reference and funded Iarnród Éireann to commission the study to undertake a financial and economic appraisal on proposals for extending the Rail corridor Phases 2 and 3.
  - The final report was submitted to the Department in July 2020
  - The Department, as planned, commissioned an independent review by the EU/EIB agency JASPERS.
  - Both Studies were published by the Department in January 2021.
  - The key findings of the EY Report did not meet the business case under the Terms of Reference. JASPERS upheld the findings of the EY Report.
- Set out what will happen next in terms of Western Rail Corridor.

- Minister for Transport has announced a Strategic Rail Review of interurban and inter regional rail network.
- Iarnród Éireann will take no action that will impact on the possibility of reinstating rail services between Athenry and Claremorris, given the policy decisions which may arise from Strategic Rail Review.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs M. Connolly, Kinane, Murphy, Cronnelly, McKinstry, McHugh**

- Western Inter County Rail Committee have worked for decades to promote the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor. The rebuilding of Oranmore Station was part of that and together with Phase 1 has proved a huge success. The Committee are producing a document that will counteract the EY Report which is fundamentally flawed.
- Acknowledge the announcement of €9.28 Funding recently made for Oranmore train station. Public transport is a lifeline to rural Ireland. Request that timetables are reviewed as there are gaps in the timetable from Dublin to Galway.
- Ask Iarnród Éireann not to destroy the infrastructure between Athenry and Claremorris. Queried if there is a plan for building a light rail connection from Sixmilebridge to the airport terminal in Shannon which would make the rail connection between Limerick and Shannon more useful.
- Suggest that staffing levels were not sufficient in Athenry which is the transfer stop from Limerick to Galway. Noted that parking fees make train travel expensive. Queried possibility of using stops like Attymon where there was ample parking.
- Noted that the EY report did not look at the potential use of freight. Queried if Iarnród Éireann are examining the potential for freight and is there a timetable for electrification of rail. As there are no non fossil fuel goods vehicles on the roads it is important to put alternatives in place before 2030.
- Sought Clarification on the definition of short medium and long term with regard to Western Rail Corridor. What action is being taken by Iarnród Éireann to protect the integrity of the track and encroachment.

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Kenny:**

- The EY report was reviewed by Iarnród Éireann, the Department of Transport and JASPERS. There are some details identified that were acknowledged as being incorrect but in terms of substantial impact on the findings there are none.
- Regarding timetables there are reduced services on all lines due to Covid restrictions. Confirmed the goal is to have a 1 hourly link between Galway and Dublin taking advantage of the passing loop at Oranmore.
- The Strategic Rail Review will examine the full island passenger and freight ambitions.

- The Limerick and Shannon Metropolitan Area Transportation Study are examining the Sixmilebridge to Shannon Airport link.
- In terms of staffing levels at Athenry station, most customers buy tickets online or at the ticket machine. Customer service is very important and there are more staff on train now to assist. Noted that the more stops there are the slower the journey. The challenge is to find a balance. Carparking is not a facility that every user needs, those using it should pay for it. There are season tickets available to recognise regular usage and prices haven't increased in 10 yrs.
- The Rail Freight Strategy is at an advanced stage and the Strategic Rail Review will examine it also. The electrification timetable plan currently is for DART. When completed the focus will be on the electrification program to cover intercity rails.
- Clarified the medium-term reference to WRC in EY Report is 7-10 years, long term refers to project Ireland 2040. In terms of protecting the line CLAR funding was used to secure the line. Because the line is not operational scarce resources are not invested.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs Cuddy, Carroll, O Curraoin, Herterich Quinn, Geraghty,**

- Welcome the investment in Oranmore. Could Iarnród Éireann consider stopping all trains in Oranmore. Also have they considered a link road from the Dual Carriage way to reduce pressure off the Oranmore coast road.
- Can you confirm when construction will commence on the new second platform and the length of twin tracking at Oranmore Station. Clarification sought on when work will be commenced and completed.
- Support the opening of the western rail corridor allowing travel to Derry Sligo and Belfast and further rail development to Shannon Cork and Waterford. All lines could be used for freight.
- Queried the possibility of securing lease or licence agreements to use station houses at Athenry or Attymon stations for use by Community groups seeking accommodation.
- Electric Ireland and Eirgrid have made statements they cannot guarantee power supplies to two large data centres in Dublin. Considering two large power stations have been closed in the west queried if Iarnród Éireann have secured guarantees to power electric trains.

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Kenny:**

- Oranmore has been an unqualified success. In terms of the Platform and the passing loop, the URDF funding has just been announced the view is that there is a 2-2 ½ year timescale but that needs to be clarified.

- Passing loop will allow for more stops at Oranmore station. Will need to strike balance between speed of intercity link and local demands. The new road access is not in their remit.
- Confirmed many properties are not required for operation purposes and will provide relevant contact details.
- Power supply is a long-term project. Regarding the national electrification and electrified network at the moment there is no issue. Noted that Iarnród Éireann are the Port Authority for Rosslare Europort and confirmed they are working with national and regional authorities to develop Rosslare as a hub for future offshore wind farms.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs Broderick, D Connolly, Roche, Sheridan**

- Commend Iarnród Éireann and Galway County Council working together to secure significant funding for the Oranmore and Galway area. The EY Report contains a number of numerical, typographical and factual errors. Claremorris noted as a non-operational station, clarification sought that it is operational.
- Update sought on the twin track from Galway to Athlone and where it is at. Woodlawn and Attymon are settlement centres in the Galway Development Plan and would welcome increase in use of stations in these areas for commuters.
- The EY Report has given a result. We are left with a 42-year-old redundant alignment which has been neglected. It should be protected, and a greenway developed.
- Would welcome opportunity to licence the Milltown Station and protect what is part of the Milltown's community heritage.

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Kenny:**

- Confirmed Claremorris is an operational station. The consultants assigned costs to Claremorris to enhance it to facilitate additional route. The report was reviewed by JASPERS which supported the findings.
- In terms of twin tracking from Galway to Athlone, the Galway to Athenry stretch is the priority. The URDF funding is a step along the way.
- Next stage for double tracking is Portarlinton, it covers Galway services, Westport services and commuter services from Athlone.
- With scarce resources the priority is on the part of the network which is operational ensuring these routes are safe and protected.
- Not familiar with specific case in Milltown but will follow up on it.

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs Byrne, Reddington Killilea, McClearn, Broderick**

- Expressed surprise that there isn't a detailed strategy for rail freight in the country. Most supporters of WRC consider freight was an aspect that would make it more viable.
- The rail line is defunct at present is there an opportunity to develop the greenway if all other options are ruled out.
- Are you fully satisfied the outcome of the EY and JASPERS reports? Will Iarnród Éireann be making a submission to the Galway County Development Plan. Noted there are HGV electric vehicles and natural gas vehicles on the road. The Unilok company in Tuam making electric locomotive units was also referenced.
- Queried if Iarnród Éireann were disappointed with the errors and inaccuracies in the EY report. Sought clarification whether JASPERS carried out a report or just reviewed the EY report presented. Noted it was surprising the EY report found not one person in Tuam would use the train instead of their car. Noted the report claimed one person would take the train from Kiltimagh - clarified that Kiltimagh is not on the line referenced, Balla to Castlebar not in the study area, Claremorris to Balla not in the study area, and noted there was no mention of freight. Queried if Ersnt & Young adhered to the terms of reference of Iarnród Éireann and the Department of Transport. It was considered the most flawed document in 25 years as a councillor and that Professor John Bradley, ERSI, was critical of the EY report.
- The EY Report gives the capital cost for Phase 2, Athenry to Tuam, as €132m. The correct tot on the figures presented is €123m. Queried how a report costing €300,000 could make a such a simple error of €9m on a simple calculation.

**Members queries were responded to as follows by Mr Kenny:**

- Regarding rail freight it was appropriate to review the strategy. Rail freight operates on a commercial basis. There is no incentive for industry to move to rail freight at present. Iarnród Éireann are engaging with Department of Transport and working with industry to look at the role of rail freight from an economic and environmental point of view.
- Regarding the greenway Iarnród Éireann await the national Rail Review before anything further is considered.
- Confirmed Iarnród Éireann are satisfied with the EY report. considered the terms of reference details were adhered to and the outcome as robust.
- Clarified Iarnród Éireann engage with all County Development Plans.
- Clarified JASPERS report was a review of the EY report.
- Acknowledged there are individual errors, but they do not inform the data analysis. Some errors are differences of opinions. The correct data assessment was undertaken. It is a detailed report and both Iarnród Éireann and the

Department of Transport have accepted it. Regarding discrepancies Iarnród Éireann accept the overall findings of the report. The costings are robust.

In response to a query from Cllr. McClearn, Mr Kenny stressed the report did assess the financial and economic benefits. It was consistent with the terms of reference and what was produced.

The Chief Executive thanked Mr. Barry Kenny and Mr. Michael Brady for attending. He acknowledged the collaborative support and assistance working with Iarnród Éireann in the past number of years. He noted that working with Mr. Jim Meade, Chief Executive and Mr Barry Kenny, in the past 2 years they had managed to secure grant funding of €12m for Oranmore station. He acknowledged the work of Valerie Loughnane and her team and Mr. Jim Meade and the team in Iarnród Éireann for their work in this regard.

Referring to a query earlier, he confirmed that access to Oranmore station from the dual carriage is part of an overall masterplan for the area. He noted topographical issues on site make it difficult, but the connection is being examined.

**ITEM NO.7 TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – MARCH 2021 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).** 3755

*Report dated 19<sup>th</sup> March published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. Mannion it was **AGREED** to note the Management Report – March 2021 in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

Cllrs. Dolan and McHugh welcomed the inclusion of Housing and Planning metrics in the Management Report. Cllr. McHugh queried the possibility of providing FAQs for new applicants in the absence of pre-planning meeting. In response Ms. Loughnane advised Members there is a series of FAQ on the Council website under five different categories which are updated regularly.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Sheridan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Killilea it was **AGREED** to suspend Standing Orders to bring forward item No.1 on the Supplementary Agenda.

**ITEM NO.1 SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA - TO CONSIDER THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC) ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF FUNCTIONS FOR 2020, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 128B (I) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT 2014.** 3756



*Report published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Donohue **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh it was **AGREED** to note the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) Annual Report on the performance of functions for 2020, in accordance with Section 128B (i) of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

**ITEM NO. 8 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE.** **3757**

*The following items of correspondence which were published on the Extranet prior to the meeting were noted:*

- Briefing Paper dated 25.1.21 sent from UK & Ireland Chapter of Mayors for Peace- Entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
- Letter dated 12.2.21 from Kerry County Council – Resolution; Immediate introduction of payment to student nurses
- Letter dated 15.2.21 from Tipperary County Council - Resolution; Providing extra supports to regional newspapers
- Letter dated 15.2.21 from Tipperary County Council - Resolution; Rebate in PSO levy on ESB bills for community halls and facilities.
- Letter dated 15.2.21 from Tipperary County Council - Resolution; circulation of the "Agri Kids Be Farm Safe Presentation"
- Letter dated 16.2.21 from Kerry County Council - Resolution; United Nations Security Council
- Letter dated 16.2.21 from Kerry County Council - Resolution; invite to Ms. Samantha Power, Head of US Aid to address Council.
- Letter dated 17.2.21 from Ernst & Young – acknowledgement and refusal of Council meeting invitation
- Letter dated 23.2.21 from Tipperary County Council- Resolution; National day of recognition for the survivors and victims of Mother and Baby Homes.
- Email dated 24.2.21 from Miriam Rooney, Private Secretary to Minister for Health - Response to correspondence; Funeral restrictions
- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to National Broadband Plan - Invitation to Council meeting
- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to Commission on the Defence Forces – Resolution: Defence Forces pay
- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to Iarnród Éireann - Western Rail Corridor Review Report
- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to Iarnród Éireann – Invitation to Council Meeting

- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to Heather Humphreys TD Department of Rural & Community Development – Resolution; Letter to Department; Broadband for Clarinbridge Care Centre
- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications– Resolution; CCTV, litter and GDPR
- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to Leo Varadkar TD, Tánaiste & Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment – Resolution; CETA/ICS agreement
- Letter dated 25.2.21 from County Secretary to An Taoiseach Micheál Martin – Resolution; CETA/ICS agreement
- Letter dated 1.3.21 from GRET B – Response to correspondence; Female Membership of GRET B
- Letter dated 3.3.21 from County Secretary to Peter Burke TD, Minister of State Local Government and Planning - Resolution; invitation to virtual meeting
- Letter dated 3.3.21 from Sligo County Council - Resolution; Land Development Agency Bill 2021
- Letter dated 3.3.21 from Sligo County Council - Resolution; Funding crisis of Community Groups
- Letter dated 3.3.21 from Sligo County Council - Resolution; Post Office contracts
- Letter dated 3.3.21 from Sligo County Council - Resolution; Appointment of Independent Meat Regulator
- Email dated 4.3.21 from Private Secretary to Minister Eamon Ryan TD - Response to correspondence; CCTV, litter and GDPR
- Letters dated 5.3.21 from Leitrim County Council - Resolution; Pesticide Cypermethrin
- Letter dated 10.3.21 from County Secretary to GRET B–Female Membership of GRET B

**ITEM NO. 9 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS.**

**3758**

The following Motions were submitted:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McClearn **SECONDED** by Cllr. Murphy the Members **AGREED:**

*“that Galway County Council calls on the Ministers for Agriculture and Health to set up an Independent Beef Regulator with authority to investigate price fixing by the Meat Industry and protect the Health of Consumers*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ó Cualáin **SECONDED** by Cllr. King the Members **AGREED:**

*"an invitation would be sent to Eir, to attend virtually and give a presentation to the members of Galway County Council, to address the queries/concerns raised by members in today's meeting, in relation to the services they are providing throughout the county, in terms of broadband and landline services."*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Dr Francis Parsons **SECONDED** by Cllr. Donohue the Members **AGREED**:

*"I call on Galway County Council to make a formal submission to the Minister for Housing Local Government & Heritage outlining our complete opposition to the proposed provisions of the Land Development Agency Bill 2021."*

*The proposed removal of the Section 183 reserved function of Elected Members in relation to the disposal of local authority held land to the LDA as provided for in Part 7 Section 56 of the bill is unacceptable and an affront to local democracy. As advocates for the empowerment of local government, we can never support or accept any diminution in the reserved functions and powers of elected Councillors."*

*I also have concerns regarding the potential long-term implications for local authorities in delivering social and affordable housing on local authority held land due to the extensive remit of the LDA. I believe that this is a major battle in our ongoing fight to preserve the local democratic function in the face of ever-increasing centralism. I wish for that a copy would also be circulated to other Local Authorities."*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Killilea the Members **AGREED** to include this motion as an agenda item for discussion at the next Plenary Council meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Sheridan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Geraghty the Members **AGREED**:

*"that Galway County Council seek that CIE Fast track a simplified licensing arrangement for properties and stations owned by it on the Athenry to Claremorris, to bona fide Community Groups that are registered with PPN, insured and whose purpose is the voluntary stabilisation and protection of these structures within their community pending the outcome of the Strategic National Rail Review which is being ordered for by the Minister."*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby **SECONDED** by Cllr. Broderick the Members **AGREED**:

*"That the members of Galway County Council stand in solidarity and support of Mayor Michael Cubbard and his family against the threat that he has received in the past. There is no place in a democratic society for any of this intimidation to any public representative or their families."*

Cllr. McClearn commented that it was appalling that a person working so hard for the Community would be treated in this way. Gardai need to take this seriously and the perpetrator must be brought to justice. Cllr. Hoade concurred with the sentiments. She reminded Members that the AILG has circulated a survey on threats and harassment. She encouraged Members to complete the survey.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Broderick **SECONDED** by Cllr. Geraghty the Members **AGREED**:

*"that the minister at the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment outlines clearly to this Council, the rationale of his Department, to direct this Council to overlook, court judgements obtained by the authority, at its own cost, for collection of rates owing, not to be offset against the Restart Scheme."*

### **Matters arising**

**The following queries were raised by Cllrs Geraghty, Cuddy, Welby, O 'Cualáin Kinane, McClearn**

- Staffing levels in terms of engineers and outdoor staff and the ability of the council to deliver services to levels of other local authorities.
- Suggested a deliberate attempt at national level to downgrade the status of Galway County Council with regard to staffing levels and funding.
- Referencing a recent survey carried out in Clare County Council comparing planning applications processed by planners in various Local Authorities Galway County fared very badly.
- Delays processing housing maintenance grants was impacted by staffing levels
- The Climate Change & Biodiversity SPC was set up but the support staff are not in place to apply for grants available. Disagree with suggestion to increase LPT to get more staff. we have to go back to central government
- In excess of 100,000 houses in the Country not paying property tax. people who have not paid LPT since 2013 as the system doesn't allow them to pay it. The Government have failed to deal with this issue. It needs to be addressed.

In response to a query from Cllr. McKinstry regarding the possibility of setting up a European funding post to seek European funding the Cathaoirleach advised it will be dealt with it at CPG.

**Members queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:**

- He was very aware of issues around staffing levels.
- He confirmed that every position that becomes vacant is replaced. He noted that the figures show that in two years 2019 and 2020 we have more people joining the organisation than leaving, albeit small numbers.
- Regarding acting positions, he noted that when staff take acting positions, they gain valuable experience which stands to them when they compete for another position. He noted that while some staff go to other organisations we are also attracting staff from other organisations.
- He noted that acting positions occur for a variety of reasons and does not mean there is a position to be filled.
- He referred to NOAC figures published annually and noted that it is very clear that we have the lowest numbers in terms of spending in a number of areas because we don't have the staffing levels.
- He noted that looking at figures for Galway in terms of average staffing levels versus comparator counties of Donegal, Mayo, Tipperary and Kerry, Galway county fares badly.
- Ultimately the only way we can increase staffing levels is by additional financial resources. That can come from national level, which has been sought, or locally by an increase in LPT which with a three-year commitment could be a practical approach to increase staffing levels in Galway County Council.

The Cathaoirleach wished the Chief Executive well on his ratification as Chief Executive of Mayo County Council. He said he had been a fantastic servant to County Galway, with a wealth of experience both as a Director of Service and acting Chief Executive. He noted it is our loss we are losing you. It is with deepest sense of respect and a heavy heart we see you go to Mayo County Council but noted it was not a million miles away.

The Chief Executive thanked the Cathaoirleach and noted he will be here for some time yet and will be at the April Plenary Meeting.

Some members expressed the view that an increase in LPT was not a solution to resolving staffing levels. In response the Chief Executive stated that he didn't make the comment on LPT lightly but noted the recurring conversation on this topic.

Cllr. Reddington said that the Chief Executive will be sorely missed in Galway County Council and it is an awful loss to the County. Cllr Killilea said he had the highest regard for the Chief Executive and said he was a man of integrity and noted Mayo's gain is Galway County's huge loss. He wished him well.

Cllr. Killilea queried if we got value for money on the upgrade of the new wastewater treatment plant in Tuam. He noted there are often breakdowns and when they occur traffic is being diverted down to Killaloony village creating problems. Mr. Cullen said he will revert to Cllr Killilea on this issue.

Comh. O'Cualáin thanked the men and women of the Fire Service An Ceathrú Rua who recently responded to a person experiencing cardiac arrest. Noting the closest ambulance was 38 minutes away at the time he said they saved a life. He conveyed the thanks of the family.

Comh. O'Cualáin asked for an update on the position regarding Covid 19 vaccines for the Fire Service staff. In response the Chief Executive advised the Fire Service are on the vaccine list. He noted that prioritisation had been determined at national level and we are abiding by the prioritisation listing.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Charity and **SECONDED** by Cllr. Broderick it was **AGREED** to suspend Standing Orders to continue the meeting past 5 o'clock for the purpose of dealing with the remaining items.

Cllr. Broderick queried why ratepayers were not informed of the extended rates waiver scheme when the recent rate demand issued. Mr. Mullarkey confirmed the extension of the rates waiver scheme to 30<sup>th</sup> June he advised that the confirmation of details regarding the waiver for the second quarter of the year had been communicated late. The rate demand was sent out to meet statutory deadlines. He confirmed eligible rate payers will be written to.

In response to a query from Cllr. Herterich Quinn regarding a lack of communication with Councillors the Cathaoirleach noted her party colleagues were represented on the CPG and SPCs.

Cllr. Donohue was joined by Cllr. Dr. Francis Parsons in paying tribute to Pádraig Ó hAoláin, former Chief Executive of Údarás na Gaeltachta who passed away recently.

In response to a query from Cllr. Geraghty regarding the removal of and lack of any bins in a particular town, Mr. Cullen agreed to examine the matter.

In response to queries on Streetscape Enhancement Programme Mr. Farrell advised:

- The scheme in Ballinasloe has been revisited to make a provision to enable further works to take place.
- The team intend to move quickly on this and they will be in contact with the successful applicants to outline the extent of the works that are possible.
- The architect in regeneration team will ensure there is consistency and impact in terms of the expenditure.
- This is part of the investment in Ballinasloe as part of the town enhancement scheme and to meet the specific commitments that were given previously.
- If all successful applicants proceed with the work it could realise €200,000 potential investment in the town.

The Chief Executive in response to a query raised by Cllr. Murphy's regarding public and private developments and wastewater treatment plants advised the approach was equal for both the public and private sector. He noted he was happy to discuss it further to clarify any issue.

Regarding the County Development Plan he advised Members that they will consider it before it goes on public display. The public will then have an opportunity to make their submissions. He advised there will be a series of workshops at Municipal District level and at Plenary level in addition to statutory meetings. He noted the statutory process allows Members the time to consider the plan and allows time for consideration of any amendments from the environmental perspective before it is put on public display.

## **NOTICES OF MOTION**

### **ITEM NO.10 - NOTICE OF MOTION**

**3759**

Cllr. McKinstry submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

"We call on the Executive to do due diligence on the sourcing of rock, sand, gravel and aggregates for roads and construction projects.

In doing so, we call on the council to ban any supplier that has been prosecuted for illegal quarrying or is known to be sourcing material from SACs or SPCs, from being a supplier to the Council for 5 years."

#### **The following reply issued:**

*"Local Authorities must comply with Public Procurement Guidelines. Procurement of good & services is set out at a national level through websites such as supply.gov.ie and e-tenders. Galway County Council cannot preclude a supplier from competing in tendering for a contract/multi-party framework. However, we can endeavor to introduce additional checks in the tender assessment to ensure that the quarry source is operating in compliance with the Planning Acts."*

Cllr. McKinstry noted his disappointment with the reply. A discussion followed. While some members agreed with the sentiment of the motion a number of Members raised concerns about the wording of the motion and the implications for Galway County Council.

Mr. Cullen said it was his understanding that the intent of the motion was to address a difficult issue. He assured Members Galway County Council always exercises due diligence but noted it is difficult to get it 100% correct all of the time. He noted his reservation about introducing any conditions in terms of procurement as it is a difficult and litigious area in general.

Cllr. McKinstry clarified that he had no doubt Galway County Council was exercising due diligence but noted there were quarry operators flouting the law and undercutting legitimate suppliers. He stressed that someone who is convicted of illegal activity should cease operations as a supplier of the Council. Cllr. McKinstry agreed to **WITHDRAW** the motion pending legal advice and further discussion of the matter at SPC level.

Mr. Cullen confirmed the matter could be discussed at both the Transportation, Infrastructure & Marine SPC and the Climate Change & Biodiversity SPC. He confirmed legal advice will be sought on the matter.

### **ITEM NO.11 - NOTICE OF MOTION**

**3760**

Cllr. Byrne submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

"The last 12 months has seen increased walking activity in our towns and villages, a very welcome development, and one which we hope will continue. The lack of public lighting on some of our footpaths on the outskirts of towns and villages has been one cause of concern with respect to safety.

Currently there is no public funding under our Roads Programme for the provision of new Public Lights.

This motion requests that for 2021 and 2022, that the current limit of funding by each Councilor through NOM for one public light per year, be increased to a max of three per year to address this issue and let it be one Covid legacy to our communities from local public representatives".

#### ***The following reply issued:***

*"At present Councillors can allocate €3,000 of notice of motion money to the provision of public lighting. The lighting must be provided in accordance with the policy on Councillors public lighting which was agreed in 2017. While the policy itself doesn't curtail the number of lights that can be provided the cost allocation of €3,000 does impose a limit. It is important to bear in mind that the Notice of motion monies support an element of payroll cost whereas public lighting is largely contract work. It would be difficult to sustain a situation where all Councillors would allocate NOM monies for three public lights each in any given year. However, it is recognised that there are situations where the curtailment to one light is too restrictive and therefore it is suggested that the Strategic Policy Committee were to consider what is being proposed in the first instance."*

Mr. Cullen advised the next Transportation, Infrastructure & Marine SPC meeting was scheduled for next week and confirmed the matter will be included as an item on the agenda.



**ITEM NO.12 - NOTICE OF MOTION**

**3761**

Cllr. Charity submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

"We propose that this Council formally apply to the relevant Department to seek funding for a feasibility study examining the development potential of a cycleway/greenway from Galway City limits to Headford, having regard to routes/loops through the areas of Menlo/Killoughter, Annaghdown/Corrandulla, Luimnagh, Caherlistrane and Headford, noting the requirement for consultation, engagement and agreement with all interested parties throughout, and with the potential for further development onwards to Westport via Ballinrobe in conjunction with Mayo County Council."

**The following reply issued:**

*"The Council is progressing a number of greenway projects at present with the support of funding from Department of transport Tourism and Sport. These include initial studies for Clifden to Derrygimlagh, Clifden to Kylemore and Milltown to Athenry. With regard to the request for a greenway project from Galway to Headford this can be considered along with other greenway proposal requests as future funding opportunities arise."*

In response to a query regarding maintenance costs for greenways Mr. Cullen advised the annual maintenance cost is currently estimated to be €1,000 per kilometer. He confirmed the local authority funds the costs and doesn't expect any change to this.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Charity **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington the motion was **AGREED**.

**ITEM NO.13 VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS**

**3762**

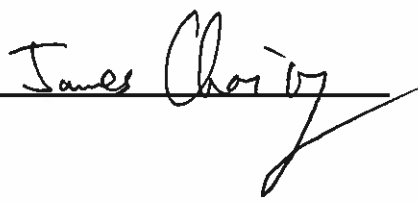
**A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:**

- Eamon Mc Gonagle, Aillebrack, Ballyconneely, Co. Galway
- Richard Bartley & Family, Fairgreen, Clifden, Co. Galway
- Betty Ó hAoláin & Family, Knocknacarra, Galway
- Nora Phelan & Family, Ballydotia, Moycullen, Co. Galway

**Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.**

**Submitted, Signed & Approved:**

**Cathaoirleach:**

  
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**Dated:**

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