

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL
Monday, 16th December 2024 at 11.00am

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. O. Turner Leas Cathaoirleach
Cllr. M. Kinane
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill: Comh. /Cllr. I. Canning, J. Charity, D. Collins, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, S. Cunniffe, S. Curley, T. Ó Curraoin, G. Donohue, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, D. Geraghty, T. Grealish, A. Harney, M. Hoade, C. Keane, P. Keaveney, D. Kelly, D. Killilea, P. Killilea, M. Kinane, G. King, M. Lee, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, P.J. Murphy, , A. Reddington, O. Turner, S. Walsh and T. Welby.

Baill ar líne: Comh. /Cllr. M. Leainde, Dr. E. F. Parsons

Oifigh: Mr. L. Conneally, Chief Executive, Mr. L. Hanrahan, Director of Services, Mr. U. Finn, Director of Services, Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services, Ms. K. O'Connor, Head of Finance, Mr. M. Owens, Director of Services, Ms. J. Brann Meetings Administrator, A. Dolan T.D., L. O'Hara T.D., Mr. M. O Donnchadha, Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge, Ms. H. Riordan, A/Staff Officer, Ms. T. Costello, Assistant Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

Members raised the following points and queries:

ITEM NO.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

4469

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finnerty the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 25th November 2024 were **AGREED**.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- The provision of a Local Link service between Galway and Loughrea on a trial period was welcomed.

ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4470

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. M. Connolly the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on 18th November 2024 were **NOTED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. Mac An Iomaire **SECONDED** by Cllr. M. Connolly the minutes of the Transportation & Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 26th April 2024 were **NOTED**.

ITEM NO.3 TO FILL A CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL ARISING FROM THE ELECTION OF CLLR. ALBERT DOLAN TO DÁIL ÉIREANN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 19 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED) AND STANDING ORDER 75 OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS.

4471

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finnerty it was **AGREED** that Mr. Seán Broderick, Colemanstown, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway be co-opted as a Member of Galway County Council and the Municipal District of Athenry / Oranmore following election of former Cllr. Albert Dolan to Dáil Eireann.

Cllr. Broderick addressed the Council. He thanked those that supported his co-option to the Council. He is looking forward to helping community groups and community projects in his area.

Deputy Dolan welcomed Cllr. Broderick to the Council. He detailed the experience that Cllr. Broderick brings from his service with Galway Rural Development. He thanked the Executive for the support, dedication, advice and their availability to him during his time as Cathaoirleach. He wished the incoming Cathaoirleach luck. He committed to working with each Member of the Council in his new role and informed them that his office will always be open to support the Council in the future.

ITEM NO. 4 TO FILL A CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL ARISING FROM THE ELECTION OF CLLR. LOUIS O' HARA TO DÁIL ÉIREANN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 19 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED) AND STANDING ORDER 75 OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS

4472

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Comh. Ó Curraoin it was **AGREED** that Mr. Martin McNamara, Sheunpark, Cartymore, Athenry, Co. Galway be co-opted as a Member of Galway County Council and the Municipal District of Athenry / Oranmore following election of former Cllr. Louis O'Hara to Dáil Eireann.

Cllr. McNamara said that it was an honour and a privilege to sit in the Council Chamber. He thanked his party for selecting him and is looking forward to representing his Local Electoral Area.

Deputy O'Hara described Cllr. McNamara as genuine, honest and capable. He thanked the Chamber, Executive and staff for supporting him during his time as an Elected Member. He committed to continuing to work for County Galway in his new role.

ITEM NO. 5 TO FILL A CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL ARISING FROM THE ELECTION OF CLLR. PETER ROCHE TO DÁIL ÉIREANN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 19 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED) AND STANDING ORDER 75 OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS.

4473

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Turner **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington it was **AGREED** that Ms. Siobhán McHugh Ryan, Kilcloghans, Tuam, Co. Galway be co-opted as a Member of Galway County Council and the Municipal District of Tuam following election of former Cllr. Peter Roche to Dáil Eireann.

Cllr. McHugh Ryan said that it was a huge privilege for her to take a seat in the Chamber. She thanked Fine Gael for giving her the opportunity and to Councillors Turner and Reddington for nominating her. She promised to learn, listen, work for the people and will endeavor to do as well as Deputy Roche did in his role as an Elected Member.

Cllr. Reddington welcomed Cllr. McHugh Ryan to the Chamber, stating that her business expertise will be invaluable to the Council.

The Chief Executive as leader of the Executive and on behalf of the Council staff welcomed the 3 new Elected Members to the Council. He informed them that there is a large programme of work planned for the Council over the next 5 years and looks forward to working with all elected members to deliver this work programme.

Expressions of welcome were extended to the newly co-opted Elected Members. The newly Elected T.D.s were also congratulated and wished well in their new roles in Dáil Éireann.

ITEM NO. 6 TO FILL A CASUAL VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF CATHAOIRLEACH OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM 2024/2025 ARISING FROM THE ELECTION OF CLLR. ALBERT DOLAN TO DÁIL ÉIREANN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 37 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **4474 A**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Hoade and **seconded** by Cllr. Finnerty that Standing Orders be suspended.

ITEM NO. 7 FILLING OF 3 CASUAL VACANCIES IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE. **4475**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McClearn **SECONDED** by Comh. Mac An Iomaire it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. McHugh Ryan to the Physical Development, Transportation and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Broderick to the Physical Development, Transportation and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. Walsh it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. McNamara to the Physical Development, Transportation and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee.

ITEM NO.8 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF ATHENRY HERITAGE & TOURISM CO. LTD. **4476**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finnerty it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Broderick to the Athenry Heritage & Tourism Co. Ltd.

ITEM NO.9 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF GALWAY RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY. **4477**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McClearn **SECONDED** by Cllr. Murphy it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Reddington to Galway Rural Development Company

ITEM NO. 10 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE GALWAY ROSCOMMON EDUCATION TRAINING BOARD. **4478**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McClearn **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. McHugh Rvan to the Galway Roscommon Education Training Board.

ITEM NO. 11 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE WESTERN INTER-COUNTY RAIL COMMITTEE. **4479**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. M. Connolly it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. McNamara to the Western Inter-County Rail Committee.

ITEM NO. 12 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD OF ÚDARÁS NA GAELTACHTA FOR THE PERIOD 2025-2026 **4480**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finnerty it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Lee to the board of Údarás na Gaeltachta for the period 2025 - 2026.

ITEM NO. 13 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE COMMUNITY SAFETY POLICY, TO NOMINATE 7 NO ELECTED MEMBERS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE. **4481**

Report dated 9th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Ms. Carroll, Director of Service gave a brief overview of the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee which will form early in the new year. The selection of the Chair is ongoing. The Committee will be supported by an Administrative Officer and Assistant Staff Officer. She requested that the Elected Members nominations be representative of each of the Municipal Districts.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finnerty **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Hoade to the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finnerty **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Lee to the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McClearn **SECONDED** by Cllr. P. Killilea it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Reddington to the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McClearn **SECONDED** by Cllr. P. Killilea it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Keaveney to the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh Farag it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Grealish to the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cunniffe **SECONDED** by Cllr. Walsh it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Geraghty to the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. Walsh it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. McNamara to the Local Community Safety Partnership Committee.

ITEM NO. 14 TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 TO RESCIND THE LEASING OF 4,500 METRES OF COUNCIL OWNED DUCTS TO VIRGIN MEDIA IRELAND LIMITED. THIS PROPOSAL HAD BEEN APPROVED AT THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD 23RD JULY 2018 (MINUTE 3268 REFERS). **4482**

Statutory Notice issued in accordance with Section 183(1)(b) and report dated 4th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Mr. Finn, Director of Service explained that the ducts leased to Virgin Media Ireland Limited under the Section 183 of July 2018 have not been used. The Council wish to retain them for our own future use.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cunniffe it was **AGREED** to rescind Resolution 3268 of 23rd July 2018 which approved the leasing of 4,500 metres of Council owned ducts to Virgin Media Ireland Limited.

ITEM NO. 15 TO CONSIDER AUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDIT SERVICE STATUTORY AUDIT REPORT TO GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31ST 2023. **4483**

Audited Annual Financial Statement and Local Government Audit Service Statutory Audit Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Ms. O Connor, Head of Finance presented Galway County Council's Audited Annual Financial Statement for the year ended 31st December 2023. The Unaudited Annual Financial Statement was previously presented to the Council at the April 2024 Plenary meeting. The only change to the unaudited statement relates to an increase in housing stock and confirmed that there have been no material movements in the Income and Expenditure Account. The Council recorded a surplus after transfer to reserves of just over €3,000 for 2023. There was an increase of nearly €17m or 11% in the income when compared to the prior year. The overall result for 2023 shows a surplus of €3,278. Which leaves the Council with a cumulative surplus on the General Revenue Reserve of €46,204.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- The Head of Finance and her team were thanked for presenting the budget.
- The newly elected TDs were encouraged to support the Council by seeking an increase in funding.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade the Audited Annual Financial Statement for Galway County Council and Local Government Audit Service Statutory Audit Report to Galway County Council for year ended December 31st, 2023 was **NOTED**.

ITEM NO. 16 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE ADOPT THE GALWAY COUNTY HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY PLAN 2024-2030. 4484

The Draft plan was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Mr. Hanrahan, Director of Service introduced the Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030. He acknowledged the work of the Heritage and Biodiversity Officers. He highlighted the level of community and forum consultation

that had taken place during the last year. The Climate Change Action Plan and the County Development Plan were considered during the drafting of this plan. The plan was brought through the Heritage Forum and the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC). Funding and activities are included as actions in the plan.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- The work of Marie Mannion and Rosina Joyce was acknowledged.
- The level of community collaboration was welcomed.
- The absence of reference to noxious weeds such as Ragwort was raised and its inclusion in the plan was requested. Specific measures are required to stop its spread.
- It was enquired how Elected Members could make contributions to the Galway County Council Tree and Hedgerow Management Plan. Also, if this plan will be brought before the Members.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Hanrahan:

- Control of noxious weeds will be included in the final Plan
- The Tree and Hedgerow Management Plan will proceed through the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) process. It will then be brought to full Council. It is on the list of actions in 2025 for the SPC.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. M. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. Kinane it was **AGREED** to adopt the Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030.

**ITEM NO. 17 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE ADOPT THE
LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN 2024-2030.** **4485**

The Draft plan was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Ms. Carroll, Director of Service introduced the Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2030 (LECP), this the final stage of the adoption process. She introduced Ms. Maria Hall who gave a presentation on the plan to the Council.

The Chief Executive stated that this is an important document. A lot of work has been undertaken in formulating the LECP. The research data from the report must be kept up to date as it will be a useful tool in the midterm review of the County Development Plan. County Galway has a young age profile, half of the Irish speaking population is within our jurisdiction and we need to cater for the daily use of our native tongue. The County boasts a skilled workforce. We are currently at full employment, with some sectors experiencing a skills shortage. The implementation of the LECP will be by multiple organisations, we need to communicate who does what and monitor this properly.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- The significant work in the plan and inclusion of Sustainable Development Goals was acknowledged.
- The workshops for the LECP were appreciated.
- It was proposed that Elected Members endeavour to speak Irish as much as possible at meetings to help strengthen the Irish language.
- The lack of reference to how gender-based violence will be addressed was raised.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms Hall:

- A Council department is required to take responsibility for every action in the plan. Where this didn't happen gaps may occur in some areas of the plan. She undertook to consult with the Local Community Development Committee for the inclusion of gender-based violence aspects in the Implementation Plan.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms Carroll:

- The area of gender-based violence will be included in the Plan and linked to the Housing and Community directorates.
- The LECP Implementation Plan will be circulated to the Members.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The LECP annual monitoring plans will come before the Members for noting.
- Gave his commitment that the issue of domestic violence would be a specific action in the LECP.

The following amendment was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Parsons **SECONDED** by Cllr. McNamara:

'To include the following objective:

Support the reduction and awareness of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence by supporting the implementation of The Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) Bill 2023 at a local level. This will be achieved through ongoing coordinating actions to tackle DSGBV, including delivery of services to victims of DSGBV, pursuing the objective of providing a Domestic Violence Refuge in Co Galway with the relevant stakeholders, prioritising the safety, well-being, and empowerment of survivors while promoting a community culture of zero tolerance for DSGBV.'

It was **AGREED** to accept the inclusion of the objective into the Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2030.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- It was asked that the areas of mental health and suicide prevention be included in the plan.
- That the Social Deprivation Index figures will continue to be updated.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms Carroll:

- While mental health and suicide prevention are not explicitly mentioned in the plan, these areas are covered. The Annual Plan will incorporate and support this piece.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McHugh **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade it was **AGREED** to adopt the Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2030.

ITEM NO. 18 TO CONSIDER THE NOISE ACTION PLAN 2024-2028. **4486**

The Draft plan was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Mr. Finn, Director of Service explained that Galway County Council are a Noise Authority. Noise from roads, railways and airports are assessed under the plan. Railways and airports are not relevant to County Galway and only roads with over 3 million traffic movements per annum are assessed in the Noise Plan. In County Galway it relates primarily to noise from the motorway and roads around the Galway metropolitan urban areas. The plan was approved at the November SPC meeting. If the Members have any queries regarding the plan he invited them to contact either himself or Mr. Tom Prendergast, Senior Engineer directly.

The Noise Action Plan 2024-2028 was **NOTED**.

ITEM NO.19 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **4487**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. Maher to attend AILG October Training Module – Local Authority Finance & Budget at Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo on 24th October 2024. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. Parsons to attend AILG November Training Module – A Briefing for Elected Members at The Claregalway Hotel, Claregalway on 16th November 2024 (Retrospective Approval).

ITEM NO. 20 TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2024 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

4488

Report dated 10th December 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The Management Report – December 2024, in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (As Amended) was **NOTED**.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- Thanks were conveyed to the Council Social Media team for the valuable updates they provide.
- The signing of contracts for the €2.5m Active Travel Scheme between Vicar Street and the Dublin Road was welcomed.
- Appointment of a design team to provide houses in Tuam was welcomed.
- It was queried if the Council have the funds to meet the required 15% financial contribution towards housing grants, following the 33% increase in grant amounts to be awarded under the new scheme.
- If data has been captured to explain why 12 Local Authority Home Loans have expired.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The notifications issued by the Social Media team have increased due to the increased frequency of weather alerts. Work on the new Council website is underway and the provision of more and more Council services via electronic means is a priority for Council.
- The Council have the funds to meet the 15% contribution towards housing grants.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- There is a limit to the number of approvals that may be on hand at a particular time.
- Once an application is expired the applicant is required to re-apply.
- Monthly returns on Housing Home Loans are submitted to the department, these can be shared at a high level.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- An update on the status of 2 Health Service Executive (HSE) owned houses in Gort was requested.
- It was raised that emergency service vehicles do not have equipment to unblock roads, this can impede their response times during storms.
- If all agriculture inspections have been transferred from the Council to the Department of Food and the Marine. It was highlighted that inspections at this time of year create increased pressure for farmers.
- If the Director could obtain information from Uisce Éireann on when boil water notices will be lifted in the Dunmore area following storm Darragh.
- When new staff will be employed in the housing grants section.
- If grant applications already approved will be eligible to avail of the increase in housing grant rates.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. Carroll:

- The functions of the veterinary service will transfer to the department from 31st December. The Council have retained a veterinary inspector to ensure that there is no gap in service.
- As regards agricultural inspections farmers are always contacted in advance unless there is an incident of non-compliance. The Council will work with farmers to assist them to comply with their environmental requirements.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- The legal transfer of the properties in Gort between the HSE and the Council is ongoing. Survey work is underway to allow the project to go to tender once the transfer is complete.
- There are 250 housing grant applications on hand.
- 2 additional inspectorate staff have been added to the grants team.
- The increase in grant limit applies to applications received from 1st December. Older applications may be withdrawn and applicants may then reapply to avail of the new rates.
- Discretion on payment of grants where works commenced prior to approval has been removed. Grant payments cannot be made if works commence prior to approval.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- As of Friday, all boil notices were lifted.
- Fire personnel must follow health and safety protocol in relation to procedures. There are internal channels through which any concerns may be raised.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- If Inishbofin was included in the recent Island Response Plan exercise.
- Clifden Fire Station is operating on a week on week off basis. The nearest station to it is an hour away. A full service is necessary in Clifden.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- Inishbofin may not have been included on the training day but it is included in the Island Response Plan.
- He committed to following up on the situation in Clifden Fire Station.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. Ruane:

- Will revert and confirm if there are currently vacancies for Fire Staff in the Clifden Fire Station.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- Thanks were expressed to staff working during weather events, especially the outdoor staff.
- If extra staff have been appointed to the Housing Section.
- If the Croí Cónaithe Scheme could be streamlined.
- If vacancies arising from staff retirement could be filled once the staff member retires.
- That an update be included in the January Management Report on the Ballinasloe Fire Station.
- An update on current fire service delivery for the peripheral areas of the closed Banagher Fire Station was requested.
- An update on fire services response times to incidents in the peripheral area of the closed Castlerea fires station was requested.
- If a map of closed HSE buildings in rural villages could be provided. They should be offered to the Council and utilised again.
- Culverts must be cleaned and road maintenance carried out following storms.
- Signage needs to be erected warning of flooded roads.
- Communication from Uisce Éireann is poor, Members need to be kept informed of boil notices.
- A grant is required to assist landowners in removing storm damaged roadside trees.
- The work of Michael Sheil, Senior Executive Engineer was commended.
- If any of the 54 new houses being developed in Headford will be social or affordable housing.
- An update was sought on a Notice of Motion that was issued to the Department of Transport regarding extending the Community Involvement Schemes (CIS) to allow people to apply for the felling of roadside trees.
- A fund separate to the CIS is required to address the felling of roadside trees.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The Director of Housing will respond to the comments on the Croí Cónaithe Scheme directly.
- Recruitment competition for a position cannot open until the Council have been notified of a resignation or the position becomes vacant. There are panels currently in place.
- The Chief Fire Officer will come before the Council at the January plenary meeting and give a County wide presentation.
- He thanked all the staff that worked during the recent storm, these staff work at all hours to keep our citizens safe and are the essence of public service.
- The department were written to following the submission of the Notice of Motion on extending the CIS, however no response has been received to date. We will await the reply.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- Notices will be placed in the Connacht Tribune and Tuam Herald on 2nd January advising landowners of their responsibility in the maintenance of roadside trees and water flow from roads.
- Crews place signage at flooded areas, however it is impossible in storm circumstances to reach every location in the vast network of roads in the County.

ITEM NO. 6 TO FILL A CASUAL VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF CATHAOIRLEACH OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM 2024/2025 ARISING FROM THE ELECTION OF CLLR. ALBERT DOLAN TO DÁIL ÉIREANN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 37 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

4474 B

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. M. Connolly and **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade it was **AGREED** that Cllr. Kinane be appointed to the office of Cathaoirleach of the Council for the remainder of the term 2024/2025.

Cllr. Kinane stated her pride in accepting position of Cathaoirleach for the remainder of the term 2024/2025. She is honoured to represent and serve the Council and pledged to serve the County with dedication and integrity. She expressed gratitude to her colleagues and for the faith and confidence placed in her by them. She acknowledged that she is only the 4th woman to serve as Cathaoirleach in the 125 years of Galway County Council. She will endeavour to listen and find solutions. She thanked her family and friends for their support.

Congratulations were conveyed to the Cathaoirleach from the Chamber. Tributes were paid to the 3 newly elected TDs. Cllr. Dolan was praised in his role as Cathaoirleach. Those contesting the Seanad elections were wished luck. Cllr. Turner was thanked for his role as Leas Cathaoirleach in chairing recent meetings.

The Chief Executive offered his congratulations to the Cathaoirleach and pledged his support to her in her role. He wished Deputy Dolan, Deputy O'Hara and Deputy Roche well in their new roles.

ITEM NO. 21 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE.

4489

The following items of correspondence which were published on the extranet prior to the meeting were **NOTED**:

- Letter dated 28.11.24 to Mr. Eamon Ryan, Minister for Transport. Resolution – CIS Scheme – Felling of Roadside Trees.
- Email date 03.12.24 from Mr. Eamon Ryan, Minister for Transport. Resolution – Felling of Roadside Trees CIS scheme – Acknowledgement.
- Letter dated 28.11.24 from Leitrim County Council, Resolution – Increase Grant funding for Community Groups.
- Mayors for Peace Newsflash –November 2024.

ITEM 22. NOTICE OF MOTION

4490

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

'This motion calls on the Dept of Health to review the fact that Westdoc Ltd employees involved in the transport of blood tests during Covid 19 did not receive the €1,000 Covid Recognition Payment. This was for frontline workers who continued to work, despite the risks associated with the work they carried out.'

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Curley **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finnerty the above Notice of Motion was **AGREED**.

ITEM NO.23 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

4491

Members raised the following points and queries:

- A request was made of the Executive to invite Eir to meet with either the full Council or at Municipal District level to address the poor infrastructure. There are vulnerable people still without power following storm Darragh that rely on safety buzzers and medical centres without broadband.
- Electricity networks in some areas have still not been restored following storm Darragh.
- Damaged and rotting Eir poles are falling during storms.
- Disappointment was expressed towards the Gaelic Athletic Association on the clashing of fixtures for the hurling and camogie matches at the weekend.
- Pride was expressed at the involvement of 4 Galway teams in action at the weekend and also the phenomenal achievements of the ladies teams.
- Loughrea Senior Hurlers were congratulated on reaching the All-Ireland semi-final.
- Annaghdown Ladies Gaelic Football team were congratulated on reaching the All-Ireland Club Intermediate final.

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Collins **SECONDED** by Cllr. Keaveney:

'I propose that Galway County Council write to the Department to put in place a dedicated scheme to allow farmers to apply for a grant to allow for the felling of trees along the roadside.'

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Collins **SECONDED** by Cllr. Keaveney the above motion was **AGREED**.

ITEM NO.24 VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS

4492

A resolution of congratulations was extended to the following:

- Kilkerrin-Clonberne Ladies Football Senior Team on winning their 4th All-Ireland Club title.
- Sarsfields Senior Camogie Team on winning the All-Ireland Club title for the 4th time in 5 years.
- Tynagh Abbey Duniry in winning the All-Ireland Intermediate Hurling Club Semi-Final.

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- P.J. Kane & Family, Abbert, Abbeyknockmoy, Tuam, Co. Galway.
- Margaret & Marjorie Clifford, Kilcornan, Kilkerrin, Co. Galway.
- Ciara McGrath, Sheeaun, Gort, Co. Galway.
- Thomas Mitchell Jnr and extended Mitchell Family, Cooloo, Moylough Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
- Sean O'Neill, Garafine, Caltra, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
- Mary Fleming, Frank Fleming & David Fleming, Lakeview, Moylough, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
- The family of the late Dr. Martin Finnerty RIP The Demesne, Neale Road, Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo.
- The family of the late Brian Hynes RIP, The Green, Dunmore, Co. Galway.

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach:

Martina Kinane

Date:

27/1/2025