

**MINUTES OF REMOTE COUNCIL MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 11:00am via Microsoft Teams**

**CATHAOIRLEACH:** Cllr. Peter Keaveney  
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

**I LATHAIR FREISIN:**

**Baill:** Comh./Cllr. J. Byrne, I. Canning, L. Carroll, J. Charity, 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, C. Keaveney, D. Kelly, D. Killilea, M. Kinane, G. King, P. Mac an Iomaire, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, A. McKinstry, P. Murphy, E. Francis Parsons, A. Reddington, P. Roche, J. Sheridan, N. Thomas, S. Walsh and T. Welby.

**Oifigh:** Mr. J. Cullen, Chief Executive, Mr. M. Owens, Director of Services, Mr. L. Hanrahan, Director of Services, Mr. D. Pender, Director of Services, Mr. G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance, Mr N. Madden Executive Engineer, Ms. J Brann, Meetings Administrator, Ms. B. Kelly, County Librarian, Ms. U. Ní Eidhín, Oifigeach Gaeilge, Ms. B. Ryan, Staff Officer, Ms. C. Walsh Assistant Staff Officer, Ms. E. Hoffman, Clerical Officer

**Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.**

Prior to the commencement of the formal business the Cathoirleach remembered a number of people who had recently passed away.

He extended sincere sympathies to the Forde family following the passing of David Forde RIP an employee of Galway County Council who had worked with the library service. The Cathaoirleach described David as a kind and intelligent gentleman. He was an extremely talented musician and organist who won many awards for his piano and organ playing. He noted his work with Childline as a volunteer which included a climb of Kilimanjaro to raise funds for the organisation. The Cathoirleach expressed his condolences to David's parents, Tom and Bernie and his brother Cáimin. He noted David's father had also worked for 45 years for the Library services in Galway County Council. He expressed his condolences to David's colleagues and all the staff in the Library Service.

The Cathoirleach also expressed sympathies to the family of Aisling Murphy RIP. He said the brutal attack and death of a young talented person had shocked the entire country. He informed Members an online book of condolences had been opened.

The Cathoirleach noted the death of Jim Fahy RIP, retired RTE journalist. He expressed his sympathies to his wife Christina, son Shane and daughter Aideen.

The Members joined the Cathoirleach in expressing their condolences to the Forde, Murphy and Fahy families. They expressed their horror at the tragic death of Aisling Murphy and reflected on Jim Fahy's contribution to the West of Ireland in his professional career and his contribution to his community in a personal capacity.

Cllr. McClearn informed Members of the death of Julia Forde RIP a former employee of Galway County Council who had passed away earlier in the morning. Members joined with Cllr. McClearn in expressing sympathies to Julia's family.

The Chief Executive joined with the Cathoirleach and Members and expressed his sympathies to all the families. He commended Jim Fahy for his professionalism, and his interest in the west of Ireland. He said Aisling Murphy's murder was truly shocking and reflected that it may be a watershed moment for change.

On a personal level as a former colleague, and on behalf of the staff the Chief Executive expressed sincere sympathies to Julia Forde's family. He acknowledged her work and the huge impact she had on the lives of many families through her work as a public official in the Housing Department.

The Chief Executive expressed his condolences to David Forde's parents, Tom and Bernie and his brother Cáimin. He said it's always a sad time when an existing staff member passes away. He noted David was very popular and well liked in the library service by his colleagues and will be greatly missed.

As a mark of respect to all those who had passed away the Cathoirleach adjourned the meeting for 5 minutes.

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

**3915**

(a) Minutes of Statutory Budget Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Carroll **SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne the minutes of the Statutory Budget Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 of were **AGREED**.

In response to a query from Cllr. D. Connolly regarding Municipal District budgets, the Chief Executive advised Members following adoption of the Annual Budget a Schedule of Municipal District Works is prepared for the consideration and approval of Members. The overall budget is then divided between the Municipal Districts based on the schedules and the elements which relate to each of the Municipal District.

He advised the principle behind a Municipal Budget was that there would be a discretionary municipal allocation available. With the current financial situation Galway County Council are not in a position to provide this at the moment.

In response to a query from Cllr. Mannion regarding the underfunding of Galway County Council, the Chief Executive assured Members it remained a priority issue. He confirmed he had written to the Department following adoption of the Annual Budget and hoped to have a meeting in person in the coming weeks. An update will be provided as soon as its available. He advised that the Department had confirmed the €600,000 additional funds notified at budget time will be lodged to our account in the first quarter of the year. The Department had also confirmed the commencement of a review of LPT and Equalisation Funding.

In response to a request from Cllr. Donohue the Chief Executive agreed to provide a report on the Coroner and the associated costs for the information of the members. He advised there was no discretion in respect of costs as it was a statutory obligation.

(b) Minutes of Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Carroll **SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne the minutes of the of Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021 were **AGREED**.

In response to a query raised by Cllr. Killilea regarding the €10 million recently approved for home loans, Mr. Hanrahan advised Members that a previous loan for the same amount lasted longer than the council term. He assured members the loan would resource more than 40 properties on ongoing basis. He advised Members that updates on home loans are provided on an ongoing basis through the Housing SPC, the Management Report and in the Department returns.

Regarding the proposed disposal of a council property in Ballinasloe Mr. Hanrahan confirmed there was no enurement clause on the property.

In response to a query regarding the amount due for shared services from Galway City Council Mr. Mullarkey confirmed there was ongoing engagement with Galway City Council and he expected to have further details and the amount due before the February meeting.

Concerns were raised by a number of Members regarding the engagement with landowners and the closing date for the consultation period on the Galway to Athlone Cycleway. In response Mr. Pender advised engineers had meet with landowners where it had been possible to do so. He confirmed they were ready to meet all landowners in person again as soon as the Covid-19 restrictions were lifted. Regarding extending the public consultation period he agreed to liaise with the team. He expected there would be no issue with an extension but noted a date would have to be set.

In response to a query from Cllr Herterich Quinn regarding Active Travel funds Mr. Pender advised that out of the €6m received for Active Travel projects in 2021, €4m was spent and the remaining €2m was committed to projects at design or tender stage. He confirmed no money was being returned. He noted submission was made for a further €5m for over 65 to 70 projects throughout the county.

## **ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 3916**

- (a) Minutes of Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Collins the minutes of the Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 were **NOTED**.

(b) Minutes of Transportation & Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee held on held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cuddy **SECONDED** by Cllr. Dolan the minutes of the Transportation & Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee held on held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were **NOTED**.

In response to a query from Cllr. Mannion regarding the Inis Oirr Pier byelaws Mr. Pender confirmed the matter would go to the Municipal District for consideration. Regarding the approval of the Inis Oirr byelaws, the Chief Executive advised in this case, it would be necessary to determine in accordance with the relevant provisions, whether the function would to be performed by the Municipal District or the Plenary Council.

In response, to a query from Cllr. Herterich Quinn regarding the "Love 30" campaign Mr. Pender confirmed there was no policy document in relation to the rollout of the "Love 30" project. The most recent update from the Department confirmed they were currently drafting a policy document.

**ITEM NO.3 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE APPROVE THE GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2022 – 2023.**

3917

*The Draft Galway Public Libraries Development Programme 2022 – 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

Cllr. Herterich Quinn, chair of the Community & Culture SPC presented the Galway Public Libraries Development Programme 2022 – 2023. She explained the programme set out the strategy and work plan for the next two years developing in line with the Galway City and Galway County Councils' Development Plans and their Corporate, Economic, Community and Cultural Plans.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn advised Members that the programme was guided by the Library Standards and Benchmarks as issued by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government and by relevant national and international strategies.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn outlined the service provided by Galway Public Libraries to both Galway City and County through the twenty-nine branch libraries, mobile library, the Schools' Library, the Local Studies Department, the Galway County Council Archives Services and the online library access service. She noted the greatest resource of a library is its staff.

The County Librarian informed Members that Galway Library Service will celebrate one hundred years in existence in 2024. The interim plan presented will bring the library service up to 2024, when a new five-year Development Programme will be developed in conjunction with relevant stakeholders, staff, and the citizens of Galway.

She outlined the vision/mission of Galway Public Libraries and the key Strategic Objectives. To achieve the objectives, she set out the priorities of the interim Development Programme as follows:

- Make the local library the Community/Cultural Hub of the city, town or village
- Ensure the democratic and inclusive nature of libraries
- Provide Quality Book Collections and access to digital media within the service
- Make Galway Public Libraries a repository for local history and local studies material
- Make each library a special place for children
- Develop event programming and service support resources
- Provide staff and appropriate training
- Enable and develop technological and digital services
- Make arrangements for the proper care, conservation and management of our archives
- Promote and market the Library and Archives service

In conclusion, the County Librarian noted that despite many challenges the libraries and archives continue to be an integral part of our community and society. She said this was particularly evident in the recent Covid-19 pandemic. She stressed the importance of continuing to resource the services to strengthen the service provided to the community.

**The following queries and points were raised by Cllrs. Hoade, Killilea and Sheridan**

- Have any gaps been identified in the location of libraries around the county? Are there any proposals to increase the number of branches of libraries? Are there any primary schools without a library service?
- Are there plans for an extension of library hours and staff less systems?
- The mobile library service is a fantastic service. It binds communities together in rural Ireland where services are being removed.

**Members Queries were responded to as follows by the County Librarian**

- Gaps not covered in the county are in the context of resources available. The county is well serviced throughout with the mobile library service and new routes to improve the service are continually being identified.
- A library service is provided to all 247 national schools in the county.
- The extension of library hours depends on staffing and resources available.
- The Library Service are currently working on two "My Open Library" which will provide a staff less service.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Herterich Quinn **SECONDED** by Cllr. Carroll the Galway Public Libraries Development Programme 2022 – 2023 was **APPROVED**.

**ITEM NO.4 BROADBAND CONNECTION POINT NETWORK LAUNCH PRESENTATION.** 3918

The Cathoirleach launched the County Galway Broadband Connection Point Network. He gave a brief overview of the BCP initiative.

- The BCP network will bring high-speed broadband connectivity to key locations in the county currently without access. It forms part of the National Broadband Plan in advance of National Broadband Ireland rolling out fibre connectivity in all areas.
- BCPs will provide free Wi-Fi hotspots to the public.
- In a number of locations BCP operators & community groups, supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Galway County Council, have already increased their service offering to their communities by providing remote workspaces or locations for skills training.
- In 2022 the Department of Rural and Community Development will facilitate a number of thematic programs in the areas of remote working, digital skills training, e-health and arts. These schemes have been designed to be rolled out through BCPs

In conclusion, the Cathoirleach emphasised the importance of harnessing technology to ensure Galway, as a large rural county, remains an attractive place to live, learn, work, visit and to do business. He said Galway County Council will continue to support the BCPs and their communities in this regard.

Mr Pender commended Mr. Noel Madden and Ms. Nora O'Connor and acknowledged their work and efforts in the launch of this much needed infrastructure. He noted the access to high-speed connectivity for all was key to a digitally inclusive society. He said Galway County Council were at the forefront of ensuring the delivery of this connectivity for the county.

Referring to Galway County's Digital Strategy Mr. Pender noted the roll out of the BCPs in Galway was a key objective. The strategy identified the importance of broadband to the future economic and social growth of County Galway. He said the BCPs would play a pivotal role in realising some of following key goals of the strategy:

- Training and education
- Innovation and growth
- Enterprise and employment
- Inclusion and well being

- Digital public services
- Access to information

Mr Madden presented a short video on four of the locations where BCPs had been set up. The BCP operators and community representatives explained the various services provided through the BCPs and the positive impacts the BCPs had in these localities.

**Queries and issues raised were responded to as follows by Mr. Madden:**

- The BCP initiative is part of the national broadband plan and it is just the first stage in rolling out high speed fibre connectivity in all rural communities.
- It is a massive project to roll out to the county. For this reason a number of locations will be waiting longer for connectivity than others.
- County Galway has one of the highest number of BCPs in the country.
- The scheme currently is closed for new applicants. It is hoped the Department may reopen it for new applications. These will be advertised through the PPN.

Members joined the Cathoirleach in commending Mr. Madden and Ms. N. O'Connor for their work with the communities. They thanked Mr. Madden for the excellent presentation.

**ITEM NO.5 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, OTHER EVENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED)**

3919

*Report dated the 14<sup>th</sup> January was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. McKinstry it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. Herterich Quinn and Kinane to attend the Celtic Conference – “*Social Media use in Political Campaigns*” at O’Donovan’s Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. McKinstry it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. C. Keaveney to attend Celtic Conferences – “*The Finance Act 2021*” at

The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022. (Retrospective Approval)

**ITEM NO.6 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).**

3920

*Report dated the 14<sup>th</sup> January was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. McKinstry it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. McKinstry and Herterich Quinn to pursue AILG – UCC Climate Learning Programme – Certificate in Continuing Professional Development in "Climate Crisis and Local Government" at University College Cork from January to May 2022. (Retrospective Approval)

**ITEM NO.7 TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – JANUARY 2022 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).**

3921

*Report dated the 21<sup>st</sup> January was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. McClearn the Management Report – January 2022 in accordance with section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) was **NOTED**.

**The following queries and points were raised by Cllrs. Curley, Collins, McHugh, Donohue, McKinstry, Killilea, Byrne, Hoade, Mannion, Kinane, Herterich Quinn, and Geraghty**

- Regarding the 'Part 8' application for the new fire station in Loughrea, have other alternative sites been explored. Residents in the area are concerned that the site is the only green space left as a recreational amenity.
- Clarification sought on the upper limit on payments for land acquisition under the Greenway Code of Best Practice.
- The 'Team Limerick Cleanup' project should be examined as a model of good practice for County Galway. It has proved a huge success combating the blight of litter in Limerick since the project began seven years ago.

- Welcome the changes to the new Housing Loan Scheme in particular the inclusion singles and the opportunity for 'Fresh Start'.
- Request a copy of the 'Mechanical Hedge Grow Cutting Guidance' document is circulated through the PPN's. Ideally every house in the county should receive a copy.
- Acknowledge the work of the team preparing the hedgerows cutting guidance document. It is very important that contractors understand the importance of multiannual cycle particularly for young hedgerows.
- Clarification sought on the works to take place on the halting site in Tuam. Request an update on the delivery of Weir Road housing project.
- The Tenant Purchase Scheme needs to be re-examined to take account of tenants who are not working and don't have an income. Some may have savings to buy the property but if they cannot fulfill the criteria set out under the scheme, they are unable do so even despite having the means.
- Tenants in 'Part V' properties should be included in the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- Welcome the changes to the Tenant Purchase Scheme allowing the elderly use pension equity to purchase their homes. It will help avoid situations where the named tenant, a parent, passes away and the family could lose a family home.
- Clarification sought on turnaround times from vacancy to reletting a house.
- Have the local authority an input into the Independent Regional Panel established to review speed limits appeal applications?
- Is there a statutory limit on speed limits on roads to beaches can the public appeal such limits to the Independent Regional Panel.
- Request a review of speed limits is required for the county.
- Are there plans for the development of an area office and library in Athenry.
- Any update regarding closure of Castlerea Fire Station

The Chief Executive advised Members that a review of council offices and accommodation in terms the needs and requirements of the organisation will be completed in the coming months. The area offices in Athenry will be considered as part of the review.

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

- Regarding the location of Loughrea Fire Station a number of sites were examined. The site chosen was the most suitable. The site is in the ownership of Galway County Council which was also an important factor in light of our financial position. The Department funds the design and construction of the project but does not fund the acquisition of a site.
- The 'Part 8' application for Loughrea Fire Station will be submitted to the planning authority in March 2022. It will go before Municipal District for discussion later in the summer.
- The 'Team Limerick Cleanup' project will be reviewed.
- The hedgerow cutting document 'Mechanical Hedge Grow Cutting Guidance' will be circulated through the PPN's.
- An update on position regarding Castlerea Fire Station will be provided following consultation with the Chief Fire Officer.

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

- Under the Home Loan Scheme, it is important to note that an applicant must have received two refusals from commercial lenders and have the proofs in place to be eligible to apply for a loan under the scheme.
- Under the Tenant Purchase Scheme the person purchasing the house must be the tenant. Family members without a housing need who wish to purchase a house just to keep it in the family are not eligible. Social housing must be kept for those with housing needs.
- The Minister is reviewing the situation regarding the purchase of 'Part V's'.
- Turn around for simple renovations is normally only a matter of weeks. Many properties that come back for reletting haven't been retrofitted for energy purposes or to modern building regulation standards. These properties have to be upgraded to modern building regulations which have changed significantly in the past few years. Turnaround time for such properties is longer.
- 'Part 8' planning permission is in place for the Weir Rd. It will go to tender for design and in the next few months. It is expected to have a contractor assigned to the work the next we few months and building works to start by Summer.

- The halting site in Tuam will be retrofitted based on the Craughwell halting site model.

**Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Pender**

- There is no upper limit on the greenway sustainability payment. It depends on the number of kilometers of the greenway. The sustainability payment is separate to the land acquisition payment. The land acquisition payment will depend on the amount of land purchased.
- The process to set speed limits for the county remains a Reserved Function for the Elected Members. A review of speed limits will commence this year. The speed limits appeals process is a separate procedure.
- The regional panel will be a minimum of three up to five people. A chair will be appointed by the Department of Transport, someone with experience in the area of road safety eg Gardai or RSA. They will be accompanied by engineers from local authorities.

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

3922

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

- Letter dated 26.05.2021 to Simon Coveney T.D. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence. Resolution – Gaza and Palestine.
- Letter dated 21.12.21 from Simon Coveney T.D. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence. Response - Gaza and Palestine.
- Letter dated 29.11.21 to An Taoiseach Micheál Martin. Resolution, Boycott on goods from occupied territories.
- Letter dated 31.12.21 from An Taoiseach Micheál Martin. Acknowledgement– Boycott on goods from occupied territories.
- Letter dated 10.12.21 from Sligo County Council. Resolution – Request for increase in funding under RRDF.
- Letter dated 10.12.21 from Sligo County Council. Resolution – Prospective licence to Flintridge Resources (Galantas).
- Letter dated 13.12.21 from Mayors for Peace.

- Mayors for Peace Newsflash December 2021.
- Letter dated 16.12.21 from Donegal County Council. Resolution – Restoration of Section 140 Motions to Councils.
- Letter dated 20.12.21 from Monaghan County Council. Resolution – Coroner service.
- Letter dated 22.12.21 from Galway City Council. Resolution – Extension of Help to Buy Scheme for 5 years.
- Letter dated 23.12.21 from Louth County Council. Response – Support the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland.

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

3923

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Reddington **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cronnelly the Members **AGREED**:

*"Galway County Council is calling on the Minister for Health to allocate adequate funding for Paediatric Orthopaedic care for those who suffer from Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. The spina bifida paediatric advocacy group have been told that if the department of health release 5.1 million then operations will increase by 400%. Ireland has the highest rates of Spina Bifida and neural tube defects in the world and the waiting list is failing to provide timely care to children."*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Collins **SECONDED** by Cllr. McKinstry the Members **AGREED**:

*"that the Environment Section of Galway County Council investigate the "Team Limerick Clean Up" {TLC} as a model of good practice that could possibly be organised in Galway and present findings to plenary in the future to see if a project like this is achievable."*

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. Sheridan.

*"that Galway Co. Co. extend a motor tax office to Tuam town. There is now an NCT centre and 2 CVRT centres in Tuam town. As a Tuam is a key town that is as*

*accessible as our other motor tax offices, it is important that our public have easy access to taxing their vehicles, thereby cutting their carbon footprint on travelling to and from the city.”*

Cllr. Killilea said putting the IT systems in place to facilitate a motor tax office in Tuam should not be a major issue and he considered it would not require any major additional staff input. Cllr. McHugh supported Cllr. Killilea’s motion and said it was an easy task to bring extra services to Municipal District offices. Cllr. Mannion noted that a lot of applications were now done online. She said the Chief Executive should consider carefully where any additional offices would be located and suggested Clifden may be more important than Tuam considering the distance from the main motor tax office. Cllr. Hoade supported the motion and suggested consideration would be given to locating a motor tax offices in both locations, Tuam and Clifden.

The Chief Executive advised there were financial and staffing resource implications for additional motor tax offices. He advised more offices required more staff. It was not a matter of redeploying staff. He said there were a lot of things to consider in relation to the motion but with the current staffing levels and the financial situation it could not be done. From a modernisation perspective he suggested it may be maybe more beneficial to examine using digital platforms to deliver services.

Cllr. Killilea sought clarification regarding Department funding provisions for motor tax staff. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Department had in the past funded the staffing of motor tax offices but advised this had stopped a number of years ago.

It was agreed to defer the item for further consideration.

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Dr Parsons **SECONDED** by Cllr. Geraghty.

*“that the council owned running/ walking track at Dunlo Ballinasloe which is operated centrally in Galway County Council have its hours of operation extended to include Sundays, Bank holidays and from 7am to 9pm daily and be considered for the installation of CCTV cameras in the interests of providing a safe place to exercise for women and girls and for allaying fears over female personal safety. I propose that*

*other similar exercise facilities owned by GCC throughout the county be audited to assess and support female safety and to allay fears among the public of Violence Against Women.”*

The Chief Executive advised he was not in a position to give effect to the motion. Regarding an extension of hours he noted there was resource implications. Regarding the installation of CCTV he advised there was a process involved. He noted another local authority had in the past received a substantial fine for the installation of CCTV.

Cllr. Geraghty suggested the local community may be able assist with extending the park opening hours. In response the Chief Executive said he always welcomed the cooperation of local communities but noted it was not as simple as transferring responsibility to a local person. There were liabilities to be considered. He suggested the matter could be considered further at Municipal District level.

Cllr. Thomas acknowledged the professionalism of the staff of Galway County Council in relation to their recent handling of a serious situation on a dumping site in Moycullen.

He said staff had gone above the call of duty. He commended in particular Joanne Perry, Veterinary Inspector, Rosina Joyce, Community Warden, Kieran Keon, Senior Social Worker and Aidan Cunningham, Staff Officer. In addition, he acknowledged the role of the Law Agent, the Housing Department staff, animal rescue groups and the local community who worked together to achieve a very good outcome in a difficult and sensitive situation.

In response to a query from Cllr. Kinane regarding the resumption of pre-planning meetings Mr. Owens advised he was not in a position to give a definite timeframe. He noted the issue regarding staffing resources was having an impact on service delivery. There had been a significant increase in planning applications in the past number of months and priority had to be given to the statutory time frame for making decisions on the applications currently in the system. He suggested the 'Single Rural Design Guidelines' were available which may assist applicants. He envisaged preplanning meetings may re commence in quarter one.

**ITEM NO.10 VOTES OF SYMPATHY/CONGRATULATIONS**

**3924**

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

- Mr & Mrs Jackie O'Shea The Ivy, 1 Railway View, Athenry, Co Galway
- Lorraine Mernagh, Slieveroe, Athenry, Co Galway
- Norman Farrell, Old Church Street, Athenry, Co Galway
- Catherine O'Donovan, Esker, Athenry, Co Galway
- John Burke, Monatigue, Athenry, Co Galway
- Kathleen Cooley, Kilskeagh, Athenry, Co Galway
- Majella O'Dea, Esker, Athenry, Co Galway
- Mary Burke, 58 Cullairbaun Estate, Athenry, Co Galway
- John Joe Burke, Ballyboggan, Athenry Co. Galway
- Noreen O'Shaughnessy, Tulira, Ardrahan, Co. Galway
- Declan Mc Loughlin, Claddaghduff, Co. Galway.

Cllr. Curley congratulated St. Thomas' Senior Hurling Club on their performance and excellent hurling display in the All-Ireland Club Senior Hurling Championship semi-final.

**Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.**

**Submitted, Signed and Approved**

**Cathaoirleach:**



**Date:**



