

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL
Monday, 23rd October 2023 at 11.00am

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Liam Carroll
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill: Comh./Cllr. T Broderick, J. Byrne, I. Canning, D. Collins, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, J. Cuddy, S. Curley, T. Ó Curraoin, A. Dolan, G. Donohue, G. Finnerty, D. Geraghty, S. Herterich Quinn, M. Hoade, D. Kelly, P. Keaveney, M. Kinane, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, S. McHugh, A. McKinstry, P. Murphy, A. Reddington, P. Roche, J. Sheridan, N. Thomas, S. Walsh and T. Welby.

Baill ar líne: J. Charity, D. Ó Cualáin, D. Killilea, G. King, E. Francis Parsons.

Oifigh: Mr. L. Conneally, Chief Executive, Mr. L. Hanrahan, Director of Services, Mr. M. Owens, Director of Services, Mr. D. Pender, Director of Services, Ms. Eileen Ruane, Director of Services, Ms. K. O'Connor, Head of Finance, Ms. J. Brann, Meetings Administrator, Ms. S. Craughwell, Administrative Officer, Ms. B. Ryan, Staff Officer, Mr. M. O'Donnchadha, Oifigeach Forbartha na Gaeilge, Officer. Ms. B. Reilly, Clerical Officer, Mr. P. Scannell, Clerical Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

Prior to the commencement of formal business, the Cathaoirleach extended condolences to Cllrs. Colm Keaveney and Peter Keaveney following the recent death of Vincent and Mary Keaveney RIP, parents of Cllr. Colm Keaveney and Rose Keaveney RIP, mother of Cllr. Peter Keaveney. The meeting was adjourned for five minutes as a mark of respect.

Group Leaders extended sympathies to Cllrs. C. Keaveney and P. Keaveney on behalf of all Members. Cllr. P. Keaveney thanked Members and staff for their support in the past week. The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Katie O'Connor to her new role as Head of Finance.

ITEM NO.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

4220

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cuddy **SECONDED** by Cllr. Donohue the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 25th September 2023 were **AGREED**.

In response to a clarification sought by Cllr. Geraghty regarding Castlereagh Fire Station, the Chief Executive confirmed the issue had been raised with Roscommon County Council. He advised he awaited a full response. In terms of the provision of fire services he noted the area concerned had fire service cover.

In response to a query raised by Cllr. Curley the Chief Executive confirmed a letter had issued to Bus Éireann regarding the School Transport Scheme. Regarding Bus Éireann's withdrawal of services on the X20 route, the Chief Executive agreed the matter would be raised with the NTA.

ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS **4221**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne **SECONDED** by Cllr. McKinstry the minutes of Corporate Policy Group held of Corporate Policy Group held on 18th September 2023 were **NOTED**.

In response, to a request for clarification the Chief Executive confirmed the County Speed Limit Review would recommence in parallel with the national review currently underway in time with Members' wishes.

In response, to a query raised regarding reduced outdoor staff numbers and the corresponding loss of “on the ground” local knowledge the Chief Executive reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening the staffing structure of the five Municipal Districts. He advised Members the employment of General Operatives formed part of the scope of the Strategic Workforce Plan work currently underway.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. Ó Curraoin **SECONDED** by Cllr. Donohue the Minutes of Transportation & Infrastructure SPC held on 21st June 2023 were **NOTED**.

Cllr. Donohue advised Members a recent meeting of the Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine acknowledged ash dieback as a huge issue. Referencing a report “*Review of Support for Farmers Impacted by Ash Dieback Report to the Minister for Land Use and Biodiversity*” Cllr. Donohue cited an extract of the Report noting “*ash trees outside plantations – especially along roadsides, trainlines and in public parks – presents a growing public health and safety risk.*” She requested a letter was sent to Minister Eamon Ryan, Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications and Senator Pippa Hackett, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine requesting additional funding to deal with the issue of ash dieback.

ITEM NO.3 FILLING OF A CASUAL VACANCY ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

4222

Report dated 16th Sept 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finnerty **SECONDED** by Cllr. Thomas it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Curley a Member of the Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr. Hoade.

ITEM NO.4 FILLING OF A CASUAL VACANCY ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE & EMERGENCY SERVICES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE.

4223

Report dated 16th Sept 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finnerty **SECONDED** by Cllr. M. Connolly it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Hoade a member of the Planning, Environment, Agriculture & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr. Shane Curley.

ITEM NO.5 FILLING OF A CASUAL VACANCY AS THE CHAIRPERSON ON THE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE & EMERGENCY SERVICES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE. **4224**

Report dated 16th Sept 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finnerty **SECONDED** by Cllr. Thomas it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Hoade as the Chairperson of the Planning, Environment, Agriculture & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr. Shane Curley.

ITEM NO.6 APPOINTMENT OF REPLACEMENT NOMINEE TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC) FOR HSE REPRESENTATIVE. **4225**

Report dated 5th Oct 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Thomas **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade it was **AGREED** to appoint Mr. Laurence Gaughan to the Local Community Development Committee to replace Mr. Michael Keady.

As Chair of the LCDC, Cllr. Thomas acknowledged Mr. Keady's work on the LCDC. He welcomed Mr. Gaughan and said he looked forward to working with him in the future. Mr. Farrell thanked Mr. Keady for his contribution to the LCDC over the past number of years and welcomed Mr. Gaughan to the role.

ITEM NO.7 APPOINTMENT OF REPLACEMENT LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTED MEMBER TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS ASSOCIATION (LAMA). **4226**

Report dated 16th Sept 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Broderick to the Local Authority Members Association (LAMA) arising from the resignation of Cllr. Welby.

ITEM NO.8 TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 37E (4)(5)(6) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE) ACT 2006 ON THE STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION SUBMITTED TO AN BORD PLEANÁLA BY EP ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS LTD. TO DEVELOP AN OPEN CYCLE GAS TURBINE POWER PLANT (350MW) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE ON LAND TO THE NORTH OF TYNAGH POWER STATION, DERRYFRENCH, TYNAGH, LOUGHREA. 4227

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Mr. Hanrahan informed Members this item was presented at the September Plenary Meeting and a recent Loughrea Municipal District Meeting. He advised the Report was due to be finalised and returned to An Board Pleanála later that evening. He noted the Report was prepared taking into account all concerns raised by the Members. He presented the Report for approval.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- Mindful a third generation of people who have been negatively impacted by this site we don't make anyone's life more difficult than it already is. All Councillors have made their views known. We need to make our case as strongly as possible.
- Have the concerns regarding the importation of 21,000m³ of topsoil onto the site been included in the Report?
- Regarding the potential impacts on human health and the environment referenced in the Report, it states "it may be advisable that supervision be provided by independent consultants reporting to GCC." Should this be put in stronger terms?
- The Community Gain condition needs to be emphasised.

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

- Members concerns and comments from the September Plenary Meeting and the Loughrea Municipal District meeting have all been taken on board and form part of the Report.
- Concerns raised regarding topsoil are included under the heading on Soil & Geology. The Planning Authority have recommended as a condition a Construction Environmental Management Plan is prepared and submitted to Galway County Council for written approval prior to commencement of

construction on site. The CEMP will incorporate all mitigation measures required by the EIAR.

- The recommendations to An Bord Pleanála of conditions to be attached is the normal wording of such conditions used in a planning permission.
- Condition number 27 recommends a Community Gain condition is attached.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Canning **SECONDED** by Cllr. Geraghty the Report under Section 37e(4)(5)(6) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006 on the Strategic Infrastructure Development Application submitted to An Bord Pleanála by EP Energy Developments Ltd. to develop an open cycle gas turbine power plant (350mw) and associated infrastructure on land to the north of Tynagh Power Station, Derryfrench, Tynagh, Loughrea was **NOTED**.

ITEM NO.9 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). **4228**

Report dated 16th Sept 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Roche **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. Kinane to attend AILG Module 4 'Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) - A Briefing for Councillors' at The Radisson Blu Hotel, Cork on 20th July 2023. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Roche **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. Roche, Donohue and Maher to attend AILG Autumn Seminar 2023 - "The Future of Local Government in Ireland- Time for an Honest Conversation" at The Park Hotel, Sligo on 13th -14th September 2023. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finnerty **SECONDED** by Cllr. Sheridan it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. Kinane, Welby, Hoade and Ó Curraoin to attend AILG Module 5 'Elected Member Personal Security – Positive Home, Workplace and Mobile Security Practices' at The Rose Hotel Tralee on 21st of October 2023. (Retrospective Approval).

ITEM NO. 10 TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – OCTOBER 2023 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **4229**

Report dated 20th October 2023 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The Management Report – October 2023, in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (As Amended) was **NOTED**.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- Thank the Executive for the comprehensive Management Report.
- Congratulate Sharon O'Grady, Arts Officer, on the success of Culture Night. The Report highlights County Galway as Culture and Arts destination.
- There was some confusion regarding the closing date for CLÁR applications. The Department advertised a closing date later than the Local Authority. Out of the 30 applications received 7 were deemed to be late. The issue needs to be addressed.
- The Community Recognition Fund is an agreed way to reward communities welcoming refugees. When, or if, the Department provides more funding, the applicants in priority two areas should be considered first.
- Compliment the housing team on the fast turnaround on inspections. Is there a sufficient remaining budget this year or will applicants have to wait to 2024?
- Timing is critical in relation to Local Authority housing maintenance. Submitting request online may be delaying things. Older, vulnerable or people with special needs may have difficulties submitting requests online.
- Thank Ms. Kilcoyne, SEO, Housing and her team on the recent Croí Cónaithe grant presentation.
- Are there any plans to roll out the information evenings on the Croí Cónaithe grant around the county? A location in the north of the county should be considered.
- The former FCA building in Tuam recently had a derelict notice attached to it. Suggest staff should engage with Municipal District Members who may assist with local knowledge in relation to property ownership.
- Regarding the Expression of Interest to develop Local Authority owned lands at Lavally, Gort it needs to be publicised more.

- Suggest we need a Land Use Analysis carried out for the town of Gort. The Council are owners of a substantial amount of land. If it is not suitable for housing it should be examined for alternative use.
- Clarification required on the Waste Management (Prohibition of Waste Disposal by Burning) Regulations. Who is responsible for enforcing it? Can an ordinary person be prosecuted for burning leaves?
- Many parishes in Galway welcome home teams with roadside fires and have bonfires on St. John's Night. Will these regulations end these traditions?
- Request clarification on the issue of illegal dumping. Normally the property owner is responsible for removing waste. The policy needs to be re-examined in cases where the owner is an older or vulnerable person.
- Request an update on pre-planning meetings.
- Request an update on the proposed covered market at the Shambles Tuam.
- Further Information requests relate to Uisce Éireann connections. Uisce Éireann can take up to 16 weeks to reply to applicants. Is it possible this could be included as a condition of planning to avoid the delay in making a planning decision?
- A Temporary Time-Limited Waiver in respect of Development Contributions was announced by Government earlier this year. The arrangements in place create another stumbling block for young people struggling to build homes. Uisce Éireann require applicants to pay upfront and then claim money back. This could not be considered a waiver. Can Galway County Council make some noise in relation to this?
- Commend the Council on their social media work. Social media is so important for the Council to demonstrate the great work it is doing. The Council website needs to be updated.
- Are there plans to allow free parking to towns around the county in the run up to Christmas?

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

- The Department published a closing date on the CLÁR Application Form. For receipt of an Expression of Interest we set a date for 8th May to allow staff time

to review submissions. We will request the Department not to publish a closing date on the Application Forms going forward.

- Regarding the Community Recognition Fund, the Department of Rural and Community Development, initially it was decided to concentrate on areas that had high numbers of refugees arriving. It was a departmental decision to create a priority one and priority two area. The Local Authority administers the scheme.

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

- We are currently in a position to meet all housing application grants in terms of funding.
- The closing date for the Expression of Interest to develop Local Authority owned lands at Lavally, Gort is the 1st December. All details will be publicised.
- We will review the housing maintenance online process in relation to people who may not have online access.
- The Croí Cónaithe Grant Application Form is a standard national form. Further details on Croí Cónaithe information events and an update on the statistics will be included in the November Management Report.
- A standard notice was issued in relation to the vacant property in Tuam. The input of Members will be welcome in terms of local knowledge.

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

- An Executive Planner has been working specifically on residential pre-planning meetings in the last number of months. We are making progress on those. In terms of major applications, they require a higher level of consultation with the Senior Planner and other departments which takes more time.
- Uisce Éireann are now in charge water connections. If someone is making a planning application, they need to start the process early to prepare the application. This includes contacting Uisce Éireann in advance to allow time for a response from them.
- A condition of planning may be attached requiring a person to do something as set out by Uisce Éireann. As they are a separate outside body it is not sufficient to condition something without proof it can be done e.g. if removal of overhead

electric wires is required, we need proof from ESB prior to granting permission they would remove the lines. Is not sufficient to condition it.

- An update on the Shambles Tuam will be made at next Tuam Municipal District Meeting.

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

- The regulations in relation to the burning of agricultural waste has fallen on the Local Authority to implement. The derogation relates specifically to agricultural waste.
- Regarding illegal dumping a lot of good work has been with the increased staff resources. In the context of illegal dumping on property of older or vulnerable people, we will examine those on a case-by-case basis and work with them to remedy the situation.

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

- Acknowledge that our website needs to be completely overhauled. Work is under way and a number of steps have to happen before it is completed.
- In terms of water connection waivers, we cannot control what happens in Uisce Éireann, but we will communicate and reflect the members issues.
- The concessions in terms of Christmas parking in previous years has proved to be very business friendly and good for trade in the towns around the County. It will continue for Christmas 2023.
- In terms of Uisce Éireann water connection and planning conditions, when we apply a condition of planning, it must be enforceable. We can't condition something we can't enforce.
- The Management Report is a reservoir of all the services the Council provide daily. Services are delivered to a high standard by professional staff. The workload delivered is a testament to the Members' work as policy and budget makers and to the staff both indoor and outdoor who deliver on the ground. It is available on the on the website for circulation.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the Chief Executive and team for the Management Report noting a lot of very good work done around the County is captured in the Report.

The Cathoirleach expressed a particular word of thanks to Ms. Mannion, Heritage Officer and her team on the recent Féile na gCloch event held on Inis Oirr with delegates from around the world attending. He commended Ms. Mannion on an excellent and well organised event.

The Cathoirleach also noted Galway Council was the only Local Authority to receive an award at the Public Sector Digital Transformation Awards 2023. The Award was in recognition of an innovative digital project mapping over 40,000 graveyard memorial records across County Galway and made available online. He noted Ms. Mannion, Heritage Officer has been working on this project for years. He congratulated Ms. Mannion and Mr. Barry Doyle GIS Project Officer and their teams on this achievement.

ITEM NO. 11 TO CONSIDER A DATE AND TIME FOR THE BUDGET MEETING.

4230

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Dolan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Sheridan it was **AGREED** to hold the Budget Meeting on Monday 4th December 2023 at 11:00am.

ITEM NO. 12 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE.

4231

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

- Letter dated 30.01.20 to Mr. Richard Bruton TD, Minister for Communications, Climate Action & Environment. Resolution – Legislation of to reduce the use of plastics.
- Email dated 19.09.23 from Mr. Ossian Smyth TD's office, Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan, Delivery and Reform. Resolution – Legislation of to reduce the use of plastics. Acknowledgement.
- Letter dated 20.09.23 from Cork City Council. Resolution – Policies to reduce road deaths.
- Letter dated 28.03.23 to Minister for the Environment, Climate & Communications. Resolution – Election Poster Legislation.
- Email dated 26.09.23 from the Private Secretary to the Minister of State for the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan, Delivery & Reform. Resolution – Election Poster Legislation. Response.

- Letter dated 26.09.23 from Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. Resolution – Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- Letter dated 26.09.23 from Limerick City & County Council. Resolution – Tax placed on residentially zoned land.
- Letter dated 27.09.23 from Limerick City & County Council. Resolution – Funding support for the Cuan Mhuire Association.
- Letter dated 27.09.23 from Limerick City & County Council. Resolution – Funding to the National Treatment Purchase Fund.
- Letter dated 07.02.23 to Mr. Niall Gleeson, CEO of Irish Water. Resolution – Irish Water Invitation to Plenary Council Meeting of Galway County Council.
- Email dated 02.10.23 from Uisce Éireann – Irish Water Invitation to Plenary Council Meeting of Galway County Council. Acknowledgement.
- Letter dated 05.10.23 to Ms. Norma Foley T.D., Minister for Education. Resolution – School Transport Scheme.
- Email dated 06.10.23 from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Education. Resolution – School Transport Scheme. Acknowledgement.
- Letter dated 05.10.23 to Bus Éireann School Transport Office. Resolution – School Transport Scheme.
- Email dated 06.10.23 from Bus Éireann School Transport Office. Resolution – School Transport Scheme. Acknowledgement.
- Letter dated 12.10.23 from Clare County Council. Resolution – Traffic calming measures as part of planning process.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- Update requested on the Kilcolgan to Clarinbridge and Clarinbridge to Oranmore cycleway.
- Work needs to be prioritised on Cuan Na Loinge road, Béal an Daingin. The road is subject to flooding and high tides. It was recently flooded and people were cut off for 6 hours. The issue is on-going for years and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- Request an update on road gritting and salting plans for winter and the strategic locations of salt boxes in priority areas such as schools etc.
- Request an update on Active Travel funding for extra staff.

- Recent flooding events in Clonfert and Brackernagh have highlighted the need to ensure we are ready to respond with resources to any future flooding events that may occur. Minister Harris visited Ballinasloe in 2015 and promised a Flood Relief Scheme for Ballinasloe. It's still a long way off.
- We need a timeframe for flood risk relief schemes around the county. Applications have been made but nothing has happened. Are there plans nationally to fast track planning for flood relief schemes?
- Are there contingency plans in place for flooding events on the Curraghline?
- Is there a process in place to deal with contractors that are not pulling their weight in terms of completion of works?
- Concerns raised regarding the poor quality of road works in certain areas. Contractors have left roads in a very poor condition with "humps and bumps" after works are completed. In terms of quality of work and value for money, the issue needs to be addressed.
- Clarification on the policy of tarring outside private houses in areas regularly used as laybys. In other local authorities these areas are tarred.
- Request an update on traffic calming measures in Baile an Chláir.
- Request an update on the Galway City Ring Road.
- Request an update on Minister O'Brien announcement of €20.8m funding to equip Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services with 40 new fire appliances. Galway are due to receive two where will they be assigned?

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

- Regarding the Clarinbridge to Oranmore cycleway the topographical survey which gives the boundary outlines has been concluded. We now have to carry out a design safety within the footprint of the road. In terms of a timetable, we hope to have it before the end of November.
- The Kilcolgan to Clarinbridge the project was paused because of the Greenway. Expect to have an update for Members on that following a meeting tomorrow.
- Acknowledge that Cuan Na Loinge Road, Béal an Daingin is a priority. Funding from the department has already been requested for the necessary works. We have also applied for secondary funding under Climate Action.

- Road gritting and salting plans remain the same as last year, we will supply areas that require it most and will leave salt at certain locations in each Municipal District. Policy details will be discussed and agreed at SPC level. A listing of the locations in each Municipal District will be provided to Members.
- The NTA have agreed to facilitate extra staff for Active Travel. The staff will be based in County Hall to assist the team already in place.
- Regarding threat of flooding in Ballinasloe, it will be monitored very closely. The Emergency Response Team are ready to respond to any emergency.
- In terms of Ballinasloe Flood Relief Scheme, we want to move it on as quickly as possible.
- Fast-tracking planning permission for flood relief schemes would require legislation. There is a statutory process involved with associated statutory timelines.
- Regarding flooding on the Curraghline, we raised the road a number of years ago but water levels are rising. If we need to close the road a Traffic Management Plan is in place.
- There is a Dispute Resolution Process in place for all contractors.
- Regarding “humps and bumps” on roads following surface dressing, quite extensive surveys are carried out on roads including substrata to determine if a road needs further remedial work prior to resurfacing work. In terms of testing, we can only do what the allocation of funding allows.
- Galway County Council have a strong quality control element included in our roads works. We ensure all materials are laid and compacted correctly. Galway County Council ranks the highest in terms of assessment of road quality across the country.
- Regarding the surfacing outside peoples’ houses, this is an area of private property and our policy is we don’t do it. We cover the area from setback to setback. With two setbacks opposite each other it would effectively be doubling the area of road to be covered. With the amount of one-off houses in the county, it is not feasible to do this work.
- Regarding Baile an Chláir, archaeological works have been undertaken and a timeline would be closer to Q2 of next year.

- Regarding Galway City Ring Road, the NRPO have confirmed the scheme has been given a new application number. There are no further updates.
- Regarding the announcement of €20.8m funding to equip Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services with 40 new fire appliances, Galway are due to receive two of those by the end of 2024 or the start of 2025. In terms of location, it is an operational issue, there is no commitment on where they will go.

ITEM NO.13 QUESTION

4232

Cllr. Donohue submitted the following question prior to the meeting:

"To ask the Chief Executive to confirm how many CLAR 2023 applications were received by Galway County Council and how many were received after their perceived deadline."

The following reply issued:

" 30 applications were received for the CLAR 2023 program.
7 applications were received after the deadline."

ITEM NO.14 QUESTION

4233

Cllr. McKinstry submitted the following question prior to the meeting:

"That the Director of Services gives a summary of why the web streaming of Plenary Meetings has been delayed and what contingencies are being put in place to get it working. In particular of the webcasting is being delayed by software updates on the voting software, what can be done to web stream in the interim."

The following reply issued:

"The Council has completed a full video distribution systems replacement and expansion for the Chamber which will facilitate future facilities such as a web casting of Meetings.

- Directors of Services in Corporate and Digital Services with respective staff have engaged with Taiden Europe to review the fully integrated remote client services offering. This combined with the planned Q4 2023 integrated web casting component from Taiden would provide the best operational experience for Members.

- In terms of contingencies the Microsoft Teams Live Events and Town Hall meeting types are not suitable for Plenary Meetings with Councillors attending remotely, there is no other contingency available.
- Review of the Public-I which is in use by other Councils that have webcasting shows a deficit in functionality with remote attendees."

Cllr. McKinstry expressed his disappointment with the response. He considered it wasn't acceptable the system wasn't operational two years after a passing a Motion to put it in place. He noted other local authorities were web-streaming plenary meetings without issue. He requested that a proper mechanism be put in place by Galway County Council asap.

ITEM 15. NOTICE OF MOTION

4234

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

"that the schedule of 80 kph- 50kph speed limits proposed amendments/submissions received (as part of the consultation process of the 2023 County Road Traffic Special Speed Limits) from Elected Members in respect of local roads within their Municipal District, be placed on the Agenda's of each Municipal District for approval."

The following reply issued:

"The speed limit review that commenced earlier in 2023 by Galway County Council has been reactivated and will run in parallel with the nationwide review currently underway."

Mr. Pender informed Members that submissions on the reactivated County Speed Limit Review would be accepted to the end of November. An update will be provided in the December Management Report.

In response to a query by Cllr. Kinane regarding locations considered priority areas, Mr. Pender advised those areas will be prioritised in line with existing legislation.

ITEM 16. NOTICE OF MOTION

4235

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

"Galway County Council own 15 playgrounds and cover all costs including weekly safety inspection of playground equipment, by Community Wardens.

65 community playgrounds currently have a signed Playground Agreement in place with Galway County Council. Galway County Council extend insurance to cover to same, subject to weekly safety inspection of each piece of equipment by certified trained volunteer committee members.

Presently, Galway County Council only covers certified inspection training to 1 Member of each Committee, every 3 years.

I, propose that Galway County Council reduce the huge financial burden incurred by community playground committees undertaking RoSPA training, a mandatory requirement of Galway County Council, by funding cost of said training for all community playground committees, from 2024."

The following reply issued:

"Galway County Council currently provides and funds the cost of the provision of certified routine playground inspection training to one committee member every 3 years. The Community Wardens also carry out certified operational inspections on the community playgrounds on behalf of Galway County Council.

Galway County Council will examine the proposal in relation to providing additional training to the playground committees, but such a request will have to be considered in the context of the overall available resources."

ITEM 17. NOTICE OF MOTION

4236

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

"that Galway County Council be provided with additional funding by Government for mechanical ventilation works to Council properties where there is evidence of rising damp."

The following reply issued:

"In 2021 The Dept. of Housing revised the Energy Retrofit Programme, in line with Government commitments to Climate Action, to include deep retrofitting of social houses by the Local Authorities.

The revised programme provides for a significant upscaling in the level of funding available and focuses on ensuring that the fabric of the home is upgraded, and an energy efficient heating system is provided with the requirement to achieve a BER rating of B2 or cost optimal equivalent.

In 2023 GCC received funding of €3,026,000 to deep retrofit 89 houses with an average cost of €34,000 per house. The allowable works include external wall insulation, attic insulation, replacement windows and doors, Heat Pump heating system, energy efficient lighting and BER Assessments. The funding **does not** cover the cost of air tightness testing and works, mechanical ventilation systems or solar panels.

Galway County Council have funded Solar panels to offset the running costs associated with the installation of a Heat pump, and to bring all houses subject to a retrofit up to an A3 standard, similar to a new build.

We have found that the increased condensation and moisture levels is as a result of the improved air tightness and elimination of draughts following the installation of new windows and doors, external insulation and the closing up of open flues, as required for the installation of the Heat Pump heating system. Ideally if installing a Heat Pump, a Mechanical Ventilation System should be installed to regulate airflow in the dwelling in accordance with Part F of the Building Regulations.

We believe the current retrofit programme, while welcome, should also include for airtightness works and testing and the provision of a designed mechanical ventilation system in order to ensure the correct level of ventilation is being provided. The programme should also include the provision of Solar PV panels for **all** retrofit dwellings in order to reduce the average annual heating costs where electric heating is installed.

We have made representations to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage unsuccessfully to date, to have these items included in the retrofit

programme. The inclusion of same would be a welcome and beneficial addition to the Energy Retrofit Programme."

ITEM 18. NOTICE OF MOTION

4237

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

"that where a Council tenant submits a request for a transfer to another property and has certified medical evidence to substantiate that request, their name will be immediately added to the transfer list."

The following reply issued:

"Galway County Council's Housing Allocation Scheme (Section 4.2) makes provisions for transfers from Local Authority, RAS, HAP and leasing properties. The Order of priorities is determined under Section 9 of this scheme.

In assessing transfer applications, applicants are obliged to submit a Transfer Application (Blank form attached) and documentation to support their request for a transfer. In the case of medical or disability grounds, applicants must complete the attached HMD Form 1. Applicants upon completion of these forms will be assessed on the basis of whether the house can be adapted to suit their needs, or a transfer should be approved. If approved for a transfer, clients will be placed on the transfer list and will be prioritised in accordance with Section 9 of our scheme. (see attached)"

ITEM 19. NOTICE OF MOTION

4238

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

"that Galway County Council should examine the possibility of funding Community Alert Texting throughout the County to all Community Alert Groups. A lot of the Community Alert Groups depend solely on local funding and really don't have much access to funding. As the vast majority are people to whom we represent are property taxpayers, it would be an important source of funding towards Community Alert Texting or notifications. It would also be a key element in fighting rural crime against

criminals. As our budget meeting is coming up in November, this should be seriously addressed. It would also be a way of showing that Galway County Council is fully committed to the helping and fighting of all aspects of rural crime, illegal dumping, burglaries, anti- social behaviour etc."

The following reply issued:

"The Council will examine the proposal as submitted".

Members raised concerns about the rising number of cases of burglaries in rural areas around the county. Mr. Farrell advised he would revert to Members if it was appropriate to for Galway County Council to provide funding as requested. The Chief Executive assured Members that whatever assistance could be given in this regard would be provided.

ITEM NO.20 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

4239

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

"That Galway County Council writes to Minister Darragh O'Brien so as to ask the Minister to increase the grants given for the following grants.

- *Housing adaption grants for people with a disability*
- *Mobility Aid Grants*
- *Housing for the elderly grants*

To give an example why we believe this should be increased. The cost of reroofing a typical bungalow can cost between €15,000 and €20,000.

The max grant available is €8000, the elderly do not have the money to foot the shortfall."

Mr. Owens advised Members that maximum the grant limits are set out by the relevant Minister through regulations.

ITEM NO.21 VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS

4240

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Eugene Greaney, Lacklea, Barna, Co. Galway.
- Bobby Gardiner, Clarke Street, Athenry, Co. Galway.

- Colm Keaveney, Kilcreevanty, Tuam, Co. Galway.

The Cathaoirleach was joined by Members in extending congratulation to Cllr. Cronnelly on his recent success at the Rowing for Paris Paralympic Games 2024 held at Armida Rowing Club in Torino, Italy. Cllr. Cronnelly won a silver medal in the Singles Sculls event and a bronze medal in Double Sculls event.

Cllr. Hoade was joined by Members in extending best wishes to Mr. Jim Cullen following his recent retirement from Galway County Council.

Comh. Ó Curraoin informed Members Coilín Ó Neachtain was reporting for the last day on Council proceedings prior to his retirement. He complimented him on his reporting on Council matters down through the years. Comh. Ó Curraoin was joined by Members in congratulating Coilín and extending best wishes to him on his retirement.

On his own behalf and on behalf of all the staff the Chef Executive extended best wishes to Coilín for the future

Members welcomed Máire Áine Ní Chuaig and wished her well in her new role taking over from Coilín.

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach:



Date:



