

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**

**Galway County Council**

**Ceantar Bardasach Bhaile Átha an Rí**

**Municipal District of Athenry**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Athenry held in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2020.**

I LATHAIR:

BAILL: Cllr. J. Cuddy (Cathaoirleach)  
Cllr. G. Cronnelly,  
Cllr. L. Carroll,  
Cllr. D. Collins,  
Cllr. S. Herterich Quinn,  
Cllr. A. Dolan.

Apologies Cllr. J. Charity.

OIFIGIGH: Mr. M. Owens, A/Director of Services,  
Mr. D. Mitchell, Senior Engineer,  
Mr. P. Gavin, Executive Engineer,  
Ms. V. Loughnane, Senior Planner,  
Ms. E. Curran, Administrative Officer,  
Ms. G. Healy, A/Administrative Officer,  
Ms. G. Cooley, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies Mr. J. Cullen, Director of Services, Infrastructure & Operations.

Cllr. Cuddy, Cathaoirleach of Athenry Municipal District Council, welcomed all present at the Meeting.

**TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT THE ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED WORKS OF MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE ATHENRY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT** AMD 30

Mr. Mitchell presented the Draft Road Works Programme 2020 outlining the grant allocations, national and non-national road allocations and roadworks to be carried out using Galway County Council's own resources. He said there was an increase in funding over the 2019 allocations but that some of this was as a result of roll-over works from previous years.

He said that in Galway certain roads are not suitable for surface dressing and therefore the Department will allow a transfer of this funding into an Improvement Grant Scheme which would allow for preparatory works to take place in advance of surface dressing.

Cllr. Collins asked if it was possible to carry out preparatory works and subsequently surface dressing works on a full stretch of road and Mr. Mitchell replied that funding available would not allow for large sections of roads to be completed in this way, as this would hinder works on other roads in need of repair.

Mr. Mitchell informed the Members that upgrading works in towns and villages are now funded through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme of the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Mr. Mitchell outlined the various schemes which are due to receive Department funding in 2020 as follows: tertiary road funding, pedestrian lights for the new Presentation College, Raheen, Athenry, drainage works, Community Involvement Schemes and Local Improvement Schemes. He said that no formal funding has been received for the Local Improvement Schemes to date, but it is expected at some stage during the year.

Cllr. Cronnelly enquired if the agreement of the Plenary Council that 10% of any extra funding would be ringfenced for the Athenry Municipal District still stands and Mr. Mitchell confirmed that nothing had changed on this, but that no extra funding had been received.

Cllr. Dolan thanked the Council staff for preparing the Roads Programme. He said he had received representations from residents along the Gortacleva Road, Claregalway, expressing concerns that the road surface has deteriorated due to the increased volume of bus traffic on the road and also that the road is used as a rat run. He said he understands that this road is earmarked for upgrading in 2021, however he asked that it be considered for works in 2020 due to the condition of the road.

Cllr. Carroll expressed his dissatisfaction with the policy of the Council to allocate roads funding on a per kilometre basis, as this places the Athenry Municipal District at a disadvantage as it has the shortest length of public road network of all of the Municipal Districts, while it has the highest volume of traffic due to its proximity to the City.

Cllr. Hertrich Quinn asked if Galway County Council draws down its full allowance of grants from the Department.

Mr. Mitchell replied that the Roads Section of Galway County Council is getting its fair share of funding, which provides for significant projects, such as the Athenry Ring Road, and the Roads Section applies for funding under every available funding stream in order to maximise funding available for roadworks. He acknowledged that Galway County Council needs to receive a bigger share of the Equalisation Fund in relation to the Local Property Tax, however, despite major efforts by the Finance Committee of the Council, this has not been forthcoming as of yet, he said.

Cllr. Cuddy expressed his disappointment at the level of funding under the Roads Programme, as he said that the Municipal District does not receive adequate funding to carry out essential works. He highlighted particular areas such as Glenascaul, Oranmore and the footpaths in the Cloonarkin Estate as being in bad repair. He expressed concern that the new school in Claregalway was granted planning permission, but no additional funding was given to upgrade the roads leading to the school.

Cllr. Cronnelly said the Council staff are doing great work having regard to the level of funding received, but said that due to the severe weather events in 2019, additional funding was required to deal with drainage issues and to repair local roads which were used as rat runs.

Cllr. Collins asked if the problem of water run off from the new roundabout at Annagh Hill on the Roscommon Road could be addressed, as the run off is damaging the road. Cllr. Collins also asked if the FÁS or TÚS Employment Schemes could help out in areas such as drainage works and clearing gullies and footpaths.

Mr. Mitchell replied that a submission had been made to the Department by Mr. Gavin for the works at Annagh Hill, but the funding at the moment is going towards the N6 and this could be the case again in 2020. Mr. Mitchell also said that the assistance of FÁS or TÚS employees would be helpful, however there were issues to consider in this regard, such as Health and Safety, Insurance etc.

In reply to Cllr. Herterich Quinn, Mr. Mitchell said that funding for outdoor staff comes from roads grants and maintenances grants.

A discussion took place regarding the installation of LED lights in the Municipal District and Cllr. Cronnelly queried if there was any pilot scheme to provide additional public lighting in rural areas. Cllr. Carroll expressed the view that the retrofitting of lights in Oranmore town caused a decrease in the brightness of the lights.

In reply to Cllr. Carroll, Mr. Gavin said that works were carried out along the Station Road recently and gullies installed to alleviate the flooding at this location.

Cllr. Cuddy said that the flooding issue at Claregalway, particularly after the recent rainfall, needs to be dealt with by Transport Infrastructure Ireland as soon as possible.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn asked what is the procedure for naming a road, for example the new link road in Athenry. Mr. Mitchell said he would check this out and revert to her.

A discussion then took place regarding the Schedule of Municipal District Works 2020 in respect of Athenry Municipal District.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn referred to the proposed allocation of €129,416.00 in respect of Housing Maintenance in the Municipal District. She also referred to the responsibilities of tenants under the Tenancy Agreement and she asked if the Council could be more lenient with tenants who did not have the means to carry out certain repair works, such as mending fences etc. She expressed the view that the Council should review this matter.

Mr. Owens replied that the overall level of funding for the Council is the issue and it would be difficult to adjust the responsibilities of tenants, having regard to available resources and funding. He said that the Council works under the Guidelines issued by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in this regard. He said that funding does not allow for the carrying out of certain maintenance works but that the Council carries out priority works such as electrical repairs and waste water maintenance. However, he said that the Department will consider applications for the adaptation of houses for people with disabilities. Mr. Owens also said that a fund of €10m was used to carry out a stock survey and investment programme to bring the Council's Housing Stock up to minimum standards of repair.

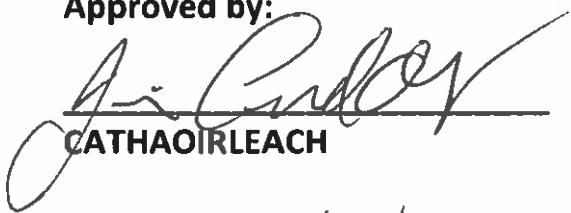
Cllr. Herterich Quinn acknowledged the funding issue but she said that future planning in relation to the building of Social Houses should have regard to increasing inclement weather events to ensure that structures, such as fencing, be weather resistant and she expressed the view that timber fencing is not suitable.

Mr. Owens replied that a document produced in 2019 by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government indicated the standards which must be met in order to receive funding they provide, and he said he would circulate this document to the Members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Collins, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Herterich Quinn, the Members **AGREED** to adopt the Annual Schedule of Proposed Works of Maintenance and Repair to be carried out in the Athenry Municipal District 2020, with reservations due to the level of funding provided.

### Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin

Approved by:



CATHAOIRLEACH

Date: 10/3/20

Minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020

