

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 Aras an Chontae, on Tuesday 2nd November, 2021 at 3.00.

I LATHAIR:

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

OIFIGI: Mr G. Mullarkey, Director of Service
Mr. L. Hanrahan, Director of Service
Mr. A. Farrell, Senior Executive Officer,
Mr. R. Conway, Executive Engineer,
Mr. D. Mitchell, Senior Engineer,
Mr. P. Higgins,
Mr P. Gavin,
Ms. M. Jordan, Administrative Officer.
Ms. G. Cooley,

To Confirm Minutes of the Athenry Municipal District Meeting held on the 14th September, 2021. **AMD97**

Matters arising

In response to a query on the derelict site at Athenry, Mr Mullarkey explained that this matter is still going through the legal process.

Cllr Cronnelly requested an update on the tender process for the Athenry Fire station.

In reply to a query from Cllr Carroll on the traffic management plan Mr Mitchell said that there was consultation taking place between the Planning and Roads Unit. Cllr. Carroll asked that Members be kept up to date on this matter.

On the PROPOAL of Cllr. Carroll, SECONDED by Cllr Dolan, the minutes of the Athenry MD meeting for the 14th September, 2021 were AGREED

Presentation on the Social Housing Waiting List.

AMD98

Mr Hanrahan gave a presentation on the Housing waiting list and explained that at the last Strategic Policy Corporate meeting the housing section are working towards the split of the Athenry/Oranmore townlands. He said that Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Tuam are the three largest areas of choice. There are approximately 940 households on the Athenry/Oranmore area of choice.

In relation to age profile there are 89 applicants in the eighteen to twenty seven age group. Families with a larger make up are in their late twenties to early forties. There are 73 applicants over sixty-five on the list. There are almost 600 households dependent on rent supplement with almost 190 with a disability or medical requirement. Homeless numbers are approximately 30.

The Housing unit are working on a process to split the areas and text messages have been sent to applicants with approximately 68% of respondents having received the message. There are approximately 561 applicants that have not updated their phone numbers and letters will be sent to them. Applicants have also been sent e-mails and 60% have provided a current e-mail addresses. The correspondence has given applicants the option to tick Oranmore/Claregalway or Athenry as a separate area of choice. The response rate was good with 900 responses out of 3,000. The outstanding ones are being followed up. It is anticipated that the exercise will be completed by quarter one and it will inform the housing unit of the need for the towns of Athenry and Oranmore/Claregalway. People have 3 areas of choice.

He said that there are a number of Part V's in Oranmore and there is turnkey approval for 58 units at Cullarbaun, Athenry. The new targets under "Housing for All" are significant with 60% for Galway County Council and 40% from Approved Housing Bodies.

In reply to a query by Cllr Cronnelly on rebuilding Ireland and disability specific units Mr Hanrahan said that it was difficult for applicants to get funding approval for loans due to PUP and that it may be next year before these issues are resolved. He said that there are 150 applicants on the list under the disability category and that plans in all developments include disability specific requirements and elderly requirements.

In reply to a query by Cllr Herterich Quinn on the provision of retirement village type accommodation Mr Hanrahan said that Claregalway AHB units can be replicated, He said

that it had been nominated for awards and the council is working with the local AHB on this. The tenants for this development came off the social housing list.

In response to a query from Cllr Charity in relation to assistance to applicants who have limited ability with the use of I.T. systems Mr Hanrahan said that anyone requiring assistance can contact the Housing Office by phone.

Cllr Cuddy said that the housing units should be 70% affordable, 20% social and 10% disability. He said that more affordable housing was needed in the county area. Mr Hanrahan explained that the lists were different for social and affordable. He said that if you qualify for Social housing you will not qualify for affordable and visa versa. He said that there are a significant number of families from the local area on the social housing list with Claregalway addresses and that developments will be a mixed design of social, affordable and elderly. He also said that the funding for Part V housing comes from the Department.

Mr Hanrahan said that there was a large turnover of vacant properties in 2021. He said that a retrofit must be done when turning over a house. There are currently delays in accessing windows and doors of up to six months.

In response to a query on the age profile of applicants over 65 Mr Hanrahan said that this can occur when there is a split in the family home and applicants who may have rented accommodation long term are looking for social housing. Also, some applicants may be living in substandard housing in rural areas and do not have the resources to refurbish them.

In relation to a query by Cllr Herterich Quinn on Approved Housing Bodies Mr Hanrahan said that if the council have a large landbank they work with the AHB. The AHB has to be an approved body.

In reply to a query on the disability grants Mr Hanrahan said that the applications are almost up to date.

Brief Presentation on Town Teams Regeneration

AMD99

Mr Conway, Executive Engineer gave a presentation on the Athenry Regeneration and highlighted the following:

Town Team

In relation to the Town Team there are 20 Community activists participating with representatives of all cross sections of the town landscape including. Arts, Culture, Heritage, Sport, Residents, Traders and Social Enterprise. He said that the Local Authority are now requesting the Municipal District to nominate Councillors to join the Town Team. There are 5 meetings to be scheduled to discuss the various regeneration projects.

Streetscape Enhancement

He said that a total of 63 applications have been received under this scheme and 23 offers have been made prioritizing commercial /retail. An additional €100,000 was sought from Town

and Village Schemes that are pending in order to complete the balance of projects. There is potential for an additional targeted funding call aimed at vacant/derelict properties which have not participated in the original scheme to date.

Brand Identity

The Preliminary reports are complete in this area and the next phase is for artwork and design of the logo. There is future potential for website, marketing and communications group.

Wayfinding and Interpretation

The Preliminary reports are complete which consist of draft signage/interpretive schedule and location planning and the Initial design work on signage style and composition is also complete. It, however, requires further refinement and public consultation. The Waterford Viking Triangle is being viewed as a successful case study. The successful application under ORIS was awarded €20,000 for a cycle route wayfinding in association with the "Wheels of Athenry". The successful application under IWTN was awarded €12,000 for Town Wall Walk feasibility study.

Town Wall Walk

HCC Architecture have been appointed and initial report has been prepared identifying the preferred route of the Medieval Town Wall Walk. The Land Registry searches are complete identifying ownership of the corridor and there is potential for scenic public amenity, visitor attraction and an active travel corridor for pedestrians and cyclists.

Market Square

The Initial non-statutory public consultation element is complete with three viable options selected. Consultation feedback was used to determine an objective assessment criteria. The emerging preferred option has been identified and a presentation will follow from LUC to the combined town team including councillor nominees.

Cross Street

A Part 8 was submitted previously for this project, which was subject to objection/criticism for not going far enough as a public realm project. The design is being re-worked internally to align and compliment the Market Square project. A funding request will be made to the Department for a "top up" payment as there is an increase in cost due to high quality materials, street furniture and lighting used in the project. It will progress in tandem with Market Square planning process.

Derelict Site Bridge Street

This is currently going through a legal process.

Town Centre Heath Check

Athenry is currently on the Heritage Council waiting list to participate in this programme. There is potential for Government funding through the launch of the "Town Centre First" Policy. It captures a towns baseline information in order to help determine appropriate policy measures. Budget 2022 also provides for the appointment of the first ever Town Regeneration Officers who will coordinate and utilise the funding streams available.

In relation to the nomination of Councillors for the Town Team it was advised to contact Mr Conway. Cllr Herterich Quinn expressed her interest in joining the team alongside Cllr. Gabe Cronnelly.

Mr Farrell thanked Mr Conway for the update. He said that while there is a lot of work ongoing, Athenry was one of the first successful RRDF applications with a mix of Category 1 and Category 2 projects and there has been good learning since then. He said that that bringing projects through from Category 2 to Category 1 was very beneficial as it ensured that applications were at a greater readiness with more detail, specification and design, stating he was hopeful that a very strong Category 2 application could be made when the next call for proposals is announced by the Department of Rural & Community Development. He indicated that this would build on the initiatives that are currently being progressed such as the report on the Town Walls and that site acquisition could also be included.

Mr Farrell gave a brief overview of the BIA Innovator Campus saying that while Covid had a significant impact on its delivery with lockdowns and supply chain issues, progress was being made albeit slower than any parties wanted. He said that the CLG were working hard to achieve the tight deadlines to draw down the Regional Enterprise Transition Fund money which had been received in October with a November deadline.

The Cathoirleach thanked the Staff for all their work.

Municipal District Directors Business and Correspondence

AMD100

Mr Mullarkey advised that he had nothing to report.

Cathoirleach Business

AMD101

The following proposal was made by Cllr Charity

"I propose that Galway County Council write to the NTA advising them that their proposed bus stop/service on the N83 comprised in proposal 22A for Eanach Dhuin/Annaghdown is in fact 10.67 km as the crow flies from Annaghdown village, is not a proposed service of any benefit to the area and requesting that they amend same to reflect the proposed stop/service as being to Currandrum and further requesting they amend proposal 21 to provide a service that actually facilitates the villages of Corrandulla and Annaghdown which the current proposal fails to do."

The PROPOSAL was made by Cllr James Charity, SECONDED BY Cllr Gabe Cronnelly and AGREED by the Members.

In response to a query by Cllr Charity on the flooding issue in Claregalway village Mr Mitchell said that the Council is examining options and said that he would meet with the local engineer as requested by Cllr Charity. He said that current negotiations with the landowner are positive but in the interim the gullies will be kept clear and the traffic management will continue as required.

The following proposal was made by Cllr Carroll

"I hereby propose that the Executive of Galway county Council in consultation with the joint owners of the Galway Airport site in Carnmore (Galway City Council) enter into a licencing agreement with the Galway Flying Club Ltd. permitting the Flying club to use the facility for the purposes of leisure flying for a three year period commencing on the expiry of the current one year lease i.e. from 1st January, 2022."

The PROPOSAL was made by Cllr Carroll, SECONDED by Cllr. Collins and AGREED by the Members.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn asked for updates on the Presentation "elbow" and pedestrian bridge for Clarin College. Cllr. Quinn also raised issues on speeding on the Monivea road and using some estates such as Ard Aobhinn as rat runs.

Mr. Mitchell advised that the land acquisition for the Presentation elbow may require a CPO. He said that a letter of intent will be issued shortly for Clarin college bridge.

Mr. Mitchell also went on to say the matter of speeding on the Monivea road should be taken up with the Gardai but he said that he would look into solutions such as providing speed cushions rather than ramps and asked that a list of the affected estates be sent to the MD office.

Cllr. Collins thanked the Council and Barry Cormican for helping to provide the driver feedback signs at Lackagh.

Cllr. Cronnelly also thanked the MD staff for helping repaint the disabled blue boxes around Athenry town.

The following proposal was made by Cllr Herterich Quinn

"I would like to propose that the trial freeparking at the Backlawn Car Park be extended for another year due to its ongoing success."

The PROPOSAL was made by Cllr Herterich Quinn, SECONDED by Cllr Cronnelly and AGREED by the Members.

Criochnaigh an Cruinniu ansin.

Approved by:



CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE

1/3/2022