

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 Aras an Chontae, on Tuesday 13th September, 2022.

I LATHAIR:

BAILL: Cllr. L. Carroll (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. J. Cuddy,
Cllr G. Cronnelly
Cllr. A. Dolan
Cllr. J. Charity

OIFIGIGH: Mr A. Farrell, DoS
Ms V. Loughnane, Snr. Planner,
Mr Brendan Dunne, Snr. Executive Planner
Mr Brian Corcoran, Executive Planner,
Ms R. Lowe, Senior Engineer,
Mr. S. Whelan, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. M. Jordan, Administrative Officer

Iarnróid Mr. Derrek Curran
Éireann Ms. Cathy O'Donnell

Apologies: Cllr S. Hertrich Quinn,
Cllr D. Collins

The Cathaoirlech welcomed Mr Derrick Curran and Ms Cathy O'Donnell, from Iarnróid Éireann who he said would be making a presentation on plans for Iarnróid Éireann for the next no of years. He also welcomed Mr Alan Farrell, DoS.

To confirm Minutes of the Athenry Municipal District Meeting held on the 12th July, 2022 **AMD 131**

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr Cronnelly SECONDED by Cllr Cuddy the minutes of the Athenry Municipal District Meeting held on the 12th July, 2022 were AGREED.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Declaration of a Road to be a Public Road – Section 11 of Roads Act 1993

AMD 132

The Cathaoirleach referred to the report, including map, which had been circulated to the Members and he read the Report to the meeting as follows:

Municipal District: Athenry

Description; Townland: (Tóin an Gharrain) Tonagurraun

Road commencing at junction with L-2129-13 (E533435, N737584) in the townland of (Tóin an Gharráin) Tonagurraun and extending Southeast for a distance of 538m in the townland of (Tóin an Gharráin) Tonagurraun and finishing at (E533874, N737424) in the townland of (Tóin an Gharráin) Tonagurraun.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr Charity, SECONDED by Cllr Cuddy the Members AGREED the Declaration of Roads to be Public Road under Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 as outlined in the report.

Presentation by Derrick Curran, District Manager, Iarnród Éireann. AMD 133

Mr Curran said that there are currently 24 commuter services between Athenry and Galway, 68 intercity services to Limerick and 143 to Athlone and Heuston Station, Dublin.

He said that the number of platforms at Ceannt station will increase from two to five and give capacity to stable six train sets at any one time. A total of three platforms will be dedicated to intercity connections while the other two will service commuter trains to Oranmore and Athenry. This will allow the separation of intercity and commuter services. It will also improve the integration of rail links and link with the redeveloped commercial site to the rear of Ceannt Station. Detailed design is complete and tenders will be issued in November, 2022 and returned in January 2023. It is anticipated that works will start on site in June 2023. He said that the works at Ceannt Station will take place at the same time as the major improvements to Oranmore Station which has plans for the construction of a passing loop and a second platform which is at an advanced stage. A new foot bridge between the two platforms will be constructed as part of the plans. Planning will be lodged in quarter one of 2023 while a detailed design should be complete by October 2023. Construction should start in October 2023 and works will be complete by April 2025. The long-term goal is to install a dual track from Ceannt Station to Athenry, providing for a frequent commuter service between the city and county. The plan will be progressed in three stages and the second platform at Oranmore is the first step. The second phase is the double track from Galway to Oranmore and the third Oranmore to Athenry. The other two phases have not yet been funded.

Mr Curran gave details of the train services at the Oranmore, Athenry and Attymon stations. He said that the issue of car parking spaces at the Oranmore station will be addressed by the County Council.

He said that an additional 41 intermediate vehicles will be put in place and this will include the lengthening of existing trains which are being delivered in the second half of 2022 and will be in service in Q1 of 2023. In quarter 4 of 2021 a contract was awarded to Alstom for 750 new rail carriages to be delivered over the coming decade. There was an initial order of 95 carriages at a total project cost of €317.8 million which includes design costs for the full frame-work agreement. Iarnród Éireann expects to take delivery of the cars from mid- 2024, with the first of the carriages entering service in 2025.

Mr Curran outlined improvements to customer service to include onboard customer service officers and this recruitment process will be completed by the end of November 2022.

In response to a query on parking at Oranmore station, Ms Loughnane said that funding has been secured from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund to draw up plans for the car park. She said that the planning office is working with stakeholders and Iarnród Éireann and the National Transport Authority to look at ways of funding the works. There are currently 140 spaces, and the aim is to increase this to 300 depending on the design. Cllr Carroll said that the car park was at capacity and that more cars need to be taken off the road this year. Ms Loughnane said that it was hoped that the design would be complete next year.

In response to a query from Cllr Cuddy on increasing the number of trains stopping at Oranmore Mr Curran said that all 89 of the commuter trains service Oranmore.

In reply to a query by Cllr Cuddy on a direct road link from the Galway to Oranmore dual carriageway Ms Loughnane said that access will be examined in the long term. In response to a query by Cllr Carroll, Ms Loughnane said that the option to facilitate double decker buses would be taken into account in the overall design of the carpark.

Mr Curran said upgrades at Ceannt and Oranmore would provide Iarnród Éireann with potential to have more trains stopping in Oranmore to accommodate increased customer numbers.

In response to a query from Cllr Charity, Mr Curran said that funding has been committed for Ceannt and Oranmore Stations. Mr Curran confirmed that both projects were funded and stated that we envisage the passing loop and second platform at Oranmore as being an intermediate measure ahead of full double-tracking. While double tracking is not currently funded, it is in line with NDP targets and said that the double track at Athenry could be done in three phases. He said that the double track at Athenry will be done in three phases. Cllr Charity also asked if a shuttle bus service between Oranmore station and the village could be considered.

Mr Curran said in response to a query from the Members on the cost of train fares that the fares are set by the National Transport Authority and that fares were reduced by 20% since May of this year, with young adult fares reduced by 50%.

Cllr Carroll said that it was his intention to invite Bus Eireann to the next MD meeting.

In response to a query by Cllr Cronnelly in relation to carpark fees Ms O'Donnell said that there was no charge for the car park at Oranmore and the cost for Athenry was €3.50 per day. This is very favourable together with a 20% reduction in fares. She said that she will examine his query in relation to the possibility of getting a reduced carparking charge when booking tickets online. She also explained that applications can be made to the Revenue Department for tax saver options.

Cllr Dolan said that the reduced fares meant that a young adult could travel from Athenry to Galway by train for €2.60 and that demand has increased in the last few months.

In response to a query from Cllr Carroll on plans to electrify the Athenry to Galway trains Mr Curran said that there were no plans presently.

Mr Curran said that in relation to a query on a freight hub for Athenry that Iarnród Éireann are currently engaging with a cross-section of industry to ensure we understand industry needs to inform locations for such facilities. Obviously, requirements include good interchange with the road network and avoiding any congestion impacts on town centres. We will keep members informed as options for such facilities are developed.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr Curran and Ms O'Donnell and welcomed the exciting projects.

Municipal District Director's Business & Correspondence **AMD 134**

Mr Farrell said that there was an open-air concert in Athenry on Sunday 18th of September 2022 at 4.00 and Paddy Casey and Munday will be performing. The event was organised by the Arts office of Galway County Council under the Local Live Performance Scheme funded by government.

Cathaoirleach's Business. **AMD135**

In relation to a query from Cllr Charity on the traffic calming and surface water proposals for Claregalway, Ms Lowe said that she will get an update from the NRPO and circulate it to the Members.

In response to a query from Cllr Cronnelly on the elbow on the link road Ms Lowe said that the detailed design was 90% complete and a CPO is needed which will go to An Bord Pleanala. It is anticipated that it will go to C.P.O. before year end and while we are awaiting their decision the tender documentation will be compiled. In relation to the water services upgrade Ms Lowe said that she will provide an update.

Cllr Dolan said that the NRPO need to be informed that the Members are not satisfied with the delays and they need an update.

Cllr Cuddy said it had very recently come to his attention that an agreement was made with the landowner on the Claregalway Scheme and they were waiting for the TII to come back to the Council to tell them to proceed. Ms Lowe said that she will get an official response shortly re this scheme.

In response to a query from Cllr Cuddy on the graveyard at Claregalway. Cllr Cuddy said that the Council should use the CPO process to acquire land adjacent to the graveyard at Claregalway.

Cllr Charity said that there is a problem at Annaghdown and a CPO needs to be considered there also.

Any Other Business (AOB)

AMD 136

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 8th November, 2022.

Criochnaigh an Cruinniu Ansin.

Approved by



CATHAOIRLEACH

Date: 10/10/22

