

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

Ceantar Bardasach Bhaile Locha Riach *Municipal District of LOUGHREA*

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held in the Loughrea MD on 8th April 2024

I LATHAIR:

Cathaoirleach	Cllr. J. McClearn
Baill:	Cllr's. G. Donohue, S. Curley, D. Kelly, PJ Murphy
Oifigigh:	Ms. R. Lowe, Senior Engineer Mr. T. Prendergast, Senior Engineer Mr. G. Haugh, Senior Executive Engineer Mr. E. Gallagher, Senior Executive Engineer Mr. L. Flynn, Executive Engineer Mr. N. Kennedy, Executive Engineer Mr. D. Executive Engineer Ms. S. Cleary, Staff Officer Ms. C. Kennedy, Clerical Officer Ms. S. O Connell, A.S.O
As Láthair:	Cllr. J. Byrne, Cllr. I. Canning, Cllr. G. Finnerty, Cllr. M. Kinane, Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services, Ms. M. Flynn, Administrative Officer

Vote of Sympathy

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting by extending his sympathies to the family and friends of the late Mary Maher (Rest In Peace), mother of Cllr. Michael (Moegie) Maher. The members in turn extended their sympathies.

Ms. Lowe expressed sincere sympathy to the Maher family on behalf of the Executive, Galway County Council Staff and the Loughrea Municipal District Area.

A minutes' silence was observed in respect of Mary Maher.

Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held in the Loughrea Hotel on 11th March 2024

LMD2352

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 11th March 2024 were **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Donohue, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Kelly and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Confirmation of Minutes of Roads Programme Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on Tuesday 5th March 2024

LMD2353

The Minutes of the Roads Programme Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on Tuesday 5th March 2024 were **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Donohue, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Kelly and arrangements are being made for Cllr. Byrne to sign.

Flooding Update

LMD2354

Mr Gallagher updated the meeting as follows:

In the last period the engineering consultants have held discussions with landowners that would be affected by the flow control structures that were discussed at the last Municipal District (MD) meeting. Updated information is now being provided to the environmental consultants, including description of proposed works, shapefiles and drawings.

The options available for the disposal of excavated material is currently being examined. Suitable locations adjacent to channel works are being identified and landowners will be consulted in the coming month. The required environmental site surveys will be undertaken this summer.

The Options report is being updated following receipt of feedback from Galway County Council and the Office of Public Works (OPW).

The environmental consultants are awaiting completion of photomontages for various locations on the scheme. There has been significant tree felling operations undertaken by some landowners in the last 12 months, that has required sites to be re-visited and re-photographed.

Tender packages have been issued to three contractors for the geophysics surveys required this summer.

All EIAR documents are scheduled to be submitted to the OPW for review by mid-May. The Public Exhibition is scheduled to be held at the end of this summer.

The approved works at Killeenaran at the end of the Kiltiernan to Ballinderreen flood relief channel are still outstanding. The lands to be accessed are still waterlogged.

On the coastal flood study for Oranmore to Kinvara, the OPW have been asked to provide clarification on their requirements from the study, i.e., outputs required from the study and standard of protection to be provided. The preparation of the tender documents will progress while awaiting the clarifications.

Following the request from Cllr Finnerty at the last MD meeting, Mr Gallagher met with the resident at Caherbroder about their flooding issue. A solution has been identified and funding put in place. The Area office will schedule the works for later this year.

Mr Gallagher confirmed to Cllr Murphy that the material to be disposed of during the works will consist mainly of rock with some sub-soil also to be disposed of. He stated topsoil will not be removed from landowners' fields during works.

In response to a query from Cllr Donoghue, Mr Gallagher confirmed that it was not proposed to raise the L-8504 at Termon under the flood scheme. It is proposed to provide an alternative access route to the householder that gets cut-off during an extreme event. The close proximity of the turlough (Special Area of Conservation) and concerns expressed by residents downstream about the installation of culverts, were significant issues raised when examining the road raising options. Mr Gallagher undertook to provide project details on this location to the Area office, for their consideration.

Speed Limit Review

LMD2355

The Cathaoirleach thanked Tom Prendergast, Senior Engineer for attending the meeting to speak about specific areas of concern regarding the speed limit review.

Mr Prendergast spoke about the extent of members powers in relation to making speed limit byelaws, the process of how it works in order for it to be robust and enforceable. Mr Prendergast stated that the making of the speed limit byelaws is governed by the Roads Traffic Act, 2004 and explained that within the legislation there is no explicit provision in the process, or elsewhere in the Act, to allow Elected Members to make changes or alterations to the draft Special Speed Limit Byelaws when brought before the Council members for approval.

Mr Prendergast explained that there is a process in place to engage with the Municipal Districts, following which public consultation process takes place, he added the draft Bye Laws are amended followed by acceptance or rejection by the members. He stated, any modifications would have to go to public consultation. Mr Prendergast added, based on work done to date, he does not anticipate any widespread changes beyond what is going to emerge from the national legislation coming through, which he states, will change default speed limits on National Secondary, Local and Urban Roads. Mr Prendergast stated that the government have confirmed legislation is in preparation to amend the default speed limits of National Secondary to 80kmph, local roads to 60kmph and Urban to 30kmph and a circular is expected to issue shortly providing clarification on timeline and also instructing Local Authorities to pause any ongoing review pending the change in legislation. Mr Prendergast spoke about periodic speed limits that will be introduced in particular at Lough Cutra, Kilchreest and Peterswell National Schools and that signage will be put in place prior to the speed limit review being completed given the time frame involved. Mr Prendergast informed that speed limits must be credible adding that completed surveys indicate that drivers respond more to the driving environment, than the speed limits.

The Cathaoirleach stated that Cllr. Kinnane would be very exercised if she was in attendance and stated that we have a situation whereby a new school is opening next September in Bullaun and there is a safety concern in place with regard to the speed limit. Cllr. Curley pointed out that Bullaun has exploded in population and is a very busy village with a

significant volume of passing traffic which includes heavy vehicles. He stated the speed limit of 80kmph leading into the village must be reduced. Mr Prendergast replied that the submission submitted regarding Bullaun will be dealt with as part of the speed limit review. Mr. Haugh clarified, the access to and from the school has been changed from a regional road to a local road and the proposed entrance on this local road is well within the existing 50kph speed limit. He also confirmed that the school drop-off point is remote from the new access and that overall, the situation should be safer than that which existed previously.

Cllr. Donohue thanked Mr. Prendergast for his update and referred to his meeting with Ms Marketa Quinn on the 21st March and asked if the outcome of the meeting resulted in the periodic signage. Mr Prendergast responded that it is intended to set a periodic speed limit at St. Thomas's National School Peterswell and Kilchreest National School on the Gort Road and that installation of warning signage will be put in place ahead of the periodic speed limit commencing, he stated this should help with regard to controlling speed. Cllr. Donohue stated that last August Wicklow County Council were the first County Council in the country to commence a periodic speed limit for 102 schools in the county. Cllr. Donohue proposed that the 30kph speed limit be trialled at all schools in the Loughrea MD and rolled out to all other schools in County Galway. Cllr. Donohue also requested that the Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council be contacted for further information, this motion was seconded by Cllr. Kelly.

Cllr. Murphy thanked Mr. Prendergast for his presentation and welcomed the clarification that a periodic limit is proposed at Lough Cutra National School. Cllr. Murphy spoke about settlements that don't currently have a speed limit, for example Peterswell, where from the church to the old barracks an 80kmph speed limit exists and asked if there will be repercussions for planning or, is it solely road safety. Mr Prendergast replied that it is solely road safety. It was also clarified that, under the proposed new legislation, local roads such as the one referenced through Peterswell, the speed limit will reduce from 80kph to 60kph.

Cllr. Donohue stated that a number of schools wish to make submissions under An Taisce's Safe Routes to School, in response Ms. Lowe stated she understands the period for submission closed in 2022 and she is not aware of when the scheme will be open for submissions again, she stated there were 65 school applications in Galway which will be completed in batches. She stated that she is not aware of any plan to reopen the scheme in the immediate future, due to the level of schools already in the scheme.

Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations – planned Active Travel development South of Ballinderry on the N67 LMD2356

Mr Darragh Connolly, Executive Engineer made a presentation to the members on the Part 8 Planning application on the N67 Active Travel Scheme South of Ballinderreen Cycleway. Mr Connolly explained that as part of the national rollout of Active Travel infrastructure in recent years funding was obtained to progress an Active Travel scheme south of the village of Ballinderreen. Mr Connolly explained that the bulk of the scheme consists of a new shared two-way cyclist and pedestrian facility, which is approximately 750m in length, between the south end of the village Ballinderreen and the existing two-way facility, which was

constructed as part of recent upgrades to the N67 and additionally, the proposal includes a new controlled pedestrian and cyclist crossing, located between the existing service station and the oakwood housing estate providing a link to the existing footpaths in the village. Mr Connolly explained there is a short section of cycle-lane to be included north of the new crossing, which will assist cyclists traveling northbound through the village to merge back onto the mainline carriageway. Mr Connolly added, the scheme will require some new drainage along the N67 on the east side of the road where the new facility will be located. He stated this is a result of the existing over the edge drainage, via water tables, being lost to the new facility and added that modern drainage design will require a new infiltration pond in order to provide an outfall for the drainage runoff.

Mr Connolly explained that there were a number of objectives set out for the scheme which include (a) reduce the risk of collisions between vulnerable road users and vehicles, especially between the end of the existing shared cycle and pedestrian facility south of the village and the footpaths in the village proper, (b) improve the connectivity for vulnerable road users in the locality to the amenities within the village of Ballinderreen such as the local shop, childcare facility, church, primary school, and (c) improve the accessibility of walking/cycling for users of all ages and abilities.

Mr Connolly explained that the scheme has been designed in line with current Design Standards for national roads, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. Between the existing shared facility on the N67, and the Village of Ballinderreen, there will be a 750m long section of a two-way, shared use facility, 3.0m wide, and separated from the mainline carriageway by a low, kerbed, drainage channel and grass verge. Opposite the service station, there will also be a new 1.75m wide cycle lane, separated from mainline by a raised kerb, and situated beside the northbound carriageway, where the existing grass verge which will be approximately 35m in length and begin at the new crossing, before filtering onto the existing carriageway, just before the existing on street parking outside the creche. There will be new drainage along the 3.0m wide section, which will be located in the grass verge and utilise a combined drainage kerb to collect runoff from the road and new shared facility. The new infiltration bound will be located midway along this section, at the low point in the road. Drainage within the village will remain as is, with some relocation of existing gullies to accommodate the new crossing and cycle lane.

Mr Connolly explained that planning approval for this scheme has been sought under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, a public notice was advertised on Friday December 8th, with the closing date of Monday January 29th. The Part 8 submission included an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report, both of which screened out for further assessment with some recommendations from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and these have been taken on board. He stated, a Chief Executive's Report was completed in line with the requirements of Part 8 and was circulated to MD Representatives for consideration on 6th March, the report concludes that Permission is recommended, subject to conditions.

The Cathaoirleach questioned how the two-way facility for cyclists and pedestrians will work, Mr Connolly replied that in rural areas, in compliance with design standards, almost all active travel schemes whether greenway or active travel are shared use/two-way. Cllr. Kelly

requested costings for the scheme and Mr Connolly responded a costing is unavailable at present as the scheme is at planning stage.

The planned Active Travel development South of Ballinderry on the N67 was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Kelly and **SECONDED** by Cllr Murphy.

Cathaoirleach's Business

LMD2357

The Cathaoirleach referred to an email issued by Ms. Maria Flynn requesting that one member of each Municipal District be part of the Transport Committee. Cllr. Donohue **PROPOSED** Cllr. McClearn be part of the Committee, this was **SECONDED** by Cllr. Kelly.

Cllr. Donohue stated she is aware the Roads programme has been passed but advocated that the L8504 road and L85912 road be repaired. Cllr. Kelly referred to a road in Kylebrack which he felt is next to undriveable and he enquired if an application could be made to central government for additional funding.

The Cathaoirleach stated that he was not looking forward to the 3-Year Roads Programme as many roads that are in very poor condition may not be included in the programme, he stated Galway County Council received an extra 500k which does not allow for inflation and road conditions caused by bad weather.

A **PROPOSAL** was put forward to hold the next MD Meeting, subject to agreement, on Tuesday 7th May 2024.

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CLLR JIMMY McCLEARN

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Date