

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL,

Monday 24th February 2020 at 11.00am

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Jimmy McClearn, Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill: Comh./Cllr. T. Broderick, J. Byrne, I. Canning, L. Carroll, J. Charity, D. Connolly, G. Cronnelly, D. Ó Cualáin, J. Cuddy, S. Curley, T. Ó Curraoin, Aisling Dolan, Albert Dolan, G. Donuhue, G. Finnerty, D. Geraghty, S. Herterich Quinn, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, C. Keaveney, P. Keaveney, D. Killilea, M. Kinane, G. King, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, K. McHugh Farag, A. McKinsty, A. Reddington, P. Roche, J. Sheridan, N. Thomas, S. Walsh, T. Welby

Oifigh: Mr. Kevin Kelly, Chief Executive (Interim)
Ms. C. Delaney, Acting County Secretary
Mr. G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance
Mr. J. Cullen, Director of Services
Mr. A. Farrell, A/Director of Services
Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services
Mr. M. Owens, A/Director of Services
Ms. M. McGann, Administrative Officer
Ms. F. Mitchell, Staff Officer
Ms. S. Elwood, Clerical Officer
Ms. C. Walsh, Clerical Officer

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir

Cllr. McClearn commenced the meeting by congratulating all his colleagues who were candidates in the recent General Election campaign and expressed best wishes to all contestants for the Seanad Éireann elections.

ITEM NO. 1 - CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

3562

(a) Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 27th January 2020

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Donohue the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 27th January 2020 were **AGREED**.

Matters Arising

Cllr. Curley requested clarification regarding the date of holding the Civic Reception for the Galway Senior Camogie Team.

In response, Ms. Delaney said that the Civic Reception is scheduled for the 23rd March at 6.00pm.

Cllr. Byrne asked if a report on Private Wastewater Treatment Plants was available as it was agreed at the February 2020 meeting that the Executive would provide this report.

In response to Cllr. Byrne's query, Ms. Ruane stated that there are two distinct pieces of work ongoing in relation to this matter i.e. dealing with legacy issues and working with the relevant national policy makers in relation to future policy in this area. In relation to the legacy matters and in recognition of the very serious difficulties caused by many of these treatment plants in the county and the view expressed by the Bord through decisions on appeal, the decision was taken by Galway County Council at the end of 2017 not to facilitate this any further.

This decision was based on the evidence from numerous estates in the County where such treatment systems clearly have not worked. When treatment systems are inadequately installed and/or maintained they pose serious environmental risks to

water quality and to human health causing ongoing difficulties for residents. Environmental enforcement has proved difficult due to a number of complex legal issues that vary across the different estates.

Galway County Council recognises and shares the concerns of the members on future development of these towns and villages. Current national policy is that these waste water treatment packages should not be allowed in areas where there are no plans to provide sewerage facilities to serve the settlement as these developments would be premature and prejudicial to public health. The provision of waste water treatment is the responsibility of Irish Water. Under the National Taking in Charge Initiative, Galway County Council has applied for funding for feasibility studies at Craughwell, Abbeyknockmoy and Corofin in an effort to advance these sites for future municipal Waste Water Treatment Plants.

Water Framework Directive:

Ireland was required to produce a River Basin Catchment Management Plan as part of the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) in Ireland. Developer Provided Infrastructure (DPIs) and associated impacts on water quality has been identified as a **significant water management issue** in Ireland through the work undertaken to date.

Following discussion regionally the matter is now being referred to the *Water Policy Advisory Committee* (WPAC) for consideration, as it has not been possible to identify a suitable technical solution and therefore requires a policy response. The role of the WPAC is to advise the Minister with regard both to progress of the plan and to the preparation of programmes of measures necessary to achieve the environmental objectives.

The issue of waste water infrastructure will be discussed further as part of the review of the new County Development Plan which is due to commence in April, 2020, and will also remain a standing item on the newly formed Planning, Environment, Agriculture and Emergency Services SPC as the appropriate forum for consideration of this matter on behalf of the County Council.

Cllr. Byrne said he is very disappointed to receive this negative response. He raised concerns that housing developments will be unable to progress in the absence of Waste Water Treatment Plant and other Councillors concurred.

In relation to Private Waste Water Treatment Plants, Mr. Kelly advised Members that there is adequate supply of zoned serviced lands in the County and that planning permission is granted on phase two zoned lands. He said that there are many opportunities for developers to apply for planning permission to build in the towns and that the approach of permitting clusters of serviced sites had not been successful at Bord level.

Cllr. Cuddy asked if Galway County Council received a response from the TII regarding the Claregalway Relief Road. Mr. Cullen read the following response:

"The National Development (NDP) which has been developed by Government to underpin the successful implementation of the National Planning Framework, provides the strategic and financial framework for TII's national roads programme for the period 2018 to 2027.

The focus of TII's activities over the coming years, is accordingly being directed towards the development of the major national road improvement schemes that are included in the NDP.

The proposed Baile Chláir Inner Relief Road is not included amongst those projects which have been identified for development during the period of the NDP and the advancement of the proposed scheme unfortunately cannot, therefore be accommodated in the national roads programme as present".

Cllr. Cuddy expressed dissatisfaction with the response from the TII.

Cllr. Hoade requested an update on the N84 road works. She said that she was assured at the January meeting that contactors had been appointed, and the contracts had been signed. Mr. Cullen replied that the design is completed and the contractors are ready to start, however, there was a delay as the TII had to confirm an element of the design. He said he would enquire further and revert on the matter.

Cllr. Connolly raised the issue on high flood waters making particular reference to Ahascragh and asked if the Council had all their relevant staff deployed to deal with the flooding.

Cllr. Thomas raised concerns over the lack of Council staff working on the ground to deal with the current flooding issues. He indicated that it is the lack of the maintenance of gullies that is causing the problems particularly in Moycullen village.

In response Mr. Cullen confirmed that Galway County Council was dealing with flooding at many locations and liaising with OPW as appropriate.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn requested an update on the Footbridge at Clarin College, Athenry and an indication of a timeframe. She also sought an update on correspondence to the the Department of Justice & Equality and the Garda Commissioner on the subject of CCTV.

In response to Cllr. Herterich Quinn's query, Mr. Kelly advised that Galway County Council have received the drawings for the Footbridge at Clarin College, Athenry, and are following review will advance to the procurement stage. Mr. Kelly advised that the drawings are not as yet finalised, he expected that a temporary solution will be required for September 2020.

ITEM NO. 2 - TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO ADOPT ROAD TRAFFIC (SPECIAL SPEED LIMITS) COUNTY GALWAY BYE-LAWS NO.1 -2019 (HOUSING ESTATES SLOW ZONES) **3563**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Mannion **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley, it was **AGREED** to adopt Road Traffic (Special Speed Limits) County Galway Bye-Laws No.1 -2019 (Housing Estates Slow Zones)

ITEM NO. 3 - TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE APPROVE A LOAN FACILITY OF €10 MILLION FOR THE REBUILDING IRELAND HOME LOAN SCHEME IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 106 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 **3564**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. Geraghty it was **AGREED** to approve a loan facility of €10 million for the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Matters Arising

Mr. Owens advised Members that they had previously approved a €10m loan for the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme in late 2018. He confirmed that this has now been fully committed and a further loan facility in the sum of €10m is now required.

Members raised concerns regarding the Rebuilding Ireland Home loan including;

- the adequacy of €10m on the basis that this would provide approximately 40 houses at an average cost of €240,000; and if this loan is fully recouped from the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government.
- the requirement for applicants to have two refusal letters from a lending institution to qualify for the Rebuilding Home Loan.
- difficulty for young people paying high rents in addition to the requirement to show a steady savings stream.
- the absence of an Affordable Housing Scheme.
- Members asked if the Council are seeking all funding streams available to them for housing.
- If this loan facility is solely for new builds and first-time buyers or can it be accessed by applicants for refurbishment works and can it be used by applicants for self builds;

In response, Mr. Owens advised that once this further loan facility of €10m is approved by Members and drawn down, the Council can revert to seek additional funding subject to sanction from the Minister. He said that the terms of the scheme is for first-time buyers only for new builds or building on a green field site. He clarified that it does not include financing refurbishment works. He stated that the criteria and terms of loans are set down by the Housing Finance Agency and that rent and savings records are part of the criteria.

Concerns surrounding the inability of individuals other than first time buyers being able to access this loan facility were raised. Cllr. McClearn advised that a proposal could be made to the Department.

Other concerns regarding the repayment terms of the loan and the amount of the €10m approved in 2018 that has been allocated to date.

Mr. Owens confirmed that the current rate is 3.3% with the cost to the borrower being 3.5% and that €6m of €10 m approved in 2018 has been expended to the end of 2019.

ITEM NO. 4 - TO CONSIDER CHANGE OF NAME OF POLLING STATIONS INCLUDED IN THE POLLING SCHEME FOR COUNTY GALWAY ADOPTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1992 AND ELECTORAL (POLLING SCHEMES) REGULATIONS TO THE LOCALLY KNOWN NAMES.

3565

- Kippaundagh National School to read Clonberne National School
- Ballinasloe Boys National School to read Scoil an Chroi Naofa, Ballinasloe

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. Aisling Dolan it was **AGREED** to change of name of Polling Stations included in the Polling Scheme for County Galway adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1992 and Electoral (Polling Schemes) Regulations to the locally known names.

- Kippaundagh National School to read Clonberne National School
- Ballinasloe Boys National School to read Scoil an Chroi Naofa, Ballinasloe

Matters Arising

Councillors raised a number of queries regarding the Register of Electors such as presiding officers stating at the General Election 2020, held on the 8th February, 2020, that there are still a number of deceased electors on the Register of Electors despite being previously marked on the Live Register that they are deceased, the boundary changes for both the Local Elections held in May 2019 and the General Election held in February 2020 resulted in Electors voting in different polling stations; whether electors receive written notification when they are removed from the Register and who

provides this information to Galway County Council; the requirement to modernise the Register of Electors system.

Mr. Farrell stated that the Marked Registers are returned directly to the County Registrar's Marian Chambers Higgins, County Registrar for Galway East and Galway West Constituency and to Mary Raftery, County Registrar, Galway Roscommon Constituency but that a copy of these would be sought. He advised that there is an ongoing review of the current system of the Register of Electors nationally.

In relation to the issue of electors voting in different polling stations, he confirmed that this arises from the Boundary Changes which were administered by the Boundary Commission Report. He said that all people affected by these boundary changes, received notification in writing of the changes of polling station prior to both the General Election 2020 and the Local Elections. Mr. Farrell advised Members that Compilers are employed on an annual basis to keep the Register of Electors up to date, and electors are removed on foot of information received from the Compilers, and a further letter is issued to electors prior to their removal advising them that Galway County Council propose to remove them from the Register, unless a response to the contrary is received within 10 working days.

Cllr. Geraghty thanked the staff of Galway County Council who had worked hard to get people onto the Register of Electors for County Galway for the recent General Election.

**ITEM NO. 5 – TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE,
GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEMES 2020
PROPOSED LIST OF APPROVALS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
PERFORMANCE OF ITS FUNCTIONS UNDER SECTION 67 OF THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED**

3566

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McHugh Farag **SECONDED** by Cllr. Canning it was **AGREED** to approve Galway County Council Community Support Schemes 2020 proposed list of approvals, in accordance with the performance of its functions under Section 67 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended.

Matters Arising

Members complimented Alan Farrell, Kieran Coyne, Mary McGann and the team in Economic, Rural & Community Development & Corporate Services for their hard work and the benefits derived from their informative information evenings throughout the county. The large number of Community Support Schemes Grants reflects the activity going on in the County and the funding whether small or big is evidence of the work the groups are doing.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn welcomed the funding received in her area, however, she expressed disappointment that an application she had submitted for the revival of an old festival had been unsuccessful.

Comh. Ó Curraoin asked if the Galway 2020 opening ceremony previously cancelled due to adverse weather conditions would be rescheduled.

In response to Comh. Ó Curraóin the Cathoirleach stated that Galway 2020 is a separate body independent to Galway County Council, however, there were six great Galway 2020 events in the county.

Cllr. Maher praised the Galway 2020 event that took place in the Galmont Hotel and congratulated Cllr. McClearn on his speech at the event.

Cllr. Mannion remarked on the spectacular opening ceremony that was held in Clifden for Galway 2020.

Mr. Farrell thanked the Members for their comments and acknowledged the work of the team and the participation from the PPN. The number of successful projects granted funding has increased from 234 to 270 in the last year. He confirmed that unsuccessful groups will be notified and advise provided on the application process and alternative funding streams

Cllr. Byrne referred to the 2019 Budget Meeting, regarding the approved funding of €5,000 to Galway Community Games. Mr. Mullarkey stated that a Resolution was

discussed but was not proposed or seconded. Mr. Kelly confirmed that the Minutes of this meeting will be reviewed. Mr. Kelly clarified that there are often a series of proposed changes to the Budget at the Budget Meeting, but unless these are formally decided by Council they are not included in the budget.

ITEM NO. 6 - TO CONSIDER COUNTY GALWAY JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2019 **3567**

Cllr. Cuddy, Chair of the County Galway Joint Policing Committee outlined to Members the content of the Annual Report 2019. This report details the work of the Committee in delivering on the objectives of the Strategic Plan 2015-2021 and is an important means of communicating the role and work of the Committee. High priority objectives of the Committee include illegal dumping and littering, education and awareness – schools programme, crime prevention/personal safety and communication strategy. Cllr. Cuddy complimented Ms. Deirdre Caulfield, Road Safety Officer, Galway County Council on her presentation to on Road Safety Awareness to students in Scoil an Chroi Naofa, Ballinasloe.

Members made the following comments;

- The need to install CCTV in the Gort Bhríde Housing estate and in Corry's carpark, Loughrea.
- The increased use of drugs in public houses throughout the country and the importance of educating our youth on the implications of use.
- A presentation to be given at the next JPC meeting on the Icelandic Model which deals with the growing problems of adolescent substance abuse.
- The importance of engaging with primary schools and Garda Liaison Officers in educating primary school children on the dangers of drug abuse.
- Make it mandatory to wear hi-vis jackets and have them available in public areas such as pubs, shops and public transport.
- The importance of getting the youth involved in activities in our towns and villages.
- The increased supply of a high-quality brand of cocaine targeting Galway.

- The lack of human resources on the Galway Drugs Unit and the requirement for greater legal enforcement by the Courts and new sentencing guidelines.
- Members commented on the presentation made by Mr. Joe Treacy, Clinical Specialist in Addiction, HSE Mental Health, Galway at the last JPC Meeting on the lack of a residential inhouse drug treatment center in Galway. Members requested that a representative from the HSE be invited to the next meeting to address this issue.

In response, Cllr. Cuddy said that he will take on board all Members comments. He said that the Regional Drugs Unit are doing what they can, however, it is important for the general public to provide whatever information they have to them. He stressed the importance of substance abuse education to be provided in schools and to abolish suspended sentences.

Cllr. Maher said that all concerns are raised at JPC meetings and Superintendent Curley has confirmed that they have sufficient human resources on the Regional Drugs Unit. Cllr. Maher **PROPOSED** the following Motion; *"Calling on Galway Co. Co to ask Emmett Major to present the Planet Youth presentation at the next Plenary Meeting"*. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington. ***This Notice of Motion is referred to the CPG.***

Mr. Farrell acknowledged the work of the JPC Committee, the sub committees, the Gardai and the HSE. He said that there are GDPR issues to be considered regarding CCTV. He advised that a review of the Local Economic and Community Plan is underway to see if this can be used as mechanism for information sharing.

ITEM NO. 7 - APPOINTMENT OF REPLACEMENT NOMINEES TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

3568

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cronnelly it was **AGREED** to appoint Mr. Steve Dolan CEO on the Local Development Committee, to replace Ms. Delia Colohan who has resigned due to her retirement.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy it was **AGREED** to appoint Mr. Kenny Derry as the new representative of Galway Chamber.

ITEM NO. 8 - 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) **3569**

- AILG Annual Conference 2020, Longford Arms Hotel, Longford. 4th & 5th March 2020
- AILG Module 2 Development Plan – The Development Plan Making Process – A briefing for Elected Members, Hotel Kilmore, Dublin Road, Cavan. (Retrospective Approval)

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Comh. Ó Curraoin it was **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of the following members at the AILG Annual Conference 2020, in the assigned location of the Longford Arms Hotel, Longford. 4th & 5th March 2020:

Cllrs. Mc Clearn, Heterich Quinn, Donohue and Comh. Ó Curraóin

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne it was **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of the following members at the AILG Module 2 Development Plan – The Development Plan Making Process – A briefing for Elected Members, in the assigned location of Hotel Kilmore, Dublin Road, Cavan. (Retrospective Approval) on the 13th February 2020:

Cllrs. King and Sheridan

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne it was **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of the following members at the AILG Module 2 Development Plan – The Development Plan Making Process – A briefing for Elected Members, in the alternative location of Dooley's Hotel, The Quay, Waterford (Retrospective Approval) on the 15^h February 2020:

Cllrs. Donohue, Hynes, Hoade and Maher

ITEM NO. 9 - TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, OTHER EVENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED) **3570**

- Major Tourism Conference - Dundalk Chamber of Conference
The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth, 22nd April 2020.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Comh. Ó Curraoin it was **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of the following members at the Major Tourism Conference - Dundalk Chamber of Conference -The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth, 22nd April 2020; Cllrs. Herterich Quinn, McClearn and Kinane.

ITEM NO. 10 - TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – FEBRUARY 2020 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED) **3571**

Lands for Social and Affordable Housing:

Members welcomed and commended the Housing Department for their forward thinking with regard to the acquisition of lands for social and affordable housing in Droim na Gaoithe, Baile Chláir and the importance of supporting integrated housing. However, a number of Members raised concerns including;

- The cost and purpose of the lands.
- If an Affordable Housing Scheme will be developed on this site despite the absence of a national affordable housing scheme currently.
- The urgent necessity for a playground and an extension of the cemetery in the area.
- The lack of prior consultation with Members regarding the purchase of these lands.
- The guidelines on the specific details of the development.
- The need for communication with Members through the Housing SPC so that both the Executive and Members can work collectively.
- The importance of ensuring that the design team put forward a value for money plan.

- The need to build the proper mix of dwellings i.e. build both houses and apartments.

Mr. Owens confirmed that 80% of the Council's land bank has been committed and will only meet the needs of the Local Authority up to next year. The lands at Droim na Gaoithe, Baile Chláir were purchased on the open market at a cost of €2.925 million with the purchasing contract completed last Wednesday and Members are being advised of this at the meeting today. He said that there are 1500 properties required in the Athenry/Oranmore Municipal District area.

These lands were acquired for both Social and Affordable housing developments, however, he acknowledged that the Local Authority is awaiting on an Affordable Housing Scheme model from the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government. He stressed the importance of having lands available to put this scheme in place when introduced. Mr. Owens stated that the loan approved last year funded the purchase of these and these funds are then recouped from the Department. He said this site became available on the open market last year, Galway County Council engaged the services of valuers, the Housing Unit carried out an appraisal and consulted with the Department for the technical views and opinion on the site. He stated that a design team will be appointed and it is anticipated that social houses will be delivered on this site in 2022.

Mr. Kelly responded to comments from Members regarding the purchase of lands stating that as a local authority it has been made very clear both locally and nationally that housing is a priority. He advised Members that the purchasing of land is an Executive Function and the approval of the borrowing of money is a Reserved Function. He confirmed that although there are elements of the Affordable Housing Scheme that need to be worked out, there is a need for the Local Authority to be proactive and have necessary lands available.

Schedule of Proposed Works

Cllr. Kinane referred to the Schedule of Proposed Works and outlined an issue, where roads that were repaired last October are now washing away and that potholes had to

be filled within 14 weeks of the repairs taken place. She asked about the composition of materials used to repair the roads.

Cllr. McKinstry asked if the members could receive the schedule of proposed works for the Municipal District's in advance of the meeting, he suggested at least 8 weeks in advance in order to examine the schedule in great detail.

ITEM NO. 11 - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE 3572

Cllr. Curley referred to the correspondence from Donegal County Council dated 14th February 2020 regarding their Notice of Motion which read as follows: *"That this Council write to the Irish Water Regulator requesting a review and reduction of costs involved for new water connections"*.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Curley, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Herterich Quinn, the Members **AGREED** *"that Galway County Council furnish all Councillors with a breakdown of the costs involved in water connections so that Councillors can show constituents why their water connections are so exorbitantly expensive"*.

A reply has issued.

ITEM NO. 12 - CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS 3573

In relation to the Roads Programme, Members raised queries on the following;

- Lack of outdoor staff available to carry out routine roads maintenance works. A recommendation was made to recruit outdoor staff on a temporary basis to carry out such works.
- Query on the composition of Roads Material used for road maintenance projects.
- Concerns surrounding the short period of time for receiving the Roads Programme.
- The requirement to prioritise roads falling into disrepair.
- Monies allocated to Notice of Motion should be carried out in the year the monies are allocated.

In response, Mr. Cullen stated that all outdoor staff vacancies have been filled and staff numbers are decided by what is allocated in the budget. With regard to the query on the composition of materials used in road maintenance, Mr. Cullen said that due to the current weather conditions, it was inevitable that there would be a deterioration and advised that the Department of Transport regularly review the roads materials used and Local Authorities follow the standards as set out by the Department. He informed Members that the Roads Programme was furnished to Galway County Council two weeks prior to the meeting.

Mr. Cullen advised that the Roads Programme is only received in the second last week in January and it is only after this, that the Roads Works Programme can be prepared.

Cllr. Cuddy referred to the matter of lack of staff resources, he highlighted issues that are occurring due to the lack of staff that roads can deteriorate overnight, and that funds need to be readily available to repair these roads. He referred to N.O.M. money that was allocated in 2018 and that this allocation has still not been acted upon.

Cllr. Cronnelly referred to the serious flooding that was experienced today 24th February and that people experienced three hours of a delay in travelling into work that morning.

Cllr. Charity referred to the Corrandulla area, and that he has serious concerns that the road network in this area will not be able to take this flooding for much longer. He referred to his N.O.M. that he has submitted regarding Animal Welfare and he referred to the incident that occurred in this area regarding horses been trapped in the flooding. He highlighted this is an ongoing issue and it needs to be resolved.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Charity, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne, the Members **AGREED** *"that the Law Agents Office examine and prepare a report for the Plenary Council on the legality or otherwise of the following measures pursuant to the Control of Horses Act 1996 or such other legislative provisions as may be appropriate. (i) The implementation of a 'horse exclusion zone' in such part or parts of the County as may be required where concerns arise over animal welfare. (ii) The implementation of a*

requirement to produce proof of ownership or leasehold interest (validly stamped) of a minimum acreage of land in the County for each horse owned or kept by any person".

Cllr. Byrne referred to the 2020 Roads Programme and said there is €220,000 allocated for drainage/flooding works.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley, the Members **AGREED** *"that Galway County Council employ on short term contracts General Operatives to work on maintenance roads issues like, repairing potholes, opening up water tables, dealing with local flooding issues etc. The funding of the above is included in the approved 2020 Roads Programme Budget".*

A reply has issued.

Cllr. Hoade payed tribute to the Outdoor Staff and said when she joined the Council first, there was twice as many Outdoor Staff employed than today. She asked were there plans to hire more staff and were retired staff being replaced. Regarding the flooding on the N84, she asked for clarification on what contingency plans were in place.

Cllr. Thomas referred to the HAP payments system and outlined how he feels this system is not working and that it currently does not favor the landlord.

Cllr. Geraghty concurred regarding staffing issues and he commented that he feels the Area Engineer needs to adopt a commonsense approach when it comes to dealing with these flooding issues taking account of local knowledge.

Cllr. Welby said he feels that a lot of money may be been spent on needless signage that could be used instead on essential items, and doing basic tasks like draining gullies etc. He said the TII are spending money on maintenance that is not a priority.

Mr. Cullen referred to all the comments made regarding the extreme flooding that is currently being experienced and that obviously the Country has been experiencing a very wet period and excessive rainfall and intense storms. He outlined that they have

done huge work with the OPW and received specific funding under the Drainage Works Programme and this allowed the Council to do maintenance works, which was done by direct labour and contract work. Mr. Cullen referred to the comments made regarding the flooding in Moycullen, he advised that they might have to consider doing a hydrology survey.

Mr. Kelly referred to the comments regarding staffing levels, he advised that staff levels were cut back in 2008. He advised that the budget is not there to increase staff levels, and that the Council needs to look at the issue of increasing LPT & Rates at the Budget Meeting in order to provide the funding required.

Cllr. Broderick requested that a review of Cost Benefit Analysis by the OPW be carried out. On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Broderick, **SECONDED** by Comh. Ó Curraoin, the Members **AGREED** *"that we invite Minister Sean Canney to make a deferred Presentation at the March Plenary Meeting."*

Comh. Ó Curraoin complemented the Turf Cutters on taking a stand and they been successful in their recent court case.

Mr. Kelly referred to the matter of the transferring of Conference & Training Monies at the end of year. He advised that it is not appropriate to transfer budgetary allocations between different purposes. Cllr. Byrne endorsed Mr. Kelly's comments. Cllr. Charity commented that the members are limited in discretionary funds and this option is being taken away from them.

Cllr. McClearn & Cllr. Hoade advised that they attended the recent AILG Meeting, at which this matter was raised and they were informed that if we were audited, that the Council were not using the funding appropriately.

Mr. Kelly clarified to the members that as previously advised once the Budget has been adopted, there can be no provision for transferring monies between budgets. He confirmed that this was a recent practice which had not previously taken place.

Cllr. Geraghty commented that this matter would not be such an issue, if Galway County Council received their fair share of funding.

Cllr. Geraghty addressed the issue of the rates bills that had been issued. In respect of vacant properties, he asked if there is any way of helping some businesses that are struggling and are finding it hard to pay these rate demands. Cllr. Albert Dolan and Cllr. King concurred with Cllr. Geraghty's comments.

Mr. Kelly replied to the comments regarding the rates demands and advised that this was what was determined by Council at the budget meeting and the clear intention was about incentivising properties back into use.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hynes, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Geraghty, the Members **AGREED** "that Cllr. Pat Hynes attend AILG Conference 2020 at Longford Arms Hotel on 4th & 5th March 2020 (Retrospectively)".

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cuddy, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Donohue, the Members **AGREED** "that Cllr. Cuddy attend AILG Conference 2020 at Longford Arms Hotel on 4th & 5th March 2020 (Retrospectively)".

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Welby, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy, the Members **AGREED** "that Cllr. Welby attend the AILG Conference 2020 at Longford Arms Hotel on 4th & 5th March 2020 (Retrospectively)".

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne, the Members **AGREED** "that Cllr. McClearn attend AILG Module 2 in Cavan on 13th February 2020 (Retrospectively)".

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher, the Members **AGREED** "that Cllr. Aisling Dolan attend AILG Module 2 in Cavan on 13th February 2020 (Retrospectively)".

ITEM NO. 13 - VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS

3574

Resolutions of Sympathy

A resolution of sympathies was extended to the following:

Evelyn MacMahon, Moy Road, Kinvara, Co. Galway

Mary Meehan, Kilbannon, Tuam, Co. Galway

Connie Ní Fhatharta, Cladhnach, Carraroe, Co. Galway

Nora Audley, Big House, Letter Mullen, Co. Galway

Aidan & Dolores McNalty, Gurraun North, Oranmore, Co. Galway

Cllr. Michael Connolly & his wife Bridie & Family


Michael Murray, Grallagh, Claddaghduff, Co. Galway

Kevin Mullaney, Caislean, Renvyle, Co. Galway

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted Signed and Approved:

Cathaoirleach:



Date:

25/05/2020