

## **COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**

### **Ceantar Bardasach Chonamara** **Municipal District of Conamara**

#### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Conamara held at the Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae, Galway on Friday the 10th of July 2020 @ 10.00 a.m**

#### **LLATHAIR:**

#### **Baill:**

Cllr. G. King Cathaoirleach, N. Thomas,  
S. Walsh, T. O'Curraoin, T. Welby, E.  
Mannion, D. Ó'Cuailín, P. Mac An Iomaire. A.  
McKinstry

#### **Oifigigh:**

D. Mitchell, S.E Infrastructure-Operations  
P. Breathnach S.E.E Infrastructure-Operations  
K. Coyne S.E.O Community, Enterprise & Econ  
Development.  
N. O'Canola, Area Engineer South Conamara  
Ml. Kerrigan, E.E Infrastructure-Operations  
S. Groarke, Meetings Administrator.

#### **Apologies:**

A. Farrell A/DOS Econ, Rural & Comm Dev &  
Corp Services.

#### **1. Minutes of the MD of Conamara Meeting held on the 15-5-2020. CMD 20019**

The adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 15-5-2020 was proposed by Cllr. S. Walsh and seconded by Cllr. N. Thomas.

#### **2. Matters arising from the Minutes CMD 20020**

Cllr. N. Thomas requested an update on Drum Pier, Lettermullen and Comh. D. Ó'Cuailín requested an update on Ceantar na nOileáin. D. Mitchell advised that the Consultants

O'Connor, Sutton, Cronin (OCSC) are arranging for the testing of samples from the bridges at Ceantar na nOileáin and the results will be made available. The works proposed for Drum Pier involve an extension to the existing pier and the construction of a new slipway. The Consultants are currently working on the NIS (Natura Impact Statement) and an application for a Foreshore Licence has to be arranged as part of the planning process. Cllr. S. Walsh advised of the need for a slipway at Cill Bhríocháin, Rosmuc

### **3. Piers & Harbours- Conamara**

**CMD 20021**

M. Kerrigan advised that the Council is in the process of organizing the works and the annual maintenance program for piers and harbours-works commenced at Inishmore 2 weeks ago. Works are proposed to be undertaken at Bellacarra, Cuilín, Baile na hAbhann and Droim piers in Conamara.

The Councillors raised the following issues:

- The Council was requested to implement the taking in charge process to deal with the ongoing blockage of the right-of-way at Furnish Pier- whereby rubble was deposited at the carpark area over a year ago. The public had access to the parking area for years and are now forced to back out their cars- the Council was requested to confirm the ownership and access rights to this pier and the rights of the public to park there.
- The closure of the public toilets at Inishmore & Inishere harbours was raised.
- Query as to whether Council officials have consulted the Department of the Marine in regard to the proposed expansion of Rossaveal Harbour -reference was made to the 2017 Report, the DKM Cost-benefit analysis and the County Development Plan. The development of Rossaveal Harbour should be a priority as it is vital to Conamara.
- Concern was expressed at the progress on the development on the third & final phase of the Cé an Caladh Mór pier at Inis Meáin- which is essential for the ferries to access. Toilet facilities are also required.
- An update on the provision of an extension to the pier at Inis Oirr and associated works including the provision of a breakwater was requested- the Part 8 was passed by the Council a few years ago.
- Recommendation that the Council implement a priority list of works in regard to Piers & Harbours -similar to the 3 Year multi-annual rolling program for Roads.
- Reference was made to the right of way over land which seaweed harvesters once has access to the coast – some of these ways are gated now and the land sold -can anything be done about this.

M. Kerrigan advised that the toilets at Inishmore harbour are open and the one at Inis Oirr will be opened in the near future. He stated that he has no information in regard to the DKM Report on Rossaveal Harbour. In regard to Inishere Harbour-he explained that discussions are ongoing with the Department of the Marine in regard to the project reappraisal, contract & tender documents. The project involves the construction of a breakwater and pier extension, dredging works and provision of additional berthage with an estimated cost of €16m. He advised that in regard to Caladh Mór Harbour on Inishmeáin- a

feasibility study and a consultation process was undertaken with Ferry & Cargo operators which identified issues with the approach to the harbour. To address these-the Council engaged the National Maritime College based at Ringaskiddy, Co Cork to model the facility which will provide for the business case for Phase 3 and this study is ongoing. This document will then be submitted to Roinn na Gaeltachta for approval. He stated that consideration on a priority list of works on piers & harbours could involve items such as levels of usage and traffic volumes.

#### **4. The R-336 Bearná-Ros a Mhíl Road**

**CMD 20022**

A discussion took place on the need to reactivate the planning process for the R-336 as a new road is badly needed with the current road is not fit for purpose as it can be dangerous to travel especially with the increase of cyclists and the difficulty of overtaking-it is the third busiest road in the county. The following points were made:

- Comment on the desirability of reactivating the planning process to select a new route in regard to the R-336 that would also provide for a connection to the Galway Ring Road at a later stage.
- A long- term design may be required to provide for situations such as the future rise in sea levels and the fact that there is no guarantee as regards the Bord Pleanála decision on the Galway Ring Road. Query as to whether there is a commitment that the R-336 would be progressed after the decision on the Ring Road and what is the situation if it is not approved. Progress on the Ring Road could also take years even if there is a favourable outcome.
- The designations undertaken by NPWS in Conamara were a disaster as there was no scientific basis for some of the SACs- Coillte & state- owned lands were never part of the designation process- which was applied to private lands. Coillte can progress the development of wind farms with access roads in Conamara and it appears that Scotland can construct new roads through the Highlands- the Council failed to look at the bigger picture at the time of the designations. Comment was made that some of these restrictions should be removed.
- Consideration should be given to an alternative route such as the back road from the Golf Club to beyond Spiddal. Consultations should be held with communities as regards a favourable route that would also provide for a cycle lane and would serve the needs of North & South Conamara.
- Comment was made that after 11 years of consultation and map studies the only progress made was the vote for the Brown Route which was unrealistic as regards planning approval due to the designated lands and the distance from the centres of population- false hope was given to the people at the time.

D. Mitchell referred to the meetings held in February and April 2019 where the Director and Senior Engineer in the Infrastructure & Operations Department outlined the reasons for terminating the planning process for the R-336 and for removing the planning restrictions imposed on the various routes. He explained that reactivating the planning process for the R-336 is premature and could prejudice and compromise the outcome of the decision on the

Galway Ring Road. He stated that the Department of Transport have advised that it cannot at present consider the reactivation of the planning process for the R336 until the completion of the Oral Hearing on the N6 GCRR and the final decision of An Bord Pleanála & the result of the appeals process-as it would compromise this scheme.

## **5. NOM-Cllr. Alastair McKinstry-List of Funding Calls.**

**CMD**

**20023**

The following NOM was submitted by Cllr. Alastair McKinstry for the June 2020 Plenary Council meeting.

“That for far better management and oversight I call on the Council to prepare a “live” list of upcoming funding calls, with deadlines, whether GCC is applying, staff member responsible and status and that the Municipal Council use this to review status at MD meetings.”

The following response was issued by M. Owens, County Secretary.

“There are a plethora of funding calls for which the Council is eligible to apply in its own right or in partnership with other stakeholders. These calls for proposals are across the various Directorates and applications are generally managed within each of the Directorates with one Directorate taking a lead coordination role where staff across the organization must feed in. It has become common practice for a number of competitive calls, which involve the Council applying or inviting interested stakeholders to be party to an application, that details are circulated through a range of means including notifying the elected members, notifying registered community groups and organizations through the PPN, publication on online digital platforms and through local media as appropriate. Examples of schemes which are circulated on this basis include Town & Village Renewal, Clár, Outdoor Recreation & Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) and the Community Enhancement Programme. In order to ensure that the elected members are aware of funding calls, the Council will review the current systems across the various Directorates and consider the available options in terms of advising the members of funding calls, deadlines and the relevant staff member responsible. For the moment it is likely that the means of communication will be by e-mail or through the Extranet. Where a schedule of dates for funding schemes becomes known, this will be circulated to the elected members, however, given the volume, complexity, resources available and time pressures associated with the administration and submission of funding applications, it may not be possible or appropriate to review the status of individual funding schemes at Municipal District meetings. “

K. Coyne advised that this motion was discussed at the Executive Team Meeting on the 3-7-2020 and the Chief Executive asked the Directors to review the process in regard to providing this to the elected members. He explained that there are a number of caveats as regards the compilation of a “real time” funding call list including timeframe/deadline issues, delays incurred by the need to cross reference, changes to the structure of schemes, co-ordination and synchronization of information as regards 5 different MD meetings. Cllr. Mc Kinstry explained the format of this information could be provided on a spreadsheet and acknowledged that there can be difficulties associated with deadlines -he cited as an example a funding application for the proposed Salthill-Barna Greenway and the name of the Council official who can be contacted about this. He advised of the need for the Council

to be aware of streams of funding it can apply for and referred to the like of Donegal County Council which can avail of cross border funding initiatives. K. Coyne explained that there a dedicated staff member in Community & Enterprise assessing EU funding streams and there is a regeneration team in place.

The elected members acknowledged the good work carried out by the Community & Enterprise section and referred to the comparatively less staff resources available in certain areas when compared to some other Local Authorities. A discussion took place as regards whether certain projects might not go ahead and the cancellation of festivals due to Covid-19 and the budget adjustments which will be a consequence. K. Coyne explained the application & approval process in regard to funding initiatives administered by Community & Enterprise.

## **6. Cathaoirleach's Business**

**CMD 20024**

Cllr. G. King referred to 2 recent retirements from an outdoor staff crew in the North Conamara area which leaves a compliment of 4 to cover an area from Leenane-Ballyconneely which is insufficient to cover emergency situations such as flooding & fallen trees when there are on leave- he enquired if the Council would recruit replacements for them. D. Mitchell confirmed that the existing vacancies will be replaced.

## **7. AOB**

**CMD 20025**

The following matters were raised under AOB:

- Request for an update on the Galway City-Oughterard Greenway for the next meeting.
- Update on the proposed bridges at Oughterard for the next meeting.
- More signage required in regard to illegal dumping.
- The problem associated with Ash Dieback Disease which is caused by a fungus was discussed. 95% of ash trees could be lost as there is no effective treatment for this.
- Request that the proposed speed limit change of 30 km/h for Moycullen be listed on the next speed limit review.
- Planning query-Comh. D. O'Cualáin

D. Mitchell advised that an update on the proposed Galway-Oughterard Greenway would be provided at the next meeting. He advised that speed limits are normally reviewed every 5 years and the next review is scheduled for 2022. Changes to the speed limits on the N- 59 require the approval of TII. He stated that he would try to provide an update on the bridges proposed for Oughterard. He advised Comh. O'Cualáin that he would discuss his planning query after the meeting.

## **8. Date & Venue for next meeting**

**MD 20026**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Municipal District of Conamara will be held on Friday 11-9-2020 at 10.00 a.m in the Council Chamber. The current duration is 2 hours.

***CROCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN***