

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 15th of May 2020 @ 10.00 a.m

ILATHAIR:

Baill:

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

Oifigigh:

G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance.
D. Mitchell, S.E Infrastructure-Operations
P. Breathnach S.E.E Infrastructure-Operations
N. O'Canola, Area Engineer South Conamara
T. J Redmond, Area Engineer North Conamara
S. Groarke, Meetings Administrator.

Apologies:

1. Minutes of the MD of Conamara Meeting held on the 21-2-2020. CMD 20009

The adoption of the Minutes of the Meetings held on the 21-2-2020 was proposed by Cllr. S. Walsh and seconded by Cllr. E. Mannion.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes CMD 20010

Cllr. N. Thomas requested an update on Drum Pier and Comh. D. Ó'Cualáin requested an update on Ceantar na nOileáin. D. Mitchell advised that he will arrange to provide these for the next meeting.

3. Declaration of Road as a Public Road- Section 11 Roads Act 1993

CMD 20011

On the proposal of Cllr. N.Thomas, seconded by Cllr. T. Welby the road at L-52049 in the Townland of na hAille (An Fhairche) was declared to be a public road.

4. Annual Report for M.D of Conamara 2019.

CMD 20012

On the proposal of Cllr. E. Mannion, seconded by Cllr. S. Walsh the Annual Report for the Municipal District of Conamara 2019 was approved. This will be included in the 2019 Annual Report for Galway County Council.

5. Update on the Roads Program- 2020

CMD

20013

D. Mitchell advised that the works relating to the Roads Program for 2020 are ongoing subject to the COVID-19 restrictions and are currently on target and the Council expects to finish the program this year. He explained that utilizing the tender process in a timely manner is essential to securing the availability of contractors to undertake the works. In response to the query from the Councillors as to whether the Department would extend the time limits for the drawdown of funding- he advised that he has no indication of this at present.

6. Knock Inverin Burial Ground

CMD 20014

A report was issued by M. Melody, S.E Environment on Knock Inverin Burial Ground which is near full capacity prior to the meeting. He referred to the meeting at the local Church on the 6-3-2020 attended by the burial ground committee members, local Councillors and Council officials to discuss options for a new burial ground site. He advised that a number of sites have been examined including a site adjacent to the parochial house, a site across from the church adjacent to the R336 and a site near the Póitín Stil. The sites at these locations were deemed unsuitable for road safety and ground conditions reasons. He advised that the meeting concluded that the most suitable location for a new burial ground site was adjacent to the existing burial ground-as ground conditions appear suitable, development costs will be relatively less than other sites and there is established precedence in the area for planning permission purposes. He stated that the committee agreed to contact the landowner regarding the sale of this site located to the south of the existing burial ground and the Council is awaiting the outcome of this. The committee enquired if it would be possible to use the main path in the old burial ground -which could cater for approx. 10 plots and they were confident that there were no burials in this area. He stated that this appears to be a pragmatic short- term solution and advised the attendees to discuss this with the local area office. He noted that the committee have been trying to contact people no longer in the area who had previously purchased plots that remain unused in order to free up capacity. He explained that the nearest 2 burial grounds to this parish are Ballinahown and Killough-both of which have over 200 plots available. A discussion took place in regard to this report and the meeting was advised that the landowner is reluctant to sell this site.

7. Illegal Dumping in Conamara.

CMD 20015

The meeting was advised that the problem of illegal dumping in Conamara is very bad- examples cited were: in one bogland area 72 bags of waste had to be removed by the Council- hygiene wipes and gloves along with other waste were dumped in a bogland area near Inverin- bottles and boxes dumped at the end of a local road in the Moycullen area- Bottle Banks like the one at the Poitín Stíl are been used as dumping grounds for boxes and other rubbish. The members condemned the indiscriminate dumping in one of the most beautiful areas in the world and stated that the perpetrators should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves. A report on the illegal dumping of waste issued by Ann Dolan, Environmental Scientist in the Environment section was circulated prior to the meeting. She stated that Local Authorities were advised by the Department that there is an ongoing issue with the Data Commissioner concerning the legal right to use CCTV for illegal dumping enforcement. (It is viewed as the processing of personal data) She also advised that the Council was seeking funding from the Department for the installation of audio devices at Bring Banks to discourage people from illegal dumping. The view was expressed that that Data Commissioner would need to provide a timely decision on this as it appears incredible that CCTV cannot be used to deter illegal activity and whether the Council's Law Agent can express an opinion on the matter. Opinion was expressed that dash camera footage on cars can be used in road traffic situations.

The members discussed the need for measures such as an on-the spot fine system, the replacement of plastic with paper and glass, the need for a recycling centre at Costello, a campaign to promote re-cycling and they praised the work of the Tidy Towns and other Community committees for the environmental works undertaken. Information concerning the use of the audio device was requested. The meeting was advised that a lot of the dumping occurs on a Saturday night and the perpetrators endeavor not to leave traces of their identity in the bags -so the Community Wardens cannot identify them. G. Mullarkey advised that there is an onus on each person to deal with their waste in a lawful manner and the Council was providing funding for additional public awareness campaign adverts and had commenced the reopening of the Recycling Centres. He stated that the use of CCTV is a national issue and there is an inconsistency concerning the Data Commissioner's views when film footage from drones is allowed.

8. Cathaoirleach's Business

CMD 20016

Comh. T. O'Curraoin advised that the proposed presentation by Ronan Mac An Iomaire concerning the work of Udarás na Gaeltachta as well as the deputation from Cóiste Arainn had to be cancelled due to the current situation.

9. AOB

CMD 20017

A discussion took place in regard to providing space for social distancing in accordance with the COVID-19 Guidelines on the footpaths/streets including the feasibility of

pedestrianization of streets in order to assist businesses such as cafes, restaurants and pubs to operate when they are permitted to reopen. It was recommended that the Council allocate space for tables and chairs on the outdoor areas of towns and villages and that businesses should come forward if they have proposals/plans in regard to this. Towns like Clifden are dependent on tourism which has a relatively short season and the Council needs to consider what assistance it can provide. The meeting was advised that hotels in Conamara are receiving bookings from people who want to have a break-areas with wide open spaces will appeal to a lot of people who will holiday at home this year. The public should also be encouraged to shop local and support local businesses to keep them operating. It was stated that as retail space capacity has significantly reduced due to the 2m restriction -that business rates will have to be reduced accordingly. The members requested clarification as regards Reval-2021 and made reference to the situation in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown. The view was expressed that some businesses may not be able to re-open due to limited capacity and that the revaluation process may have to be reviewed in light of Covid-19.

G. Mullarkey advised that the Council is waiting on further clarification in regard to the payment of rates -but in his view the waiver may have to be extended beyond June. He referred to the fact that a re-start scheme for businesses is being proposed and that as far as he is aware Reval-2021 is still going ahead based on 2019 valuations. The revaluation of rateable valuations has been deferred until 2021 in the case Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown. He outlined to the members that businesses are entitled to claim refunds of rates paid on the basis of vacancy.

8. Date & Venue for next meeting

MD 20018

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Municipal District of Conamara will be held on Friday 10-7-2020 at 10.00 a.m in the Council Chamber.

CROCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN