

# Municipal District of Tuam – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021

---

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TUAM HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY ON 1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2021 AT 2.30p.m.

<b>CATHAOIRLEACH:</b>	Cllr. Keaveney
<b>I LÁTHAIR FREISIN</b>	Cllr. Sheridan, Cllr. Reddington, Cllr. Hoade, Cllr. McHugh Farag
<b>AS LÁTHAIR</b>	Cllr. D. Killilea & Cllr. P. Roche
<b>BAILL OIFIGIGH:</b>	Mr. Derek Pender D.O.S. - Infrastructure & Operations, Mr. Paul Connolly - Executive Engineer, Ms. Eibhlin Curran - Meetings Administrator, Liam Hanrahan, D.O.S. - Housing & Economic, Rural & Community Development, Ellen Mongan - Housing Liaison Officer, Ms. Sinéad Naughton, Staff Officer.

**MDT210048**

### **1. – Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of Municipal District of Tuam held 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021.**

On the **proposal** of Cllr Mchugh Farag and **seconded** by Cllr. Reddington the minutes of the meeting of the Tuam Municipal District held on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were **agreed**.

#### **Matters Arising:**

None

**MDT210049**

### **2. – Housing – Update on operations and services – Director of Services, L. Hanrahan**

Cllr. Keaveney, Leas-Cathaoirleach, welcomed Mr. L. Hanrahan, DOS Housing and Ms. E. Mongan, HLO and thanked them for their representation on behalf of the Housing Department to address specific concerns regarding housing operations and staff resources that had been raised by the Elected members in the meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

Cllr. Keaveney referred to the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme where applicants were turning to Galway County Council for mortgages, who had previously been refused funding from other financial institutions. He expressed concern regarding difficulties being encountered by applicants where there was no movement on their applications made to Galway County Council and with the market moving so quickly, he felt this a great disservice to the citizens.

Mr. Hanrahan, DOS, referred to his meeting with Cllr. Killilea following on from the MD Meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 regarding the motion put forward and added that he would now give a brief overview on all aspects of Housing.

Mr. Hanrahan stated that there were currently 496 live housing applications in Tuam Town, 135 in Headford and approximately 67 in Dunmore and surrounds. In response to the provision of housing he referenced a Capital Project at the Weir Road for 31 units with an expected 18-month timeframe.

## Municipal District of Tuam – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021

---

Mr. Hanrahan referred to the construction of 49 new dwellings at Fana Bhuí, with phase one of 15 to 20 units expected to be available in early 2022 and advised that the former Fire Station site is being considered with scope for development on this site of 8-10 housing units and this is expected to go for part 8 planning in 2022.

He advised that Galway County Council have acquired a site of 8 acres on Sun Street, Birmingham Road approximately a half a kilometre from the town centre. He indicated that as well as the benefit of purchasing the site and the potential to build, a significant portion of land, that was previously landlocked and will become accessible to private sector developers.

Mr. Hanrahan acknowledged the delay in 2020 and early 2021 in re-allocating properties, advising that due to Covid restrictions maintenance teams were only allowed to do emergency works, contractors were not allowed on site and there were 3-6 month delays in supply of doors and windows. He provided an update on Voids informing the Elected Members that 5 were completed of which 2 have been occupied, 1 under allocation and 2 vacant expected to be allocated in coming weeks. There are a further 6 properties with works ongoing and due to be completed this year. There are also 3 long term voids which are due for completion in 2022.

He advised the members that the Housing Liaison Officer, Ms. E Mongan, is back out in the community since summertime and added that the refusal rate is quite high with perhaps some applicants in the hope of getting a house in Fana Buí.

In response to the Elected Members query regarding HLO's in comparison to other counties Mr. Hanrahan advised that GCC have 4 Housing Liaison Officers, 2 Traveller Liaison Officers, 1 Tenancy Enforcement Officer and 2 admin Staff by comparison Galway City Council have 3 equivalent Housing Liaison Officers with similar housing numbers. Mayo have none but tenancies are managed differently through their area offices.

Responding to queries regarding Housing Grants, Mr. Hanrahan informed the members that 15 no. grants were signed off today Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> Nov and progress is ongoing with full complement of staff in this area. He advised that they are awaiting a new member of staff to be assigned in the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan area, that 15 applications were assessed under RIHL, 12 of which were in the system with 3 awaiting Credit Committee decision and would be written to in the next few days. There are also 15 applications waiting to be assessed.

Cllr Reddington stressed the importance of RIHL applicants being first provided with the RIHL calculator to check their eligibility prior to completion of the full application and getting all the required data.

Mr Hanrahan provided an update to elected members as requested in relation to 11 units acquired in Tuam town centre by the Peter McVerry Trust advising that it is an Approved Housing Body and allocations will be taken like that of any other allocation, adding that there will be a mix of people with a view to the provision of high-quality town centre living.

Cllr. McHugh Farag queried the maintenance loan that was approved previously and asked if Mr. Hanrahan knew what had been spent out of approved €10 million. In response, Mr. Hanrahan advised that approximately one million was spent to date.

### **3. Municipal District of Tuam Director's Business**

Mr. Pender gave an update on the following projects:

#### **Climate Adaption**

- Schemes at both Cottage located outside of Bearnaderg and Gurteen Cross located outside of Dunmore have been completed in the past month by Galway County Council crews.
- Applications for the 2022 Climate Adaption Schemes have been prepared and submitted in the past month.

#### **Hedge cutting**

- Regionals – Works commenced by Contractor in October and on-going a present
- Local Roads - Works commenced by GCC Crews in October and on-going a present

#### **Active Travel**

- Footpath works have been on-going in numerous locations in Tuam Town with works at Glass Avenue having recently commenced. It is envisaged that both the Birmingham Road and Dublin Road will be completed in the coming weeks.
- Design works are proceeding for several AT schemes in Tuam MD and works will commence once has been completed.

#### **National Roads**

- 2 safety schemes completed on National Routes HD 17 Safety Schemes in the townland of Banagher outside of Milltown on the N17 have been carried out in the past month. (Works involved improving sightlines out of L 6511 road and measures to prevent hazardous parking adjacent to the NR, Works carried out by GCC Crews)
- Hedge cutting is being carried out by contractor (P&D) on NR's in Tuam MD.
- Pavement Scheme on-going at Ardacong on the N17 (Roadstone to have completed in circa 1 week) – Works by NRPO
- Pavement Scheme on-going at Fortyacres on N83 (Harrington's to have completed in circa 2 weeks) – Works by NRPO
- Capital Pavement Scheme at Castletown on N17 to commence in 2 weeks, was due to start this week but will allow works to be completed at Ardacong first to avoid issues with traffic (McGraths to carry out works)
- Water tables – Contract awarded to Colas and works to commence in coming month on opening water tables on the National Routes within Tuam MD
- N83 @ Tinkers Hill – The Contractor (Ward Bros) have taken charge of the site and have commenced site clearance and fencing works. (NRPO)

#### **Town & Village Scheme**

- Footpath works at Belclare are on-going and are substantially complete.

## Municipal District of Tuam – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021

---

Cllr. Mary Hoade queried verge trimming that on dangerous sections on the N84 South of Headford that had been highlighted at a previous meeting but remains uncompleted and requested if it could be prioritised.

Cllr. Hoade referred to enhancement works scheduled for Headford and asked if local business in Headford would be consulted in relation to the proposed commencement date as they have been greatly affected over the last two years by Covid and would like to see that traffic disruption and delays would be avoided coming into the busiest time of year for retail. Cllr. Reddington agreed that November would be suitable for completion of works but any later would be too close to Christmas.

Mr. Pender advised that he would liaise with John Coyle, SEE in relation to works in Headford and if they were not ready to commence this week or next may have to be postponed until the New Year.

Cllr. Sheridan praised the works at Barnadearg and Gurteen and the work completed at Banagher by Council's own staff. He welcomed the works at 20 Minute Hill where lights were in place for nearly 4 years and was happy to see a brighter future there.

**MDT210051**

#### **4. Municipal District of Tuam Cathaoirleach's Business**

Cllr. Reddington was pleased to report the announcement of funding of €17,000 for the 1<sup>st</sup> Phase of the Ross Abbey Walkway with match funding from the Council, which was a huge achievement for all involved. He referred to Ross Abbey as an underused monastery and envisioned it could be a similar walkway to that of Knockma if it was developed. Cllr. Reddington queried would the funding when allocated go to a Community Group or to the Council. He expressed his interest in the GCC's own outdoor staff in the Headford area to complete these proposed works. Cllr Hoade echoed Cllr. Reddington's comments in relation to Ross Abbey which is regarded as an untapped asset.

Cllr. Keaveney added that this was an executive function and would be under the remit of the County Manager.

Cllr. McHugh Farag queried ESB poles being removed on Bishop Street which has led to difficulties for wheelchair users and buggies as drivers are pulling up on the footpath and obstructing traffic and pedestrians. She also referred to a bollard in Tuam Graveyard and was aware of several people who had caught their cars on it and requested if it may be possible for one of the engineers to meet with her on site and discuss a solution.

Cllr. McHugh Farag and Cllr. Hoade queried the possibility of free parking in the Municipal District over the Christmas period, however Ms. Curran advised that as this proposal had financial implications it must be proposed at the Plenary meeting.

Cllr Hoade questioned the meetings being held in the Council Chamber and what was the situation going forward to which Ms. Curran advised that they were still waiting for further instructions. Cllr. Keaveney felt that the current restrictions would be in place until February or until advised otherwise.

Cllr Hoade also questioned if Elected Representatives are allowed be in the building as some of the key cards do not work. Mr. Pender advised that Councillors were welcome in the building on appointment basis and that they should first touch base with the person required and arrange a meeting. Ms Curran advised that staff in County Hall are operating in zones and are restricted within their own zone and that communication at this time would preferably be through e-mail or over the telephone.

## Municipal District of Tuam – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021

---

Cllr. Sheridan mentioned the promotion of Dunmore Winterville 2021, preparations are underway and asked that where possible local staff were available to assist trade associations on the night with considerations such as bollards, traffic control and safety of pedestrians to be considered.

Cllr. Keaveney acknowledged and thanked the area office staff for their works to date on the old FCA Barracks in Tuam and noticed that development of this area was not provided for under the Tuam Area Regeneration Plan.

**MDT210052**

On the proposal of Cllr. Keaveney, seconded by Cllr. McHugh Farag the following motion was agreed;-

‘That Galway County Council provide for a review of the Tuam Area Master Plan that would allow consideration for the incorporation of the FCA Building on the old road in Tuam. That this Council would fund a strategic viability plan for this area with a view of providing much needed community space.’

Cllr Keaveney concluded the meeting by acknowledging the hard work of Municipal Staff in Tuam, the meetings administrator and the Executive throughout the year. He advised that is it was the last meeting of the 2021 and wished everyone a Happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

*Chríochnaigh an cruinniú ansin @ 3.30pm*

Approved by:



Date:

2/2/22

Cllr. Killilea, Cathaoirleach