

Municipal District of Tuam – 13th November 2023

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TUAM HELD AT TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OFFICES, TUAM, COUNTY GALWAY ON MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 12.30PM.

CATHAOIRLEACH:	Cllr. Killilea
I LÁTHAIR FREISIN	Cllr. Hoade, Cllr. McHugh, Cllr. Roche, Cllr. Sheridan, Cllr. Reddington
AS LÁTHAIR	Cllr. Keaveney
BAILL OIFIGIGH:	Mr. Derek Pender D.O.S. - Infrastructure & Operations, John Coyle - Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. Tom Regan – Executive Engineer, Ms. Katie O'Connor, Head of Finance, Ms. Aine Fenton, Financial Accountant, Finance, Ms. Geraldine Byrne - Meetings Administrator, Ms. Sinéad Naughton – Staff Officer.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to the meeting, welcoming Katie O'Connor, Head of Finance to Tuam MD for the first time and advised the ordinary MD meeting would proceed directly after.

To consider & adopt (with or without amendment) under Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 a Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Tuam as prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive. (Report Attached)

Ms. O'Connor presented the budget for the Tuam Municipal District and she explained that the budget for 2024 was €6,865,425 and increase of €800,331 from 2023. She said that on the 17th October 2023 the Minister advised that Galway County Council had not varied the basic rate of LPT for 2024 therefore the allocation remains at €15,299,282 for 2024. She explained that the second step in the Budget process was the consideration of the draft Municipal District Budgetary Plan and that at the last CPG meeting there was a deficit of €8.5m.

The Members then made the following comments in relation to the budget;

Cllr. Reddington welcomed the increase and requested where the town twinning budget was shown. Cllr. Killilea advised that the twinning budget was €2,000 and the allocation would be added.

The Elected members enquired if there was any funding available to support communities struggling to raise funds for Christmas lighting. Ms. O'Connor advised that there was no funding available.

Cllr. Reddington enquired if it was possible to nominate some funds from their training and conference allocation budgets to help the local communities. Cllr. Hoade advised she also wished to support local communities but that she was a member of the Association of Irish Local Government and there was an issue raised regarding use of these monies as they were not allocated for this purpose. She proposed that NOM funding was allocated as a contribution.

Cllr. Killilea advised it never came up on an auditor's report but that other councils have discretion to give funding to particular groups.

Mr. Pender advised that NOM funding and allocations were specifically for works on road maintenance and a management report had been circulated setting out guidelines relating to same.

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Cllr. Sheridan enquired if there was scope to seek funding under Climate Action with conversion of lights to LED's. Mr. Pender advised that the retrofitting of public lighting is being done regionally and there is a procurement process ongoing to appoint a contractor with Mayo County Council being the lead authority.

Cllr. Roche welcomed the increase but of €5.6 million in the overall budget for Galway County Council but said it did not meet the requirement of €20 million required and wanted to know if there was any prospect of GCC getting this increase. Ms. O'Connor said she hoped for more increases but under 2024 did not see that a further increase was coming. She advised that she has already written a letter accepting the increase and explaining the huge deficit of funding for Galway County Council and promised to continue to lobby the Department regarding same.

Cllr. Hoade enquired as to why the operation of public convenience is still included and requested if there was scope to increase funding for community grants. Ms. O'Connor advised she did not have a budget for community grants. Mr. Pender advised that the public convenience was a line item and afforded discretionary spend under the operation of street cleaning as Coral Leisure Swimming pool located beside the park has facilities that can be used by the public.

Cllr. Sheridan enquired regarding items on income 2023, if rate payers had settled amounts in appeal and how Tuam compares with other areas in the County. Is there a mechanism to increase in net take on entries. Does it go into a general allocation. Ms. O'Connor advised that LA's are not being curtailed where there is an objection on the G factor.

Cllr. McHugh enquired if there was a provision in the budget for looking at the bollards in the town with rusty chains and street lighting with the overall town appearance of the town becoming more run down. Mr. Pender advised that funding for such works is provided under Regional Road General Maintenance works and Local Road Maintenance works.

Cllr. Killilea commented that the budget being recommended for approval is not the final budget and not truly reflective as roads grants are not received until February and didn't have the detail for every line item at MD level but does accept that the CE wishes to empower the MD's and he was happy to propose the budget on this basis but asked that next year there be a more robust discussion regarding the MD finances.

Cllr. Roche enquired to the finance team present if GCC have ever had a discussion regarding the age friendly downsizing scheme in relation to GCC developing age housing appropriate units and the council in turn taking on their properties to be retrofitted. Ms. O'Connor advised that there is an age friendly alliance that do meet in GCC that she was not aware of the ins and outs of it but would enquire with relevant parties.

On the proposal of Cllr. Killilea seconded by Cllr. Reddington the following motion was agreed I propose; -

That €2,000 euro twinning budget be kept as a line item on our 2024 Municipal District Budget.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Killilea, **SECONDED** by Cllr Hoade , the Members **AGREED** to adopt the Budgetary Plan 2024 for the Municipal District of Tuam as prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive.

Chríochnaigh an cruinniú ansin @ 13:10pm

Approved by:



Date: 11/12/2023

Cllr. Killilea, Cathaoirleach.