

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

**Ceantar Bardasach Bhaile Locha Riach
*Municipal District of LOUGHREA***

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held
remotely via teams on 12th July 2021 @ 11 am.**

I LATHAIR:

Cathaoirleach

Cllr. G. Donohue

Baill:

Cllr's. M. Maher, PJ Murphy,
J. Byrne, M. Kinane, I. Canning, J. McClearn,
S. Curley, G Finnerty.

Oifigigh:

Ms. E. Ruane, Director or Services
Mr. D. Mitchell, Senior Engineer.
Mr. C. Wynne, Senior Executive Engineer.
Mr. F. McGillicuddy, Area Engineer.
Mr. B. Sheehy, Assistant Engineer.
Mr A. Cunningham, Staff Officer.
Ms. M. Finn, Administrative Officer.
Ms. P. McHugo, Assistant Staff Officer.

Apologies from Cllr Hynes and Mr Haugh who were not in attendance.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Annual Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea
held on 14th June 2021** **LMD 2131**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting for Loughrea MD held on 14th June 2021 were proposed by Cllr Maher, seconded by Cllr Donohue and agreed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on
14th June 2021** **LMD 2132**

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 14th June 2021 were proposed by Cllr Maher, seconded by Cllr Kinane and agreed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Arising from the Minutes, Mr Wynne confirmed for Cllr McClearn that there was constant engagement with the Stakeholders involved in the Loughrea Town Hall and the Department were aware that further funding would be sought for the project, once ongoing investigative studies from a structural and environmental aspect were complete. Mr Wynne also stated

for Cllr Maher that once the detailed design was received, an application for funding would be submitted to the Department. Cllr's McClearn and Donohue requested a meeting with the Stakeholders and the Design Team. Cllr Curley suggested that the stakeholders be sent a monthly email update on the work done and also requested an inventory of the fixtures in the building in response to some concerns that items have been taken from the town hall over the last week or so. Mr. Wynne stated that updates are already being given to stakeholders frequently and agreed to look to compiling a list of fixtures in the building.

Cllr Kinane thanked Ms Ruane and Ms Finn for their updates regarding Renville Park. The bike infrastructure would be installed in the coming weeks and thanked Michael Owens, DOS for his work in the matter. Cllr Kinane also expressed her disappointment with Galway City Council in the matter of the purchase of land to extend Renville Park and hoped to revisit the issue in 18 months' time. She also thanked Mr McGillicuddy, Mr Mitchell and the Athenry staff on the excellent work on the extension of the footpath at Renville.

Cllr McClearn expressed his concern at the delays by the contractor in starting work on projects in Killimor/Portumna area as the start dates have not been adhered to. Mr Mitchell read out a detailed report from Mr Lally, S.E.E. regarding Kilmeen Junction as follows:

The current update is that the public consultation process was concluded in late 2020 and the feedback from the questionnaire forms and other submissions received were evaluated. A summary of this feedback is as follows:

- A total of 22 submissions were received of which 21 were from members of the public from or near to the Kilmeen Area, the remaining submission was from a Government Dept
- Approximately 50% of the submissions received were from the public living within the Study Area
- The majority of submissions were from property owners as opposed to landowners
- In terms of 1st of preference of scheme options
 - 10 No. for Route A Yellow
 - 6 No. for Route C Blue
 - 0 No. for Route B Green
- In terms of responses whether the junction improvements were required
 - 9 No. indicated Yes
 - 6 No. indicated No
 - 4 No. were unsure or didn't respond to that question
- Nearly 50% of submissions received indicated that improvement to road safety and improvement to traffic conditions were the most important attributes to the project
- Other feedback received
 - Roundabouts will slow the flow of traffic on the main road unnecessarily without any improvement to road safety
 - The consideration of traffic calming as an alternative
 - The consideration of lighting, signage and road markings as an alternative
 - Works are not necessary and to leave the junction in its present form
 - Overlooking of property, affect to front gardens, devaluing of domestic property

- There are many unrecorded road traffic incidents
- There would be potential impacts to environment, flora and fauna with round-about options.
- There is also a view from some that the junction should be left as it is and to consider alternatives such as:
 - Traffic Calming on approach to junction
 - Reduce the Speed Limits
 - Provide lighting, signage, road marking improvements

To allow for the conclusion of the option selection process with an emerging preferred route this office want to focus further on some preliminary design work to establish whether we can further reduce the impact or indeed eliminate if we can the requirement to acquire land from domestic front garden properties. This office had proposed to undertake this design work in-house but unfortunately this has not happened for a number of reasons primarily down to continuity of service with design staff in the office. Arising from this, this office proposed to discuss with TII the option of procuring and engaging external design consultants to allow further progression of this project.

A discussion was held regarding the proposed Garden of Remembrance in Loughrea by Cllr Curley. Cllr Maher said that while he was not against the proposal, he expressed his concerns with an additional site as there were already two remembrance locations in Loughrea and the proposed plaque/flag could be erected in one of them. He alluded to concerns in the past from the people of Loughrea in regard to the use of the Fairgreen and the wish to have it remain an open space. Mr. Mitchell stated that Mr. Haugh had circulated an email to the local councillors in the Loughrea area to reach consensus as to the appropriate location of this garden. Mr. Mitchell agreed to circulate Mr Haugh's email to all members in the Municipal District with details of the proposed location for the garden.

Mr Sheehy clarified for Cllr Maher that delays in progressing the footpath in Kiltulla were due to Covid and finalising the Land Dedication Agreement with the Landowner as he still had livestock in the field.

Flooding Update

LMD 2132

South Galway/Gort Lowlands Flood Relief Scheme

The public consultation period has now closed. Meetings have been held onsite with all those that requested a meeting. The results of the consultations are now being examined and will be incorporated into the Options Report, to be examined under the EIAR.

The Environmental Consultant is commencing a series of additional surveys in the area including: -

- Marine Ecology
- Botanical Surveys
- Bat Surveys
- Bird Surveys
- Landscape and Archaeological Assessments

The majority of these surveys are seasonal and will progress over the following three months.

Dunkellin

The OPW have completed works on the new fish counter downstream of Rinn Bridge. The old counter at Killeelybeg bridge is scheduled to be removed this week.

Landowner compensation talks and payments are continuing.

Portumna Flood Relief Scheme

A letter has been sent to the OPW asking for confirmation on the financing of Tranche 2 CFRAMS projects.

Kinvara Floodgate Scheme

Installation works commencing on the Expandable Floodgates on Monday 12th July in the Quay, Kinvara.

Ballyboy/Mannin Flood Alleviation

Mr Gallagher has sought clarification from Tobins Consultants on the scale of the channel envisaged for the Ballyboy/Mannin Flood Alleviation. The Consultants confirmed the €1m estimate for works was based on the Jennings O'Donovan 2001 estimate of £550,190 for regrading 3.5 km of the Aggard channel. The specific regrading/reshaping requirement was not examined but could not be deemed substantial as only €140,000 was budgeted for excavation over the 3.5 km length. Tobin's reiterated that environmental issues would be the greatest constraint to any proposals for Ballyboy/Mannin.

Development of Carpark, Kinvara

LMD 2133

Cllr Byrne stated that a dedicated carpark is a piece of infrastructure that is badly needed in the village of Kinvara. Mr Mitchell confirmed for Cllr Byrne that a location had been identified in Kinvara as a possible solution to parking needs. He stated that the functionality and cost of the car park would be associated with a Traffic Management Plan and funding for this plan has been received under the Active Travel Measures which is now going out to tender along with a number of other traffic management plans. The car park will be considered as part of this which will take the form of a Transportation Plan as it will incorporate walking and cycling also. 5 plans will be carried out in towns and villages in the county.

Skateboard area in Loughrea Playground

LMD 2134

In relation to the skate park in Loughrea Mr. Mitchell informed the meeting of the following:

- The main ramp has been fenced off more than 12 months due to repairs that are required on the unit
- The budget used for the repair of playground's is in the region of €45,000.00 per annum which covers 15 Council owned playgrounds and as part of this budget we

must undertake a yearly independent inspection of all playgrounds to ensure that there are no safety concerns.

- Also deducted from this budget is the yearly license fee for the use of the Geo Pal system by our Community Wardens who inspect our playgrounds on a fortnightly basis.
- This budget is used to undertake repairs to all Council owned playgrounds which have seen increased usage during the Covid period.
- A quotation was requested by the Loughrea Area Office for the repair of the unit which came in at €10,000.00 just for this one unit. This price may have changed due to increased costs associated with the pandemic.
- Murphy's Playground undertook a recent inspection of the skate-board unit and they have advised that the wooden beams which support the unit have become rotten and will need replacing. They are to submit a quotation for this repair.
- It may be a consideration to replace the whole unit as it may be better value than replacing one section of rotting beams.
- It seems that there may be issues with the two other skate-board units, and they may also need to be replaced as well so a full assessment is being carried out.
- Due to the cost of repair to this one unit, the playground budget would not be the best source of funding for the works due to the need to undertake repairs on all the Council owned playgrounds. For example, work is required in the Loughrea playground on the swings which have been taken out of service. A quotation is being sought for the repair of these also.
- Monies have already been allocated for the Loughrea playground this year.

Mr. Mitchell surmised that the €45,000 allocated for the repair of playgrounds in the council is not sufficient for the extent of the works that need to be carried out.

A discussion was held regarding the shortfall in funding for all playgrounds in the county and the problems associated with replacing expensive equipment from the allocated budget. Cllr Maher stated that the report had outlined that the equipment within the skateboard area was not safe and that until the necessary funding was secured to make it safe the area could not reopen. Cllr Curley and Cllr Donohoe expressed concern that the continued closure of the park was depriving children in the area of a valued sport and pastime especially considering the increase of use of playgrounds since the onset of the Covid pandemic. Ms Ruane agreed that it was important to have as many recreational opportunities for young people as possible. However, as the report outlined that as there are safety concerns around the skateboard area it would have to remain closed. She said it was clear the current budget was insufficient but that she would make contact with Noel Costello in Corporate Services with a view to establishing whether there was any alternative funding sources or opportunities that could assist with his issue.

Taking in Charge of Tulach na Carraige, Loughrea

LMD 2135

The taking in charge of the road at Tulach na Carraige, Loughrea was proposed by Cllr Maher, seconded by Cllr Curley and agreed by the Members.

Details as follows: -

Point A-B on TIC Map:

1. Road commencing at its junction with L8265-10 in the townland of Cuscarrick and extending South for a distance of 70m and ending outside house No.8 in the townland of Cuscarrick.

Point C-D on TIC Map:

1. Road commencing at its junction with A-B and extending West for a distance of 53m and ending outside house No. 17 in the townland of Cuscarrick.

Point D-E on TIC Map:

1. Road commencing at its junction with C-D and extending North for a distance of 33m and ending outside house No.20 in the townland of Cuscarrick.

Point D-F on TIC Map:

1. Road commencing at its junction with C-D and extending South for a distance of 35m and ending outside house No.13 in the townland of Cuscarrick.

Cathaoirleach's Business

LMD 2135

All members wished both Mr McGillicuddy and Mr Sheehy well in their new positions with Galway County Council and thanked them for their work in the Loughrea MD. Mr Mitchell and Ms Ruane also wished them well and thanked them both for their work in the Loughrea MD. Ms. Ruane confirmed for the members that the Council were in the process of appointing their replacements and would ensure that there would be a handover of work and that the new appointees would be introduced to the members. Mr. McGillicuddy thanked them for their comments and remembered Cllr Fahy, RIP during his time in Gort. Mr Sheehy thanked the Members for their comments for his time spent in the Loughrea area.

Cllr Canning requested that the 80 km signs that used to be on either side of the road into the village of Kylemore near Abbey be replaced. He also reiterated his request from the previous meeting of the Loughrea MD for a speed detection survey be carried out on the approach to the swimming area in Portumna.

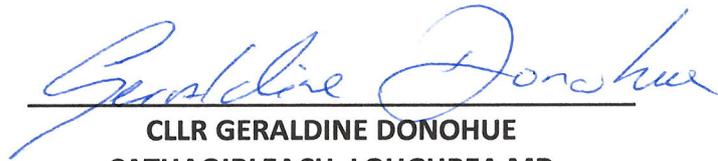
Cllr Maher thanked the Loughrea staff for the ongoing work on the footpath repairs in a number of estates in Loughrea and also the work carried out at the Long Point Shower Facilities. He also stated that with regard to the appointment of the Contractor for verge trimming of N.S. routes, that if there was a funding shortfall for the work, could the Members consider contributing some NOM money to ensure that more roads were done.

Cllr's Kinane and Donohue expressed their concern with the adequacy of the safety barriers at Rinville Pier following a serious accident there recently. Cllr Kinane also wished all those well that were to be involved in the Renville Atlantic Masters fundraising event which was due to take place at the weekend.

Cllr McClearn requested the verge trimming on the national secondary routes and on the R446 be expedited for safety reasons. Cllr Donohoe concurred with Cllr McClearn's comments and asked that this matter be progressed as soon as possible.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Loughrea MD would be held on 20th September 2021.

CHRIOGHNAIGH AN CHRUINNIU ANSIN



CLLR GERALDINE DONOHUE
CATHAOIRLEACH, LOUGHREA MD

