

## **COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**

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

#### **Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held in the Loughrea Council Chamber on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022@ 11.00 am**

#### **I LATHAIR:**

**Cathaoirleach**

Cllr. P.J. Murphy

**Baill:**

Cllr's. G. Donohue, D. Kelly, J. Byrne, M. Kinane,  
I. Canning, J. McClearn, G Finnerty, M. Maher

**Oifigigh:**

Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services  
Ms. R. Lowe, Senior Engineer  
Mr. E. Gallagher, Senior Executive Engineer  
Mr. J. Coyle, Executive Engineer  
Mr. N. Kennedy, Executive Engineer  
Mr. B. Mostert, Executive Architect  
Ms. M. Finn, Administrative Officer  
Ms. S. Cleary, Staff Officer  
Ms. P. McHugo, Assistant Staff Officer  
Mr. Alan Farrell, Senior Executive Officer

Apologies from Cllr Curley who was unable to attend.

#### **Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held in the Loughrea Chamber on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

**LMD2230**

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were proposed by Cllr. Maher and were seconded by Cllr. Canning, they were agreed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. Kinane stated that further clarification is required regarding the layout of the Athenry junction in Clarinbridge, she advised that she has spoken to the relevant Engineers however issues raised are unresolved. She asked if bus, crane, and truck drivers using the junction could be contacted regarding the issues and stated that members of the public have contacted her advising that the junction is unsafe, Cllr. Kinane wishes it to be on record that the junction is unsafe. She sought clarification on when the stage 3 audit will be carried out and asked if bus, crane and truck drivers could be contacted regarding issues of concern, she stated that if a school bus or truck travels from the N18 to N67 they meet traffic straight on

Cllr. Byrne also enquired regarding No Swimming signage erected at locations in Galway and Ms. Ruane advised that the Water Safety Officer position has been sanctioned by the Department.

Cllr. Byrne proposed a need to review the minutes of meetings for the last twelve months to identify actions taken and to develop a tracker of actions outstanding. He referred to Hennelly's corner as an example where a solution is still to be achieved. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Donohue.

In response to Cllr. Canning's query, Ms. Ruane advised that she will enquire regarding the appointment of a Caretaker to Churchill Graveyard and revert.

**Loughrea Town hall Part 8 LA 13/21 CEO Report for approval**

**LMD2231**

The Part 8 Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2006 as amended, Part 8 - The proposal consists for the renovation and refurbishment of the Town Hall building (including a change of use and the demolition of an annex building on site) at Barrack Street, Loughrea, Co. Galway was proposed by Cllr. Maher and seconded by Cllr. McClearn.

Cllr. Maher welcomed the proposal and stressed the importance of having the building utilised again, he thanked the County Council and Staff for progress made to date.

Cllr. McClearn acknowledged that it is an important milestone for Loughrea Town and that a lot of progress has been made to date with the project. He acknowledged the great partnership between Galway County Council, LARC, the Chamber of Commerce and the Credit Union. He stated that this will be a focal point for the town and acknowledged the value of the Arts as an economic benefit for Loughrea.

Cllr. Donohue asked if consideration in design can be given for access to the building for people with disabilities. Mr. Mostert advised that accessibility for people with disabilities was one of the issues being incorporated into the plans. Cllr. Donohue requested a tour of the Town Hall when it was safe to do so.

Cllr. Byrne acknowledged it and congratulate everyone on the progress made.

Mr. Farrell thanked the members for approving the Part 8 and advised that the building required redesign due to the deterioration of the building.

Mr. Gallagher was complimented by the Loughrea MD Councillors on the progress he has made with his work.

### **Cathaoirleach's Business**

**LMD2233**

Cllr. Maher congratulated the Environment Section on achieving the Blue Flag Status at Loughrea Lake. He stated that the public lights near Fahy Gardens/Lawrences Fields, Loughrea need be upgraded to LED lights and asked for clarification on when this can be done. Mr. Coyle replied that he will follow up on the matter.

In response to Cllr. Maher's request that the footpaths in Loughrea need to be repaired as they are unsafe, Mr. Coyle advised that funding would be made available under Active Travel.

Cllr. Maher highlighted improper behaviour by persons at the Walks in Loughrea resulting in fences being destroyed and damaged, the fences he explained were repaired twice and were damaged for a third time in one week, he stated that something has to be done to stop this behaviour. He enquired if there is funding available to install cameras at the walks and stated that he is aware that members of the public are afraid to walk in the area.

Cllr. McClearn raised a concern regarding hedge trimming, he stated that there is an agreement on the R446, Aughrim to Cappataggle, to allow cutting of a particular type of growth where sightlines are restricted. He stated that an exception to the nesting period is in place for this location where visibility at a junction is of concern. Mr. Coyle advised that the tender for hedge trimming is now awarded for national and regional roads and the Council will utilise same for the hedge trimming after the nesting period.

Cllr. McClearn advised that he attended a meeting during the week regarding the Greenway and it appears that agreement on the Greenway may not be achieved, he stated that the policy is being pursued but will not be implemented.

Cllr. McClearn proposed that a hybrid system be pursued and that this should be raised at the Plenary Meeting. He asked why a Greenway from Dublin to Galway cannot be achieved where Meelick and Stoneyisland can be facilitated.

Cllr. McClearn proposed that the Loughrea Municipal District Members call on consultants to pursue the hybrid system in relation to the provision of the Greenway. Cllr. Canning seconded the motion.

Cllr. Kinane stated that many landowners have concerns regarding splitting of lands and that the Kilcolgan to Clarinbridge area should be facilitated to progress the Greenway along the road. Cllr. Kinane stated the roadway is safe for local people to cycle on and therefore it should be utilised for the Greenway.

Cllr. Maher stated that there is a significant number of landowners with whom agreement is yet to be reached. He stated that it is necessary to state where the Greenway is starting,

Cllr. Byrne highlighted an ongoing problem in Gort where members of the public are disposing of household waste in public bins. In response to his query, Ms. Ruane advised that in compliance with Waste Byelaws a door-to-door campaign is being carried out in Gort.

Cllr. Byrne stated that Traught Beach did not achieve its Blue Flag Status and asked if it is possible to have water samples checked again as previous samples were taken in 2020, he stated that it will only be possible to achieve a Blue Flag Status in 2025 in line with current procedures. He also sought clarification on who carries out inspections on Galway County Council's Septic tank in the area. Ms. Ruane advised that An Taisce procedures must be followed to achieve a Blue Flag Status but that it is safe to swim in the area, although it has not achieved the standard of excellence required to achieve the Blue Flag Status.

Ms. Ruane stated that an inspection on the Septic tank had been carried out.

Cllr. Byrne stated his disappointment at TII not permitting the provision of a left turn filter lane at the side road at Stradbally, he stated that TII should provide a filter lane on the N67 for traffic turning at Stradbally East.

Cllr. Byrne raised a concern of understaffing of schools by the Department of Education which could lead to the closure of schools in the County.

Cllr. Kinane stated, as the left turn at Stradbally will not proceed due to a TII decision, she enquired where the CIS funding will be utilised and stated she hoped the funding will not be lost, Mr. Kennedy advised he will make enquiries regarding C.I.S. funding to ensure it stays in the Municipal District but that C.I.S.'s normally don't include resurfacing of roads.

**Any Other Business**

**LMD2234**

Cllr. Kinane referred to funding granted under Active Travel for the provision of a pedestrian crossing in Oranhill where many school-going children live. She expressed her disappointment that the pedestrian crossing will not be located at the location for which it was requested and that she would advise residents at Oranhill. Cllr. Kinane requested confirmation of the date on which the two new pedestrian crossings would be installed. Ms. Lowe advised that this was at an early stage but that she would provide details to Cllr. Kinane by email.

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**CLLR P.J. MURPHY**  
**CATHAOIRLEACH, LOUGHREA MD**

## **Deputation by Peter Gohery and Martyn Moran**

Mr. Gohery addressed the members advising them of issues in the Loughrea Municipal District which create difficulties for persons with disabilities, one of the issues raised related to parking facilities. He advised that a disability survey was carried out which generated 130 replies, the replies highlighted concerns surrounding parking.

Mr. Gohery advised that most parking facilities provided are unsuitable and some parking spaces are impossible for people to access or egress their vehicles due to the location of items such as trees and bins, he referred to photographs included in his presentation for clarification and said this is especially relevant where the use of a wheelchair is required. He advised the members that An Garda Síochána cannot issue a summons for illegal parking on a disabled parking space if the parking space is not painted. He stated that some family members of disabled persons use disabled parking badges for their personal use and advised that a €2,000 fine is payable if they are identified, he asked if the use of Disabled Parking Permits is monitored.

Mr. Gohery enquired if it is possible for Community Wardens to issue fines to persons who park illegally in disabled parking spaces. Mr. Gohery also requested works be carried out to enable persons with disabilities proper access to footpaths, he stated that Loughrea should be a disability friendly town however some people with disabilities don't come to Loughrea. He stated that persons with disabilities should be consulted when plans are prepared to provide facilities for persons living with a disability, and people with disabilities should be included in the Disabilities Steering Groups.

Mr. Moran addressed and asked why the disabled parking spot has been removed from outside the barracks in Loughrea. He stated that parking bays are not fit for purpose and charging points are adding to difficulties. He stated that at one parking location there is a twelve-inch step up which is not accessible, and this is unacceptable.

The Loughrea MD Members acknowledged the importance of the provision of appropriate disability parking in the County. They expressed gratitude to Peter Gohery, and Martyn Moran for their excellent presentation and for outlining their experiences across the County.

Cllr. Donohue referred to the motion passed at the Plenary with respect to the painting of parking spaces and ensuring visibility.