

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLMHE

Ceantar Bardasach Chonamara

Municipal District of Conamara

**Minutes of the Municipal District of Conamara held on Friday 3rd December
2021 at 10a.m. in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill,
Galway**

ILATHAIR:

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Seamus Walsh.

BAILL: Comh. / Cllr. G. King, E. Mannion, P. Mac An
Iomaire, A. McKinstry, D. Ó Cualáin, T. Ó
Curraoin, N. Thomas & T. Welby.

OIFIGH: M. Owens, Director of Services, D. Mitchell, Senior
Engineer, P. Breathnach, Senior Executive
Engineer, I. Martyn, A/Administrative,
Officer/Meetings Administrator, N. Moughty,
Clerical Officer.

A Minutes Silence was held for the late mother of Ita Martyn, Meetings Administrator.
The Cathaoirleach was joined by the Members and Mr. Owens in conveying their
Condolences to Ms. Martyn and her extended family.

1. **Confirmation of Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Conamara held on Monday 5th November, 2021.** **CMD21068**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Conamara held on Monday 5th November 2021 was **PROPOSED** by Comh. T Ó Curraoin, **SECONDED** by Cllr. G. King and **AGREED**.

Matters Arising

Cllr. King acknowledged that the hedge cutting had been carried out on the N.59 Galway to Clifden roadway.

Cllr. Mannion concurred but she had concerns with some areas and proposed that a survey should be undertaken to determine the adequacy of the works undertaken.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Mannion and **SECONDED** by the Cathaoirleach and **AGREED** to propose a survey of the works.

Comh. Ó Cualáin agreed that the area needs to be looked at. He expressed his concern regarding the funding of hedge cutting going forward with the absence of Notice of Motion monies.

Cllr. Thomas questioned the reason and benefit of hedge cutting being undertaken so late in the year.

The Cathaoirleach stated that the Knockgannon to Oughterard road is very dangerous with hedges and potholes, and he said that the contractors left substantive works incomplete overnight which contributed to a cyclist to be thrown off their bicycle and left lying on the road which could have been fatal.

Cllr. Mannion questioned if Transport Infrastructure Ireland funded the N59 Hedge cutting.

Mr. Mitchell replied that a contract was set up by the T.I.I. to carry out hedge cutting, and he would contact them regarding their concerns. He agreed that he was familiar with the incident on the Knockgannon to Oughterard road and it was not acceptable that substantive works were left overnight.

He said that the delay in hedge cutting was caused by a shortage of Contractors to do the work. He advised that the Notice of Motion monies provided by the elected members will go into road maintenance.

Cllr. Welby replied that it was his understanding that if Notice of Motion monies are gone that the funding will not go into road maintenance.

The Cathaoirleach advised that the costs for hedge cutting is about 200 per metre whereas surgical treatment is long-term and the Knockgannon to Oughterard road is a death-trap.

2. Oughterard Town & Village Funding

CMD21069

Mr. Mitchell advised that there was an allocation of €250,000 funding for Oughterard Town & Village and the available funding is €210,000 as €40,000 has been spent on the river-walk. There were a number of projects considered for the remainder of the funding. 1) Footpaths at Claremont to link Claremont to the village i.e continue the footpaths along the river bank. 2) Bus parking at the existing car-park which would involve the loss of a lot of car-parking spaces. 3) Bus parking at the GAA grounds He advised that discussions were ongoing with the GAA in relation to bus-parking in the GAA pitch which is a very feasible location for bus parking.

Cllr. Welby acknowledged that the river walk was well done and suggested that the €210,000 funding be ringfenced for coach parking.

Comh. Ó Curraoin expressed his concern regarding the safety of children on the bridge and recommended that a foot-bridge should be priority.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ó Curraoin and **SECONDED** by the Cathaoirleach it was **AGREED** that the footbridge overpass for children go ahead in the interest of safety.

The Cathaoirleach advised that the funding was not sufficient to construct the footbridge.

Mr. Mitchell replied that funding for the provision of a footbridge should be progressed by the T.I.I.

Cllr McKinstry advised that coach parking swiss style be considered connectivity between public and private bus and he recommended a bus depot where a smaller bus could connect.

Cllr. Welby in relation to the linear parking on the Pier Road agreed that the available funding was not sufficient for setting back walls and acquiring lands. He proposed that the bus park in the GAA grounds should be progressed. He advised that he had committed €10,000 of his funding to the bus parking project and he recommended that a discussion take place at Committee stage.

On the **PROPOSAL** of the Cathaoirleach and **SECONDED** by Cllr Thomas it was **AGREED** that the remaining funding of €210,000 be ringfenced for the provision of coach parking.

3. Taking in Charge Bruach Na Mara Estate, Carna.

CMD21069

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. King and **SECONDED** by the Cathaoirleach it was **AGREED** that Bruach Na Mara Estate, Carna be taken in Charge. Road pavement and footpath commencing at junction with local road L-12062-0 in the townland of Carna and finishing at No. 18 Bruach na Mara in the townland of Carna.

4. Directors Business

CMD21070

Mr. Mitchell gave an update on the Causeways Report.

Comh. Ó Cualáin questioned the changes in the reports and the cost of the report. He said the bridges should be widened and the speed limit on the bridges as referenced in the report was incorrect.

He stated that there were huge issues and consultation was necessary in relation to proper design and he advised that the Heritage Officer should be consulted and public consultation should take place in advance of any works being carried out.

Cllr. Thomas added that the bridges are included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

The Cathaoirleach recommended that funding be sought from National Government for new bridges.

Cllr. McKinstry said that the bridges should qualify for essential works on safety grounds. He said that people's lives should not be put at risk and he has a concern with the safety issue.

Comh. Mac An Iomaire commented that it was pointless spending 3.5m and erecting Traffic Lights on the Causeways that were not going to work. He said that the roads leading on to the bridges were too narrow and the people on the islands were very concerned and public consultation is necessary.

Cllr. King added that the people on the islands are proud of their heritage and the onus was on the Members and the Local Authority to improve standards and by spending €7m on the bridges it would be a long term investment.

The Cathaoirleach, Comh. Mac An Iomaire and Comh. O Curraoin agreed that public consultation was necessary.

Cllr. Ó Curraoin stated that new bridges were necessary. Cllr. Ó Cualáin enquired regarding the proposals of the Executive in relation to the works. The Cathaoirleach requested that new bridges be constructed for 7m.

Mr. Mitchell replied that he would be delighted to seek funding for the construction of new bridges but 7m as outlined in the report was an estimated cost and did not include associated works and services. He advised that €20m would be the estimated cost of the project. He said that it would be difficult to construct the bridges in the S.A.C. area

and he added that assessments had been carried out on the safety elements- 2 way traffic and the facades of the bridges. Based on the difficulties associated in acquiring both planning permission and funding and the associated delays, it was felt that the funding should be sought to address the safety elements. He said that the cost to date was €28,000 and he advised that there was no significant difference in the earlier version and final reports. He stated that the issues in relation to scour damage would be completed under maintenance and he said the main issues with safety were that the bridges were not wide enough and vehicle activated traffic lights to allow traffic go through safely was necessary.

He said that the Heritage Officer would be consulted in relation to work being carried out and the speed limit is 50km/hr. He stated that the safety concerns had to be addressed and acquiring all the necessary permissions to construct new bridges could take ten years. He said that funding was sought to address the safety concerns and there are very little options but proceed to design and consult with the Heritage Officer regarding the delivery of the works. He said he understood the concerns of the people of the islands but he said the safety issue has been highlighted and it has to be addressed.

Cllr. McKinstry expressed his concern in relation to the scouring and structure integrity of the bridges.

Cllr. Ó Cualáin raised the issue of pedestrian safety on the bridges and he said the speed limit of 60km/hr is incorrect as the speed limit is already 50km/hr He added that the existing road and bridge weights is sub-standard for regional roads and it needs to be addressed by the Department.

He stated that there was no other option only erect Traffic Lights on the Bridges.

- 1) The bridges are too narrow for two-way traffic.
Solution - Vehicle activated lights
- 2) Parts of the parapets are in disrepair and do not conform to design standards
Solution - repair parapets and conform to current design standards
- 3) Missing stones on facades of Causeway
Solution - Replace stones

Mr. Mitchell replied that there are a number of bridges that were constructed in the past that do not meet the more recent design requirements of regional roads. He advised that the proposed speed limit was 60km/hr and local access will be agreed on the ground and the speed limit can remain at 50km/hr.

On the **PROPOSAL** of the Cathaoirleach **SECONDED** by Cllr. Ó Cualáin it was **AGREED** that public consultation should take place. Mr. Mitchell replied that the decision in relation to the proposed works to address safety issues raised and subsequently highlighted in the consultant's report is not a planning issue and public consultation is linked to a planning application.

He said that the final design would be brought to the Members for information purposes and discussion but fundamentally there was little choice in the implementation of the design. A delegation could be facilitated as at previous Municipal District meetings.

Comh. Mac An Iomaire and Comh. Ó Cualáin expressed their congratulations to the Intermediate Lettermore Football Team on their success.

Cllr. Thomas and Cllr. Walsh expressed their congratulations to the Moycullen Team on their success. County Intermediate Hurling Champions & Naomh Anna Leitir Mor booked their place in the County Intermediate Football Final.

5. A.O.B.

CMD21070

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Conamara MD would be on Friday 14th January at 10a.m.

CHRÍOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIÚ ANSIN

Submitted Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach: _____ *Seamus Walsh*

Date: _____