

Monthly Meeting of Galway County Council held on Monday, 22nd July 2019

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL,

Monday 22nd July 2019 at 1.00pm

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. McClearn, Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

I Láthair Freisin:

Comhaltaí: Comh./Cllrs. T. Broderick, J. Byrne, I. Canning, L. Carroll, J. Charity, D. Collins, D. Connolly, G. Cronnelly, D. Ó Cualáin, J. Cuddy, S. Curley, Aisling Dolan, Albert Dolan, G. Donohue, G. Finnerty, D. Geraghty, S. Herterich Quinn, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, C. Keaveney, D. Killilea, G. King, M. Kinane, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, K. McHugh Farag, A. McKinstry, P. Murphy, A. Reddington, P. Roche, J. Sheridan, N. Thomas, S. Walsh, T. Welby

Oifigigh: Mr. K. Kelly, Chief Executive (Interim)
Ms. C. Delaney, Acting County Secretary
Mr. G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance
Mr. J. Cullen, Director of Services
Ms. V. Loughnane Moran, Senior Planner
Mr. M. Owens, A/Director of Services
Mr. K. Coyne, A/ Senior Executive Officer
Mr. M. Timmins, Senior Engineer
Ms. F. Mitchell, Staff Officer
Ms. Ú. Ni Eidhin, Oifigeach Gaeilge
Ms. H. Riordan, Assistant Staff Officer
Ms. C. Walsh, Clerical Officer

Thosaigh an cruinniú leis an bpaidir

ITEM NO.1 - CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:

(a) Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 7th June 2019. 3455

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finnerty, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Keaveney, the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on the 7th June 2019, were **AGREED**.

(b) Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 17th June 2019.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Killilea, the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on the 17th June 2019, were **AGREED**.

Matters Arising

Cllr. Killilea expressed his disappointment at the lack of response from Irish Rail regarding a Motion submitted at the June Plenary meeting for the removal of the gates/barriers erected to Vicar Street and Milltown Road Tuam. He remarked that this reflected negatively on Irish Rail. He was also dissatisfied with the response from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

ITEM NO.2 – CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. 3456

(a) Membership of Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board

Membership of Galway Roscommon Education Training Board was considered at the Annual Meeting of Galway County Council on the 7th June, 2019, when the vacancies were filled. This was further considered at the Corporate Policy Group Meeting on the 19th July, 2019. Following discussion at the Monthly Plenary Meeting on the 22nd July, 2019, it was confirmed that there are no additional female members available to sit on the board.

ITEM NO.3 - TO CONSIDER THE REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED), PROPOSAL FOR A TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME ON THE N83 FOR BAILE CHLÁIR, CO. GALWAY – REF LA02/19. 3457

Mr. Cullen referred to the Chief Executives Report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He explained that the proposal was for a scheme consisting of road improvements and traffic measures for a length of approximately 960m on the N83 and approximately 260m on the R381. The proposed works provided for resurfacing, introduction of footpaths, crossing locations, planting and an upgrade to the surface water drainage system. He said that there had been consultation with interested parties and with the Athenry- Oranmore and Tuam Municipal District Members.

Cllr. Charity very much welcomed the scheme which he said would be of benefit to the town of Claregalway particularly the much-needed surface water drainage works. He commented that the proposal is intended to balance traffic for residents and commuters that pass through the village. He stated that while supporting the scheme there were a few amendments to the design that the Municipal District Members wished to have included having regard to public representations that had been received. Cllr. Cuddy also welcomed the proposed scheme which he and the other Municipal District Members supported subject to the amendments that were to be proposed.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Charity and **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy and **AGREED** that the Part 8 proposal for a Traffic Calming Scheme on the N83 for Baile Chláir, Co Galway, be approved subject to the following amendments:

1. The retention of two traffic lanes along the N83 at Claregalway Church in the direction of both Galway city and the left-hand turning lane towards Carnmore/Oranmore.
2. The retention of the signalised traffic junction at the head of the Montiagh Road intersection with the N83.
3. The provision of a pedestrian crossing at the Desire Line, between Hughes Supermarket and Claregalway Church.

The motion was approved.

ITEM NO.4 - TO CONSIDER THE REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED), PROPOSAL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 5 – UNIT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND REMOVAL OF EXISTING BUILDINGS/SITE CLEARANCE WORKS, SIGNAGE, LANDSCAPING, CONNECTION TO EXISTING SERVICES AND ALL ANCILLARY SITE DEVELOPMENT WORKS AT BARRACK STREET, LOUGHREA – REF LA0319
3458

Mr. Owens outlined the proposal for the construction of 5 no. Social Housing units at the old Council offices on Barrack Street, Loughrea consisting of three, 2 Bed houses and two, 3 bed houses under the Rebuilding Ireland Programme.

Members welcomed the proposed development and referred to the lack of available accommodation in Loughrea town centre, however, some concerns were raised regarding the purpose, allocation and type of accommodation being provided.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley, the proposed construction of a 5 – unit housing development and removal of existing buildings/site clearance works, signage, landscaping, connection to existing services and all ancillary site development works at Barrack Street, Loughrea – Ref LA0319 as outlined in the Report, was **AGREED**.

ITEM NO. 5 – TO CONSIDER IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO APPROVE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE OPERATION OF WATER SAFETY IRELAND (WSI) (FORMALLY IRISH WATER SAFETY) IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 67 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001.
3459

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher, it was **AGREED**.

ITEM NO. 6 – TO APPOINT A CHAIRPERSON OF THE LOCAL TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.
3460

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Broderick, it was **AGREED** that Cllr. Cronnelly be appointed as chairperson of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

ITEM NO.7 – FINANCIAL REPORT ON ACCOUNTS OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30TH JUNE 2019.

3461

Mr. Mullarkey provided a broad outline of the financial report. He advised that although the Council were behind budget at the half year mark, this is consistent with previous years. The commencement of works under the Roads Programme by September will reflect the budget position more accurately.

Cllr. Killilea sought clarification on the financing of housing capital projects. He asked at which stage in the process the Council receive funding, and if this is a curtailment on the Council in providing housing projects. His understanding of the matter is that the Council would need to have €25m in reserve for such projects.

Mr. Mullarkey responded that the Housing Finance Agency used to provide land loans where no interest was paid until the land was used and the monies drawn down. However, no land loans have been provided since 2008. Currently, the best option for the council are loans on an Interest Only basis until the loan is drawn down, which is controlled by Resolution of the Council.

Cllr. Killilea asked if the Council has €30-40m to fund lands banks, and queried if the Council are restricted in the number of sites that they can develop at a time by funding constraints, as there is a site in Tuam ready for development Minister Murphy has stated that finance is readily available, but the reality doesn't reflect this. Cllr. Killilea sought clarification on any restraints to Local Authority development.

Mr. Mullarkey replied that funding was based on the ability to repay loans and that the options under consideration would not incur anywhere near €30-40m.

Cllr. Killilea asked why there are only 1-2 schemes progressing at a time and not 5-6 and queried the reliance on housing agencies and that our hands are tied borrowing money, that it is overall too restrictive an approach.

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Mr. Owens advised that we are committed to providing 926 units under the current capital project programme to 2021 and that we are on course to meet and even exceed this target. There are no financial constraints and the Council currently have a land bank to provide those units. Post Rebuilding Ireland the Council will require additional lands for future builds. The monies are recouped from the Department as units are delivered on site.

ITEM NO.8 – TO CONSIDER IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). 3462

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade, the Members **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of the following Members at the AILG 2019 Elected Members Training Programme Module 3 (Retrospective) in the assigned location of the Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar, on the 11th July, 2019;

Cllrs. Herterich Quinn, Ó Cualáin, Aisling Dolan, Sheridan, Geraghty, Carroll, Mac An Iomaire, Donohue, King, Murphy, Welby, Hoade and Mc Clearn.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade, the Members **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of the following Member at the AILG 2019 Elected Members Training Programme Module 3 (Retrospective) in the alternative location of the Horse & Jockey Hotel, Co. Tipperary on the 13th July, 2019;

Cllr. Maher

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade, the Members **AGREED** to authorise the attendance of the following Members at the AILG Autumn Training Seminar 2019 – Climate Change and Planning – A new challenge for Local Authorities, in the Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan on the 11th and 12th September, 2019;

Cllrs. Hynes, Maher, Welby, Kinane, Donohue, Mc Clearn and Heterich Quinn

ITEM NO.10 – CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE. 3463

Mr. Kelly informed the Members that the provision of additional functions to Municipal Districts and a review of the Standing Orders is under discussion at Corporate Policy Group (CPG) level. He confirmed that the addition of functions to Municipal Districts was proposed to be on a phased basis. He referred to discussions at a recent CPG meeting regarding the establishment of a sixth SPC and confirmed that a revised Draft SPC Scheme will be presented to Members at the September 2019 Plenary Meeting.

He confirmed that the Review of the Corporate Plan 2019-2024 is commencing. This would include consultation with members and in addition to this he invited Members to contact him directly with any issues or priorities that they wish to be considered in the Corporate Strategy over the next 5 years.

Although Members acknowledged the importance of Climate Change, a number of Members raised concerns regarding the establishment of a sixth SPC solely for Climate Change. During the course of discussion concerns were raised including the costs associated with the establishment of a new SPC and source of funding; that consideration should be given to re-structuring the existing SPC's to include Climate Change and the support for the additional SPC for Climate Change highlighted the need to raise awareness of climate change issues. It was stated that a temperature increase of half a degree would significantly affect Galway through increased flooding. Reaching the goals of zero carbon emissions must be aspired to and the elements of planning and funding that are required to ensure change must be addressed.

In response, Mr. Kelly stated that he had not anticipated that a proposal for a 6th SPC would arise at this meeting. It was his intention that a Draft SPC Scheme be brought to the Plenary Meeting in September 2019 for consideration by the Members. He informed the Council that the costs of an SPC are limited, however the costs of actioning measures on climate change are significant e.g. public lighting retrofitting which would cost approximately €6m. It is this element that would raise more financial concern. He indicated that next years budget would have to include some degree of

additional revenue raising capacity and a level of funding for climate change would have to be considered.

The following Motions were presented by Members regarding the discussions surrounding Climate Action.

Motion A: "I propose that we postpone a final decision on our SPC structure until we are presented with a detailed breakdown from the Chief Executive in September".

PROPOSED by Cllr. Curley, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Kinane.

Yes (Vote: 15)

Cllr. Albert Dolan	Cllr. Colm Keaveney	Cllr. Declan Geraghty
Cllr. Dermot Connolly	Cllr. Donagh Killilea	Cllr. Gerry Finnerty
Cllr. Gerry King	Cllr. Ivan Canning	Cllr. Joseph Sheridan
Cllr. Martina Kinane	Cllr. Mary Hoade	Cllr. Noel Thomas
Cllr. Shane Curley	Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn	Comh. Dáithi O Cualáin

No (Vote: 19)

Cllr. Aisling Dolan	Cllr. Alastair Mc Kinstry	Cllr. Andrew Reddington
Cllr. David Collins	Cllr. Eileen Mannion	Cllr. Gabriel Cronnelly
Cllr. Geraldine Donohue	Cllr. James Charity	Cllr. Jim Cuddy
Cllr. Jimmy Mc Clearn	Cllr. Joe Byrne	Cllr. Liam Carroll
Cllr. Michael Maher	Cllr. Thomas Welby	Cllr. PJ Murphy
Cllr. Peter Roche	Cllr. Karey Mc Hugh Farag	Cllr. Tim Broderick

Comh. Pádraig Mac an Iomaire

Abstain (Vote: 1)

Cllr. Pat Hynes

No-Voting (Total: 0)

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the Motion was defeated.

Motion B: "I propose that Galway County Council establish a Climate Change SPC as an additional SPC to the current 5 committees". **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Byrne, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Mc Hugh Farag.

Yes (Vote: 19)

Cllr. Aisling Dolan	Cllr. Alastair McKinstry	Cllr. Andrew Reddington
Cllr. David Collins	Cllr. Eileen Mannion	Cllr. Gabriel Cronnelly
Cllr. Geraldine Donohue	Cllr. James Charity	Cllr. Jim Cuddy
Cllr. Jimmy Mc Clearn	Cllr. Joe Byrne	Cllr. Karey Mc Hugh Farag
Cllr. Liam Carroll	Cllr. Michael Maher	Cllr. PJ Murphy
Cllr. Peter Roche	Cllr. Thomas Welby	Cllr. Tim Broderick

Comh. Padraig Mac an Iomaire

No (Vote: 12)

Cllr. Albert Dolan	Cllr. Colm Keaveney	Cllr. Donagh Killilea
Cllr. Gerry Finnerty	Cllr. Gerry King	Cllr. Joseph Sheridan
Cllr. Martina Kinane	Cllr. Mary Hoade	Cllr. Noel Thomas
Cllr. Shane Curley	Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn	

Comh. Dáithi Ó Cualáin

Abstain (Vote: 3)

Cllr. Declan Geraghty	Cllr. Dermot Connolly	Cllr. Pat Hynes
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No-Voting (Total: 0)

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the Motion was carried.

Motion C "I propose that in line with the examples of other local authorities in the west of Ireland, this Council agrees to amend the title and membership of the Environment SPC to the Environmental & Agriculture SPC and refer to the CPG as regards sectoral membership". **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Charity, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington.

Yes (Vote:18)

Cllr. Aisling Dolan	Cllr. Alastair Mc Kinstry	Cllr. Andrew Reddington
Cllr. David Collins	Cllr. Eileen Mannion	Cllr. Gabriel Cronnelly
Cllr. Geraldine Donohue	Cllr. James Charity	Cllr. Jim Cuddy

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Cllr. Jimmy Mc Clearn	Cllr. Joe Byrne	Cllr. Liam Carroll
Cllr. Michael Maher	Cllr. PJ Murphy	Cllr. Peter Roche
Cllr. Thomas Welby	Cllr. Tim Broderick	Comh. Padraig Mac an Iomaire

No (Vote: 13)

Cllr. Albert Dolan	Cllr. Declan Geraghty	Cllr. Donagh Killilea
Cllr. Gerry King	Cllr. Ivan Canning	Cllr. Joseph Sheridan
Cllr. Martina Kinane	Cllr. Mary Hoade	Cllr. Noel Thomas
Cllr. Pat Hynes	Cllr. Shane Curley	Cllr. Shelly Heterich Quinn
Comh. Dáithi O Cualáin		

Abstain (Vote: 0)

No-Voting (Total: 0)

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the Motion was carried.

The following Motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Kinane, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Hoade
"I counter propose that we rename the planning SPC to Climate Change and Planning, and not increase of SPC's from 5 to 6".

This Motion was **WITHDRAWN**.

ITEM NO.9 – TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – JULY 2019 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **3464**

The allocation of €2.6m for the Conamara Greenway was welcomed by Members, while other Members expressed disappointment regarding the refusal of funding for the Tuam Athenry Greenway. It was suggested that this issue be returned to after the Rail Review is published.

Rent Pressure Zones (RPZ) identified in County Galway by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government are the Local Electoral Areas of Athenry-Oranmore and Gort-Kinvara. Rent increases in these areas are limited to a maximum of 4% per annum which applies to both existing tenancies and rental properties that are being re-let on the market. Members queried the reason why the Tuam Local Electoral Area did not fall within the RPZ given the high cost of rents for dwellings in the town of Tuam at present and also questioned whether Local Authority housing rents falls within the remit of the RPZ's. In response, Mr. Owens stated that the Tuam Local Electoral Area met only one of the criteria to qualify under the RPZ areas but not on the second criteria. He also stated that qualification under the RPZ areas were based on the average rents over the whole Tuam Electoral area and not on specific towns. He also confirmed that RPZ are only applicable to HAP and RAS applicants but not on social housing tenants. The question of whether HAP clients in the Local Electoral Areas of Athenry-Oranmore and Gort-Kinvara will be dealt with differently than the rest of the county was also raised. Mr. Owens confirmed that the RPZ will apply in relation to HAP tenancies.

The negative impact of short term letting on the rental market in Kinvara was raised and clarification was sought on the planning implications of same. In response, Ms. Loughnane-Moran confirmed that this is considered to be a change of use to commercial use. She would investigate if a Fire Safety Certificate is required and also informed the meeting that a Frequently Asked Questions section is currently being developed for the Council's website to inform the public.

A question was raised regarding SP2 of the Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019 and if measures are being considered to assist members in relation to democratic representation.

Mr. Kelly advised that the headings in the Management Report are those included in the existing Corporate Plan and that these can be reviewed in the new Corporate Plan but reminded Members that there are limited resources available.

ITEM NO.11 – CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

3465

Cllr. McClearn welcomed the introduction of the reusable cups into Galway County Council by Canteen Manager Patricia Mannion.

A number of Members expressed concerns regarding the safety of Bealadangan bridge. In response, Mr.Cullen stated that a report was carried out on this bridge for the purpose of inclusion in a submission to the Department for funding. He confirmed that an update on same would be provided at the next Conamara Municipal District.

The allocation of social houses within new housing developments and in towns was queried by Members. In response, Mr. Owens said that there was no fixed percentage on the number of social houses allocated within housing developments and allocations within a specific area depended on the existing housing need of the area and the extent of social housing already existing in the area.

The following Motions were submitted:

ITEM NO.12 – JIM CUDDY

3466

“that a delegation including the CEO, The Director of Services for Roads and Transportation and the Cathaoirleach of Galway County Council seek an urgent meeting with Minister Murphy and Minister of State Paul Phelan with a view to addressing the severe funding shortfall from Central Government for Galway County Council”.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cuddy, **SECONDED** by Cllr. McKinstry it was **AGREED**;

Mr. Cullen sought clarification whether this motion specifically related to roads funding shortfall or to general funding shortfalls. Cllr. Cuddy confirmed that it relates to general funding shortfall.

Correspondence issued to Minister Murphy and Minister of State John Paul Phelan, acknowledgement included in extranet.

ITEM NO.13 – ALASTAIR MCKINSTRY

3467

“Irish sign language interpreter at public meetings ‘Acknowledging section 6 of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017 and the duties of public bodies therein, the council will have its public meetings interpreted by an Irish Sign Language interpreter and that this interpretation is made publicly available with the minutes of the Council’ interpreters for ISL speakers ‘Acknowledging that members of the deaf community have specific requirements in accessing council services, the council will provide interpreters for Irish Sign Language speakers in line with section 6 of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017”.

The following is the reply: -

In accordance with Section 6 of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017, a public body “shall do all that is reasonable to ensure that interpretation into Irish Sign Language is provided for a person who is competent in that language and cannot hear or

understand English or Irish when that person is seeking to avail of or access statutory entitlements or services provided by or under statute by that public body.

Please note that Galway County Council make this service available on request, subject to adequate notice being provided.

The Sign Language Interpreting Service have advised us that at least 2 weeks' notice is required and it is advisable to book as far in advance as possible to ensure provision of this service.

If any member of the public wishes to avail of the service, they should contact us here in the Corporate Services Section by email to – secretary@galwaycoco.ie or phone (091) 509307.

For your information, we have not received any requests for this service to date.

Unfortunately, it would not be possible at this time to make an interpretation available publicly with the minutes as the Council Chamber is not currently equipped with visual recording equipment.

Cllr. McKinstry thanked the executive for the reply to his Notice of Motion and informed that he was happy with the response and was satisfied that there was a good service in place. He added that it would be worth investigating the possibility of a video to help people that are hard of hearing as this could include text speech.

ITEM NO.14 – NOEL THOMAS

3468

“that all public representatives would get a detailed briefing at the meeting on the possibilities of companies coming in to the county to carry out mining. There are a lot of stories in the media at the moment so I feel it would be appropriate to have a discussion on the issue and to be updated on where this application stands currently”.

The following is the reply: -

Further to the motion on potential gold mining by Councillor Thomas, it is a Prospecting Licence or permit, issued by the Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment, that is required which allows the holder (the licensee) to prospect for minerals. No planning permission is required for this license. If exploration were to occur on foot of this prospecting licence, then planning permission would be required and any application would be open to observations and submission etc. and must comply with all the requirements of the EU Directives and Irish Planning Legislation in place on the date of application.

Cllr. Thomas advised that at the moment there was exploratory work being carried out by companies but that there is very little detail available. He raised concerns of the subsequent toxic lakes and adverse effects on local business and quarries. He is seeking clarification on what was happening and that the Council should benefit from this resource. There was further discussion on this item and matters raised included concerns relating to Special Areas of Conservation, natural heritage and bog cotton; the difficulty encountered by local people obtaining planning permission and yet private entities can easily.

Ms. Loughnane-Moran advised that prospective licenses are issued by the Department of Natural Resources and that this development would require planning permission. A strategic Infrastructure Development Application would have to be made to An Bord Pleanála, the Council would prepare a report and the matter would be brought before the elected members. She added that the environmental designation considerations would be enormous.

ITEM NO.15 – SHANE CURLEY

3469

"This council calls on the government to reject the Mercosur trade deal and to lobby other EU states to do likewise."

Cllr. Curley explained that there are climate action concerns in relation to Brazilian beef, the amount of forestry that is cut down and that there is four times the amount of carbon emitted in its transport. It has a huge rural impact with the potential drop in beef prices, which would have a knock on effect in other sectors. He called for the support of the other Councillors.

In seconding the motion, Cllr. D. Connolly commended this motion and hoped that all members would support it. He noted the effect that imports have on the price of lamb and beef, that a strong message is required to protect our demographic and associated industries involved.

Cllr. McClearn stated that there was full agreement from the Council on this Motion.

ITEM NO.16 – AISLING DOLAN

3470

"Herbicide & Pesticide Reduction Motion I propose that Galway County Council Executive consider a reduction of herbicides and pesticides policy in areas under County Council management in particular playgrounds, parks and green spaces used frequently by the public. Certain chemical based products may be required for Council use e.g. against invasive species. This could build on the excellent Greener Cleaning Products Policy Environmental Tips for Domestic Cleaning and Hygiene and Greener Gardening Guide To Chemical-Free Affordable Gardening within the environment section at Galway County Council. This action and example to reduce herbicide & pesticide use may encourage other groups take on similar policies in our community e.g private housing estates, carparks, shopping centres,. It may also incentivise alternatives to pesticides where possible and encourage a pollinator friendly environment for bees and wildlife. References International Agency for Research on Cancer <https://www.iarc.fr/featured-news/media-centre-iarc-news-glyphosate/> Pesticide Action Network PAN <http://www.pan-uk.org/pesticide-free/> The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization. In March 2015, IARC classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans" (Group 2A) Pesticides are having devastating effects on our environment and biodiversity. When used on hard surfaces such as pavements and paths they tend to run off, contaminating water courses and harming aquatic wildlife in the process. Herbicides are used to turn parks into 'green deserts' where only grass grows. They kill all other plants, many of which are relied upon by birds, insects and other wildlife. In addition, many of the pesticides used are highly persistent meaning that they stay around in the soil long into the future. Due to habitat loss and the large quantities of pesticides used in UK agriculture, wildlife is increasingly seeking refuge in our towns and cities. However, the overuse of pesticides is destroying many of the areas where they can forage for food and contaminating the natural resources they depend upon. As a result, the populations of many kinds of wildlife have been devastated in recent years. A 2017 study revealed a 76% decline in flying insects since 1990. We know that pollinators such as bees are particularly struggling."

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Cllr. Aisling Dolan encouraged other groups in our communities to take on similar actions. She requested that Galway County Council and the environment SPC consider a reduction on this practice by the end of the year.

Cllr. Curley spoke on behalf of Cllr. C. Keaveney, who with other Members agreed with this Motion but thought it could be expanded further. He proposed a ban on phosphates and Roundup as staff are exposed to these chemicals and they raise environmental, climate and health concerns.

Cllr. Thomas advised that the Council must be careful in the use of glyphosate against invasive species, that alternatives should be sought. There is a new technology using hot water treatment for weeds. It is important to eradicate weeds as they affect structures. He also suggested that some areas be left to grow wildly for the education of children and the additional cost benefit.

Cllr. Aisling Dolan thanked the Councillors for their support and stated that she would be happy to amend the motion and agreed with a total ban if this was possible. She suggested working within the SPC.

Cllr. Kinane stated that she also supported the motion and informed Cllr. Thomas that his approach has been adopted in Clarinbridge. Some areas are left to be maintained by nature and this has led to a reduction in man hours maintain it. She added that she would like an amendment to be added to approach Transport Infrastructure Ireland regarding roundabouts on the main access roads and the possibility of them being left as meadow, she would like Galway County Council to champion this cause.

In response, Mr. Timmins informed the Council that Galway County Council use these products as sparingly as possible and that they are approved and used as per the stated instructions and a blanket ban would not be possible.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. C.Keaveney, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley, an amendment to Motion 16 was **AGREED**;

“This Council notes;-

That in the USA a Local Authority outdoor worker secured a two billion dollars award against his employer and Monsanto arising from cancer concerns.

This Council is aware;-

That Sydney Council is currently trialing a replacement to all glyphosphate products as their staff refused to handle glyphosphate products due to cancer concerns.

In light of these concerns;-

We call on Galway County Council to take steps to remove all glyphosphate products from the itinerary of all council works.

To take immediate steps to identify alternative and safe products that can be used in the delivery of Galway County Council Services.

Concerns of poor visibility at junctions on National and Secondary roads and the duty of care of Galway County Council were raised by Members. The Director of Services was questioned as to whether verge trimming can take place to alleviate this issue. In response, Mr. Cullen informed Members that there are exceptions to the rules governing hedge trimming where there are safety concerns. He stated that the Local Engineer be notified of the specific locations and road safety issues would be investigated.

The following **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. King was made “*I propose that Galway County Council set up a 7th SPC named Agricultural and Agricultural Business SPC, this will be set up to fully represent the agri and rural sectors with in Galway County.*”

Cllr. Killilea raised the topic of creating an Agriculture SPC. He said that he had previously raised this 5 years ago. He said considering the great support for the earlier motion regarding the Mercosur trade deal, that the voices of farmers should be represented the same as climate change. He added that he was informed earlier in the meeting that there is a minimal cost in establishing an extra SPC.

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Mr. Kelly responded that each SPC is directly related to the functions of the Council. That they are committees to discuss policy relating to Council functions. Notwithstanding the importance of agriculture, it is not directly related to or within the functions of the Council nor is it a statutory requirement.

Cllr. Killilea stated that the Council have a veterinary function and that agriculture is the second biggest industry in Ireland and so the extra SPC should be embraced.

Cllr. McClearn informed Cllr. Killilea that there had previously been an Agriculture SPC but that it was only in existence for a year due to its irrelevance. He suggested that there be an increased farming representation on the existing SPCs.

Following prolonged discussion regarding the merits of an SPC for Agriculture & Agricultural Business Cllr. Charity **PROPOSED** restructuring the Environment SPC to include Agriculture and that the composition of the SPC's be considered by the CPG. Cllr. Reddington **SECONDED** the proposal.

Mr. Kelly pointed out that this proposal would limit the options of the Council when considering the intended re-structuring of the SPCs. It was his intention that they be re-aligned with directorates, to reduce the need for multiple Directors at an SPC.

Cllr. Roche stated that he expected that most Councillors would support the farming community but that he himself had never been approached regarding the establishment of an agriculture SPC. He agreed with Cllr. Charity that it should be incorporated into the current environment SPC.

The following was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Thomas, **SECONDED** by Cllr. King and **AGREED**.

"I propose that Galway County Council write to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment to get a detailed account of the processes and conditions involved in securing a mining licence in Ireland.

And also request an up to date report on where we are at the moment with the current proposed applications for Galway, and also what measures the department are taking

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to ensure that if this mining was to proceed, how would the state benefit? And how we can guarantee no environmental risks."

Response included in correspondence.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kinane, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Herterich Quinn it was **AGREED** that Cllr. Kinane allocate €200 Training monies towards the set up fee for Coole Park Parkrun.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. C. Keaveney, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Curley it was **AGREED** that Cllr. C. Keaveney allocate €350 Conference monies, be allocated to Faolchú Martial Arts Tuam for the purpose of supporting the clubs' participation in the Nissan International competition.

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted Signed and Approved:

Cathaoirleach:



Date:

26th September 2019