

**CEANTAR BARDASACH BHAILE LOCHA RIACH
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF LOUGREA**

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea
held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices Loughrea, on 13th April 2026**

LATHAIR:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. P. Killilea

Baill: Cllrs. I. Canning, G. Donohue, L. Harney, G. Finnerty
D. Kelly, M. Kinane (online), M. Maher, J. McClearn, M.
Regan.

Oifigigh: Mr. C. Harley Senior Engineer, Mr. G. Haugh Senior
Executive Engineer, Mr. N. Kennedy Executive
Engineer, Mr. D. O'Loughlin Executive Engineer, Ms.
M. McGann Meetings Administrator, Ms. O. Cloonan
Staff Officer.

As Láthair: Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL
DISTRICT OF LOUGHREA HELD ON 9th MARCH 2026 LMD2475**

The Minutes of the monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 9th March 2026 were approved by the Municipal District Members and signed by the Cathaoirleach on the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. G. Donohue and **SECONDED** by Cllr. L. Harney.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Cllr. Donoghue requested an update on the works at Kinvara Pier due to concern that it would impact on the local festival. In response, Cllr. Killilea confirmed that he was advised it won't have a direct impact.

Cllr. Regan requested an update on staffing levels in the Loughrea Municipal District and in response, Mr. Harley stated that discussions are ongoing with the Human Resources Department to resolve the short-term absences. Mr. Haugh confirmed that the Human Resources Department is following the recruitment process to fill the permanent vacancy.

Cllr. Harney sought clarification on how Members can apply to get a speed camera at a location, and in response, Mr. Haugh confirmed that the Council County can make application to An Garda Síochána who subsequently carry out a Risk Assessment at the proposed location to determine its suitability. Mr. Haugh advised that any proposed locations can be referred to the relevant Engineer.

Cllr. Canning requested an update on public lighting at the Cnoc na Sí estate, and Mr. Haugh

responded that, to his knowledge, the road in question was not classified as a public road, however, he would consult with the Taking in Charge (TIC) Section to verify and provide confirmation. Cllr. Canning expressed his gratitude to Superintendent Baker and complimented An Garda Síochána for organising regular patrols in the Woodpark area in response to his representations at the March Meeting. Cllr. Canning also thanked the roads staff for the prompt response in installing road markings near the Primary and Secondary Schools in Portumna and welcomed these safety improvements. Cllr. Kililea also thanked the Roads staff for works completed at Kinvara N.S.

Cllr. Maher enquired whether the road surveys for Gort Road and Lake Road had been forwarded to Superintendent Baker since the previous Municipal District Meeting. Mr. Haugh responded that the survey results had already been shared with An Garda Síochána, albeit not within the last month, and confirmed that they would be circulated again following this meeting.

Cllr. Maher requested clarification regarding the status of the Part 10 Application for Longpoint vis-à-vis the provision of a coffee shop facility as he now understood this was a standalone project. Cllr. Regan expressed his disappointment about hearing this and stated that clarification was required as businesses were currently willing to operate at the location. Cllr. Regan proposed referring the matter directly to the Chief Executive to seek clarification, and this proposal was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Mr. Haugh queried if confusion had arisen due to a designated casual trading area being included in the Part 10 planning application and clarified that he had discussed this with the Director of Services previously. Cllr. Donohue also confirmed that recent correspondence received from Ms. Ruane, Director of Services, on 20th January indicated that the Concession Licence for the Long Point had not yet been advertised.

Cllr. Kinane sought an update regarding Tawin Island Bridge and Cllr. Killilea indicated that he had received correspondence on this matter indicating there was no fundamental structural issue and would forward the information to Cllr. Kinane. In response to Cllr. Kinane's query whether a full review and investigation had taken place to identify any issues to be resolved, Mr. Harley stated that he would ask Mr. Prendergast to issue a formal response to her.

Cllr. McClearn enquired about correspondence issued to An Post concerning Loughrea Post Office and Ms. McGann replied that no response has been received to date.

2. LPT (LOCAL PROPERTY TAX) NOTICE OF MOTION:

LMD2476

The allocation of €13,000 from the Local Property Tax Discretionary Capital Fund for supply and installation of public lighting on the R352 at St. Joseph's Road Portumna to Oakwood View Housing Estate was agreed by the Members.

3. NOTICE OF MOTION:

LMD2477

Cllr. Martina Kinane:

I propose the installation of a speed ramp / raised table approaching Oranhill Estate, Maree Road, to increase pedestrians and cyclists' safety at this busy intersection.

Reply:

Galway County Council will carry out a Traffic Volume and Vehicle Speed Survey at this location to validate the concerns raised. We would also note the existence of a traffic calming ramp adjacent to this junction.

Cllr. Kinane thanked Mr. Haugh for the reply and clarified that the raised table is on the approach from Oranmore side and queried when the survey information would be available. Cllr. Kinane also advised that NOM funding would be made available for the project. In response, Mr. Haugh stated that fulfilling the request will take some time and he will confirm by email once the information is available. Mr. Haugh clarified that if a major issue is identified, funding will be pursued through the Low-Cost Safety Improvement Scheme 2027 or, if unsuccessful, through NOM or LPT funding. The earliest projected completion date would be 2027, dependent on resources and an evidence-base supporting both the need for action and the suitability of a raised table as a traffic calming measure.

4. PRESENTATION ON WESTBRIDGE JUNCTION LOUGHREA – SYSTRA LIMITED CONSULTANTS:

LMD2478

Mr. Haugh introduced Systra Limited as the consultants engaged to consider options proposed by the members for the Westbridge junction and stated that they were an internationally recognised consultancy who had worked with Galway County Council on a number of projects including the modelling of various phasing options at the Westbridge traffic lights. A report was presented by Systra Limited, with the Consultants outlining their engagement history including traffic surveys, microsimulation modelling, forecasting and phasing options feasibility assessments.

They then advised that their latest work to assess the feasibility of implementing a mini-roundabout (with a similar arrangement to the Barrack St. mini-roundabout) or a small compact roundabout, including upgraded pedestrian facilities at the Westbridge junction and Traffic Signals Optimisation was complete. They outlined that the report had considered the space available, junction visibility, vehicle tracking, existing issues including traffic delays, conflicting movements and pedestrian safety concerns. The Options Development and Assessment report was then presented.

The Consultants outlined three potential design options with both the compact and mini roundabout options found to be unworkable due to safety risks, impacts on large vehicles, and significant cost implications. The preferred third option identified by the Consultants was outlined as traffic signal optimisation incorporating revised signal staging, one-way traffic arrangements, and improved pedestrian facilities. The Consultants advised that this option is expected to reduce delays at the junction, improve safety for vulnerable road users, maintain all pedestrian crossings, and deliver the required improvements at a lower cost and

with minimal disruption. Mr Haugh clarified that this third option was not being formally proposed but was included in the report to provide clarity on the type of alterations that would be required to achieve any significant improvement in waiting times.

A discussion took place amongst the Members with concerns expressed regarding malfunctioning of the lights and delays at the lights, noting that local businesses fear potential closures as a result and they could not support measures which did not protect local businesses. Additionally, the Members stated their opposition to converting “Old Galway Road” to one-way traffic and enquired if a smart system of lights which adjusted according to traffic demand could be investigated.

In response to queries from the Members regarding on-site assessments, Mr. Haugh confirmed that there was a wider team from the Consultants involved in the project who had carried out site visits and assessed the situation on the ground. Mr. Haugh confirmed that the existing traffic control system was a “*smart*” system known as MOVA – Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Activated, but the system is reliant on inputs from in-ground detection loops and makes decisions in relation to phase sequencing and timings based on these inputs. Where these inputs are compromised, e.g. vehicles do not move on green, leave a space for other vehicles to exit from parking or side lanes etc. the system can temporarily misinterpret these inputs and delays are caused. Typically, the system recognises this issue and corrects accordingly, with most issues being resolved within 1 or 2 cycles. He stated that he would explore any alternative solutions to minimise disruptions caused by the existing detection loops being out of order or power outages. Mr. Haugh suggested that as an example, a telemetry system could enable a repair company to remotely monitor the lights and address issues more promptly, as currently issues can go undetected for several days, if not weeks, and this approach might facilitate quicker resolution of issues as they arise. Additionally, Mr. Haugh proposed considering a service contract to ensure proactive management, rather than waiting for problems to occur before taking action and stated that these are options that may be evaluated moving forward but would obviously come with a cost implication which the MD may not be able to accept. In response to a query from the Members regarding public consultation on the project, Mr. Haugh advised that any viable reconfiguration of the junction, supported by the Members, could be developed further and then put forward for public consultation.

Cllr. Kelly requested a costing of these options for the next MD meeting and stated that if there was a way to upgrade the technology that it should be costed and evaluated as a fourth option.

Mr. Harley stated that the report demonstrates clearly that a mini roundabout is not a viable solution, as it confirms articulated trucks failure to manoeuvre around it and it raises significant safety concerns at pedestrian crossings. Mr. Harley noted that it was positive that the facts were now on the table regarding which options are feasible and which are not. He further noted that although the current system is somewhat outdated, it remains adaptable, providing all necessary elements to allow the junction to function effectively. Vehicle congestion occurs due to specific failures; under normal, steady-state conditions, the junction operates adequately. However, when disruptions occur, dissatisfaction arises, highlighting the need to minimise the frequency of such failures. Mr. Harley stated that the team will

review the existing traffic lights to identify potential improvements, including remote access, to try to maintain it in steady-state conditions. Mr. Harley stressed that this was a discussion document rather than a definitive proposal, and this independent assessment of options could now facilitate further discussions with locals by the Elected Members and if further options arose from this local knowledge, then further discussions could take place.

Cllr. Regan noted that it was preferable for any presenters to be present at Municipal District Meetings for optimum audio and visual quality, and that it was also preferable to have a hard copy of the presentation on the day.

5. MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF LOUGHREA CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS **LMD2479**

Cllr. Killilea expressed his commitment to advancing the Traffic Management Plan for Kinvara and ensuring all deadlines are met and would collaborate with Mr. Harley to move the plan forward.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS **LMD2480**

A discussion took place amongst the Members regarding road maintenance and vehicular damage from potholes vis-à-vis constituents being unable to file claims for vehicle damage. It was noted that local authorities are generally not liable for damage caused solely by a failure to maintain or repair a road, unless in the case of malfeasance or misfeasance, meaning active wrongdoing or negligence by the authority can be proven. Mr. Harley clarified that changes have been made to the IPB process whereby previously, insurance claims were first reviewed by Roads staff before being forwarded to the IPB; now, claimants submit their claims directly to IPB through an online portal.

Cllr. Canning reported that the pedestrian lights at Finn's Filling Station are currently malfunctioning and Mr. Haugh advised he would follow up on this.

Cllr. Canning requested an update regarding the reeds at Portumna Bathing Area and Ms. McGann stated that health and safety documentation is being finalised with the contractor and works are on target to be carried out prior to the bathing season.

Cllr. Canning requested information regarding potential funding options for the Portumna Playground Committee and Mr. Haugh responded that matters related to playground funding are handled by the Corporate Services Section and Community Department and he advised Cllr Canning to contact these sections directly.

Cllr. McClearn asked if Uisce Éireann had made contact about plans to extract water from the River Shannon and whether they could be asked to attend a meeting of the Municipal District. Ms. McGann stated that, according to recent protocols circulated to Members, Uisce Éireann would only send representatives to Plenary Meetings.

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 13th April 2026

Cllr. Kinane requested an update on taking-in-charge of the Rinville Point walkway and Mr. Haugh advised that the issue is currently being reviewed by the Director of Service, Mr. Finn, and several factors required consideration prior to any decision, including coastal erosion protection measures and the ongoing maintenance costs associated with the walkway. He agreed to raise this matter again with Mr. Finn.

Cllr. Kinane sought an update on the Part 8 Pedestrian Crossing at Clarinbridge and Mr. Haugh replied that he would seek an update from the National Roads Project Office.


Cllr. Regan enquired about ring-fenced footpath grants for Loughrea MD and Mr. Harley clarified that funding for footpaths must come through a budgetary process and whether discretionary funding is reallocated for specific footpath funding is a matter for 2027 Budget Meeting discussions.

Cllr. Regan referred to a previous proposal put forward by the late Cllr. Pat Hynes for constructing a walk around Loughrea lake, highlighting that it would not require purchasing any land, could be developed in stages, and boardwalks used in areas where land is not made available by landowners. Cllr. Kelly supported this proposal and in response, Mr. Harley acknowledged that the suggestion and proposal were very worthwhile and he would present them to management but noted that there may be significant environmental and ecological issues.

In relation to a query from Cllr. Regan on a status update regarding the Greenway project, Mr. Harley advised he was not aware of any further progress but would check with the NRPO and revert to Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Harney stated that he is currently in discussions with Mr. O'Loughlin regarding providing NOM funding for sign cleaning and kerb painting at the traffic calming measure in Labane and also raised the possibility of placing lighting on Craughwell's east side, pointing out that the island near the traffic calming measures become much harder to see after nightfall. Mr. Haugh responded by noting a lighting quotation had been secured and recently shared with Members, requesting their support for funding via NOM or LPT.

CHRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN.



Cathaoirleach:


Date: