

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

**Minutes of Special Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea
held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Prospect Hill, Galway
on 31st March 2026**

I LATHAIR:

Leas - Chathaoirleach:

Cllr. M. Regan

Baill:

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

Oifigigh:

Mr. U. Finn Director of Services, 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, Mr. Tom Prendergast Senior Engineer, Ms. G. Byrne Administrative Officer, Ms. O. Cloonan Staff Officer, Ms S. Ryan A/Assistant Staff Officer.

AS LÁTHAIR:

Cllr. P. Killilea

1. TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT THE 2026 ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED WORKS OF MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE LOUGHREA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

LMD2474

At the outset, Mr. Uinsinn Finn, Director of Services, expressed appreciation to staff in the Roads Department and the Area Offices who had been involved in bringing together the Roads Programme and noted there was a 15% increase in the overall national grant income for County Galway compared to a 0.7% increase nationally.

Mr. Harley noted there was a multitude of funding sources across the total programme valued at €79m, including €46 million from the Department of Transport, €12 million from the Council's own resources, €2.6 million from NTA Active Travel, €500,000 from the NTA Bus Stops programme, and €1.4 million for LIS. It was noted that the funding will facilitate the upgrade of approximately 500kms of roads countywide, including approximately 124kms within the Loughrea Municipal District.

Mr. Haugh confirmed the programme includes 53 RI (Restoration Improvement) projects, 23 RM (Restoration Maintenance) projects and 9 discretionary road projects. Mr. Haugh stated that the selection of roads for inclusion in the programme was based on overall needs and priorities and was subject to budgetary constraints. Mr. Haugh thanked Mr. Kennedy, Mr. O'Loughlin, Mr. Duane and Mr. Gavin for the significant work undertaken in preparing the Draft Roads Programme.

The members welcomed the Roads Programme funding and thanked all the staff involved in the preparation of the programme.

Cllr. Regan enquired if there was any update on staffing shortages in the Loughrea Municipal District. Mr. Haugh advised that he is reviewing works that can be delivered by our own staff and those that may need to be undertaken by a contractor. He further advised that, should the situation not be rectified in the coming weeks, staff may be reassigned internally for a short period within the next two to three weeks.

Cllr. Kinane queried whether the stretch of road in Kilcolgan remains included in the three-year Roads Programme. In response, Mr. Haugh confirmed that, while the road surface is not considered suitable for inclusion in this year's Roads Programme, it will remain included in the three-year programme.

Cllr. Kinane enquired as to where the €150,000 and €200,000 funding allocations for the Galway to Athlone Greenway will be applied and in response, Mr. Finn confirmed there is no current update on the project. Mr. Finn advised that the situation was per the report already issued to Members indicating that the project will be divided into two sections, with Galway County Council progressing the Galway to Portumna section and this section has not yet been taken over and is currently in transition with Westmeath County Council. Mr. Finn confirmed that he will update the Members when further information becomes available.

Cllr. Kinane highlighted the L-4102 road between Casey's Cross and Clarinbridge Village. Mr. Haugh advised that there are drainage issues that need to be addressed before this section of road can be progressed and welcomed Cllr. Kinane's assistance and engagement in this regard.

Cllr. Kinane welcomed €50,000 for Casey's Cross junction realignment and asked if Tawin Island bridge is covered by the €65,000 Bridge Improvement Maintenance allocation. Mr. Prendergast replied that Tawin Bridge is not included in this year's funding but will check for a report and confirm.

Cllr. Kinane welcomed funding for parks, especially Cowpark in Clarinbridge, and expressed hope that a contractor would be appointed for yearly maintenance.

Cllr. McClearn enquired as to when the 2025 and 2026 Roads Programme works will be completed, noting his understanding that some roads from the 2027 programme have been brought forward, and asked whether any roads were omitted as a result. Mr. Haugh advised that the majority of roads in the 3-year programme are completed as initially indicated but not all roads have been completed and he confirmed that he would follow up on the matter and revert.

Cllr. McClearn referred to the value achieved in last year's tender process and, in light of increases in oil and bitumen prices, queried whether appropriate allowances have been made for cost inflation. Mr. Haugh advised that the price of bitumen has increased significantly in recent weeks and Galway County Council are on notice of a price increase that is due to take effect from 3rd April 2026. Mr. Harley added that the most recent

increases in fuel and bitumen prices occurred during the Covid period, at which time the Department provided support, and noted that this is a national issue and a case for support would be made should this issue arise again.

Cllr. McClearn welcomed the allocation of €20,000 for Kiltormer Bridge and €35,000 for the retaining wall on the L-88091. Cllr. McClearn raised ongoing concerns regarding Oxgrove Bridge, Killimor, noting it has been problematic for some time and presents a pinch point for approximately 300 metres on either side. He enquired whether, in the event that funding cannot be secured, Members could consider providing funding from their NOM allocations. Mr. Finn stated that Mr. Troy had enquired about funding for this location and would follow up with members after checking with him.

Cllr. McClearn requested an update regarding the Local Improvement Schemes (LIS) and Community Involvement Schemes (CIS). In response, Ms. Byrne reported that there are currently more than 200 applications for these initiatives. The LIS applications have been submitted to the Department for approval and as confirmation is pending applicants' written agreement to contribute, a definitive list for 2026 will be provided in due course.

Cllr. Canning enquired whether the full extent of the L-43132 Kilcorban Road is included in the programme. He also highlighted the roads at Green Door junction and Oxgrove Bridge, advising that he has spoken with the landowners at both locations and that they are supportive of works required.

Cllr. Maher concurred with Cllr. Regan regarding staffing constraints within the Loughrea Municipal District and noted that current staffing levels are insufficient. Cllr. Maher also enquired about available funding for footpaths within the Loughrea Municipal District.

Cllr. Harney highlighted the L-4502 Caher Peak Road and advised that the section towards Greenhouse Cross requires remediation, noting that approximately 0.75km is in poor condition. Cllr. Harney also highlighted a section of the L-8562 Mulroog East near the seashore which requires maintenance. In addition, Cllr. Harney advised that further sections of the L-8589 Cappagh Beg to Ardnagno Road require attention.

Cllr. Kelly stated that he is delighted to see the number of roads on the 2026 Loughrea Municipal District Roads Programme.

Cllr. Donoghue noted that, while motorists are legally required to maintain their vehicles, IPB has recently clarified that there is no corresponding legal obligation or liability on the Local Authority to repair and maintain public roads. She stated that Galway County Council should endeavour to improve road maintenance, acknowledging that this is constrained by available budgets. She further remarked that, given recent increases in LPT and commercial rates, constituents have an expectation of improved service levels.

Cllr. Donoghue asked about replacing the Road Patching Units, and in response, Mr. Haugh advised that while the units are roadworthy and have passed inspections, breakdowns can occur but the primary issue relating to the quality of temporary road repairs remains standing water and low temperatures.

Cllr. Regan welcomed the proposed traffic calming measures in Kilreekil and Carrabane, noting that the matter has been raised on a number of occasions previously. He stated that while the measures represent a positive start, he would like to see further similar initiatives implemented.

Cllr. Regan further requested that a dedicated budget be provided for footpaths across the Municipal District going forward. He proposed that €200,000 be allocated from the overall footpaths budget to facilitate the repair of existing footpaths and the installation of new footpaths, noting that many are currently in poor condition. Mr. Finn stated that Cllr. Regan had raised a valid point in relation to footpaths and agreed that it is an issue that Galway County Council should examine. Mr. Finn noted that grant funding is ring-fenced for specific purposes; however, discretionary funding could be considered, subject to the availability of resources and the need to balance priorities, as this would require the Elected Members to approve reallocation from other projects at the annual Budget Meeting.

Cllr. Regan enquired about when the R-351 Woodford to Ballynagar road would be completed and asked for clarification on what material is being used to fill in potholes as they are reappearing again after a short period of time. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that there is no issue with the material being used; however, standing water on the road and very cold temperatures are impacting on the durability of the repairs. He stated that when temperatures increase, temporary repairs can be expected to last much longer. Mr. Finn referred to the NOAC performance indicators, which benchmark local authorities, and noted that Galway County Council performs well in these indicators and that Galway County Council has been recognised as having some of the highest-quality regional roads nationally in terms of condition, and the standard of work carried out in recent years has extended the lifespan of roads. Mr. Finn also stated that the contribution of the Municipal District teams and staff should be acknowledged and noted that this is reflected in NOAC's recognition of the quality of the Council's road network.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr. M. Kinane, SECONDED by Cllr. J. McClearn, the Loughrea Municipal District Roads Programme 2026 was agreed by the Members.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr. J. McClearn, SECONDED by Cllr. Canning, the Loughrea Municipal District Schedule of Works 2026 was agreed by the Members.

CHRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN.



Cathaoirleach:

11th of May 2026.
Date: