

**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 8th June 2026**

I LATHAIR:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. G. Donohue

Baill: Cllrs. I. Canning, P. Killilea, G. Finnerty,
D. Kelly, M. Kinane, M. Maher, J. McClearn, M. Regan.

AS LÁTHAIR: Cllr. L. Harney.

Oifigigh: Ms. E. Ruane Director of Services, Mr. C. Harley Senior Engineer, Mr. G. Haugh Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. E. Gallagher, Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. N. Kennedy Executive Engineer, Ms. M. McGann Meetings Administrator, Ms. O. Cloonan Staff Officer.

**1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
OF LOUGHREA HELD ON 11th MAY 2026. LMD2489**

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 11th May 2026 were approved by the Municipal District Members and signed by the Cathaoirleach on the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. M. Regan and **SECONDED** by Cllr. M. Maher.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Cllr. Kelly stated that he had been contacted by a number of people opposed to the demolition of the existing open-air dressing shelter at the Long Point, and also requested an update on the provision of a ramp to ensure accessibility at the amenity. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that these matters would be addressed as part of the review process arising from the decision of An Coimisiún Pleanála and an update would be sought from the Regeneration Team once this process has been finalised. Cllr. Maher stated that he had been raising the need for a disabled ramp at Long Point for many years, noting that residents of St. Brendan's Nursing Home who use wheelchairs are unable to access the area.

Cllr. Kelly sought an update on when construction works are expected to commence at St. Joseph's and St. Brigid's Road Portumna and in response, Ms. Ruane advised that she would seek an update from the Director of Services for Housing, Mr. D. Mitchell, and revert to Cllr. Kelly.

Cllr. Maher requested an update on the lights at Westbridge, Loughrea, noting that while there had been some improvement, the lights were still not operating properly. In response, Mr. Harley advised that Galway County Council had entered into a maintenance contract

under which a contractor would monitor the site regularly. He stated that Galway County Council remains committed to ensuring the lights are in full working order and that every effort will be made to maintain the current system.

Cllr. Maher sought an update from the Director of Services on when the concession licence for Long Point, Loughrea, would be progressed, noting that the toilet facilities should be available to the public year-round. Cllr. Regan concurred with Cllr. Maher noting that September was approaching and that the toilet facilities would again be closed to the public. Cllr. Regan requested an indicative date for the advertisement of the concession licence and thanked the staff of Loughrea MD for their work cleaning Long Point following the recent spell of fine weather, noting that public behaviour regarding littering and parking had been unacceptable and suggested that additional signage or patrols may be required. Cllr. Maher also complimented the staff of the Loughrea Area for their assistance in opening Long Point during the recent spell of fine weather. In response, Ms. Ruane advised that the Council are reviewing procurement requirements with a view to preparing documentation to enable the proposal on an initial trial basis and will issue an update to the Members once the procurement requirements are finalised.

Cllr. Canning sought an update on the illegal encampment in Portumna and on the cost of the refurbishment works at Capira. In response, Ms. Ruane advised that the OPW had informed her following the previous MD meeting that they were awaiting advice from the Chief State Solicitor's Office and that she had asked to be kept informed. In relation to Capira, Ms. Ruane stated that she had followed up with the Housing Section and understood that they would contact Cllr. Canning directly regarding the expenditure involved.

Cllr. Canning thanked the staff in the Portumna Area and Ms. Ann Dolan for the removal of reeds at Portumna Bathing Area, which resulted in the removal of the 'do not swim' notice. Cllr. Canning also enquired whether the public toilet facilities could be opened more frequently as required at local level. In response, Mr. Haugh noted that additional opening of toilet facilities creates human and financial resource issues including additional cleaning and maintenance of the toilets which may impact day-to-day work. Following the discussion, Cllr. Maher requested that Mr. Haugh provide Members with an indication of the additional funding required so that it could be considered during the budget process in October.

Cllr. McClearn expressed his satisfaction that the Post Office will remain on Main Street, Loughrea, noting its importance to commercial activity and the vibrancy of the town centre.

Cllr. Finnerty enquired whether funding could be sought for the car park at Thoor Ballylee, noting that the pilot shuttle bus service, known as the Yeats-Gregory Explorer, was recently launched and the car park requires repair and maintenance. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that as the car park ownership has reverted to Galway County Council it is available to be resurfaced, however, the availability of funding is an issue and support through Notice of Motion or Local Property Tax funding would be welcome.

Cllr. Maher and Cllr. Kelly welcomed the progress on the housing development at Cosmona. Cllr. Kelly encouraged Galway County Council to progress further housing projects without delay, particularly where available land facilitates access to employment opportunities.

Cllr. Donohue complemented the Council for installing slip-resistant steps at Longpoint.

Cllr. Donohue concurred with Cllr. Finnerty regarding the need for attention to the car park at Thoor Ballylee and stated that the car park adjacent to the Regional Road at Long Point also requires attention due to potholes. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that NOM or LPT funding would also be welcomed for this project.

Cllr. Kinane stressed the need to progress the taking in charge of the Rinville Point Walkway particularly as Measure 3 of the Outdoor Recreation and Infrastructure Scheme is open until November 2026, stating that it would be worthwhile use of LPT funding to provide the match funding element of this project. In response, Mr. Harley advised there are significant ecological constraints in relation to the proposal, and in the first instance, funding may be required for consultancy on ecological issues to identify the next steps. He confirmed that he would arrange a meeting with Mr. Finn, Director of Services, and all relevant parties to consider the ecological requirements that would need to be addressed as part of this process.

Cllr. Kinane sought assurances regarding the safety of Tawin Island Bridge and stated that the matter was ongoing since Storm Eowyn. In response, Mr. Harley advised that Mr. Prendergast and his team had indicated that there was nothing to suggest that the bridge should be closed or that it was unsafe. He stated that they were awaiting an exceptionally low tide to coordinate an inspection with the team from the University of Galway.

2. FLOODING UPDATE: ENDA GALLAGHER S.E.E.

LMD2490

Mr. Gallagher stated that he was at today's meeting to address the correspondence that had been received from David Murray on behalf of the SGFRC (South Galway Flood Relief Committee). Mr. Gallagher acknowledged the frustration that was felt by the members of the Committee and the communities in general in the Gort Lowlands, with the rate of progress of the scheme. He also acknowledged the increased anxiety experienced with every year that passes without having a flood relief scheme in place.

Mr. Gallagher confirmed the contents of the correspondence but reassured the members that progress on this scheme is in line with similar schemes that are progressing under the CFRAM (Catchment-based Flood Relief Risk Assessment and Management) process nationally. The planning requirements and level of consultation required on the scheme have been set at national and European level, with little scope for Galway County Council to deviate from the prescribed pathway.

Mr. Gallagher stated that unfortunately, there is an extremely limited number of specialists available to the Council when reports and opinions are required on turlough related issues and invariably, these specialists already have commitments in place and are not available to dedicate themselves fully to this project at short notice.

Mr. Gallagher stated that given the length of time that has been invested into this scheme, there is an incredible amount of data and information available. One of the key issues facing the project team at present is deciding the most relevant data and the format of that data that

should be included in our planning submission. The current engagement with NPWS has been extremely helpful in identifying their data priorities for the scheme.

Mr. Gallagher stated that the SGFRC have sought four commitments in their communication, and he proposed to the Members that he provide a detailed programme of works including where the four commitments being sought are addressed, where possible. Mr. Gallagher also gave an undertaking to provide an update on the programme at future Municipal District meetings.

A discussion took place among the Members and the following was agreed:

- a) A letter to issue to Minister Moran outlining the concerns raised by the SGFRC and confirming the support of the Elected Members for the committee. It was agreed that the letter also requests that the Minister come to Galway to meet with the Committee and Elected Members.
- b) In the meantime, a meeting between the project team and the SGFRC should be arranged for as soon as possible, to discuss the current progress on the scheme. Mr Gallagher confirmed that he had given an undertaking to meet after an NPWS response but will arrange to meet in the interim and issue an invite to the Elected Members when details are confirmed.

Cllr. Donohue highlighted that in addition to the growing frustration over delays, there is increased anxiety and fear amongst the communities of South Galway as the next major flood event is getting closer with the passing of each year, and we still have no scheme in place, or indication that it will be in place in time. Cllr. Kinnane stated that it was important to heed the 'lessons learnt' review of other major schemes such as the review undertaken by Cork County Council on behalf of the OPW and set realistic timeframes for a project based on known timeframes from completed schemes. The Members also highlighted other issues to be raised, including the need to distill data to what was actually required, and the low number of experts available in this field.

The Members reaffirmed their commitment to the project and asked Mr. Gallagher to draft a letter to the Minister stressing the need for action on the areas within the OPW's remit.

Cllr. Kinnane requested that a detailed update be presented at the next MD meeting on the Oranmore to Kinvara Flood Relief Scheme, ensuring that the Bridge Centre and the wall on the Coast Road in Oranmore are specifically addressed. Mr. Gallagher confirmed that a draft Interim Report had been forwarded to the OPW and a meeting was due to be held with the OPW within the coming weeks to discuss potential solutions. Cllr. Kinane requested a further update on progress at the July MD Meeting.

3. LPT (LOCAL PROPERTY TAX) FUND NOTICE OF MOTION

LMD2491

On the proposal of Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Finnerty, an allocation of €9,700 was approved from the Local Property Tax Discretionary Capital Fund towards the repair of gates at Garrybreeda Cemetery, Loughrea.

4. MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF LOUGHREA CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

LMD2492

Cllr. Donohue enquired whether there was any update on the use of the hotbox in the Gort Area. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that staff have not yet had an opportunity to use it but that it is hoped it will be operational shortly. Cllr. Finnerty stated that it was essential to procure the use of a hotbox for the Municipal District considering the prevalence of potholes and if any LPT or NOM assistance was required for equipment or training to progress the matter the Elected Members should be advised.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LMD2493

Cllr. Finnerty enquired about the process for replacing seating at the bus stop in Gort and in response, Mr. Haugh advised that the matter falls under the remit of the National Transport Authority (NTA).

Cllr. McClearn enquired whether Coillte could be contacted to identify if there were plans for updating of toilet facilities at the Forest Park in Portumna. Cllr. McClearn also referenced a number of locations within the Loughrea MD where members of the public swim in areas not patrolled by lifeguards and enquired whether signage and lifebuoys could be provided. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that he will seek the advice of the Water Safety Officer but noted that issues may arise where the lands are not in the ownership of Galway County Council or are not designated bathing areas.

Cllr. McClearn enquired whether a representative of the Portumna Public Realm Project could attend a future meeting to provide Members with an update and in response, Mr. Haugh advised that this update will be included in the request to the Regeneration Team to attend a meeting.

Cllr. Maher sought an update on the cycling and walkway project from Cosmona. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that, as he understood it, the walkway at Cosmona is not currently being progressed, with the focus instead on the Danesfort, Bride Street and Caheronaun areas, in conjunction with the Safe Routes To School (SRTS) project associated with St. Brendan's and St. Ita's National Schools. Mr. Haugh advised that this Active Travel Project is ongoing, and a survey has recently been completed, and he would request the Active Travel Team to provide a specific update on the project timeline. Cllr. Maher requested an update at the next Municipal District Meeting and stressed that if the town project was not going ahead, it was essential that a project proposal for the Municipal District is submitted for funding consideration.

Cllr. Canning enquired whether there was any update in relation to finishing the pedestrian crossing in Portumna. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that the pedestrian crossing forms part of an Active Travel Project and he would seek an update on the matter.

Cllr. Kinane enquired whether a local school could apply to the Safe Routes to School Scheme if it had missed the initial deadline and in response, Mr. Haugh advised that the scheme is currently closed to applications and any queries should be directed to An Taisce.

Cllr. Kinane raised the issue of the solar bin in Clarinbridge, stating it is currently out of order and in response, Mr. Haugh advised that he will follow up on the matter with Mr. O'Loughlin and revert to Cllr. Kinane.

Cllr. Kinane enquired whether signage could be erected in the Cowpark area of Clarinbridge following reports from local residents of dogs being off their leads and posing a risk to elderly pedestrians. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that he will discuss with the Dog Warden in relation to appropriate signage.

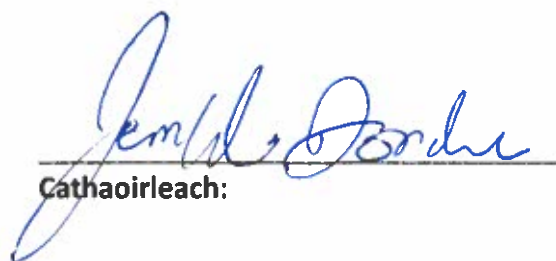
On the proposal of Cllr. McClearn, seconded by Cllr. Kelly, it was agreed that the following Motion signed by all the Elected Members, regarding the provision of a publicly owned swimming pool, be identified as an urgent objective of the Loughrea Municipal District:

"Loughrea Municipal District makes the provision of a public-owned public swimming pool in Loughrea an urgent objective of the Municipal District and calls on all relevant staff of Galway County Council to work coherently to progress this objective using whatever means are available."

The Members requested an update on the Greenway at the next Municipal District meeting and in response, Mr. Harley advised that he would seek an update from the Project Office.

Cllr. McClearn enquired whether TII had reverted to Galway County Council in relation to the repair works on the N65 at Heathlawn and whether this funding could be redirected to other necessary projects. Cllr. Kelly concurred stating that Kilmeen Cross had not received funding under recent announcements, and footpaths needed urgent investment. In response, Mr. Harley stated that it was not possible to redirect TII monies to footpath maintenance, and any reallocation of Galway County Council budgets to footpaths would need to identify another area of funding to be reduced. In relation to works at Heathlawn, Mr. Harley advised that the proposed minor works will enable the traffic lights to be removed until more substantial works can be done.

CHRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN.


Cathaoirleach:


Date: