

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

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea
held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Prospect Hill, Galway,
on 13th July 2026**

I LATHAIR:

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. G. Donohue

Baill:

Cllrs. I. Canning,
G. Finnerty (Online),
L. Harney,
D. Kelly,
M. Maher,
J. McClearn,
M. Regan.

Oifigigh:

Ms. E. Ruane Director of Services,
Mr. C. Harley Senior Engineer,
Mr. G. Haugh Senior Executive Engineer,
Mr. T.J. Redmond Senior Executive Engineer,
Mr. E. Gallagher 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:

Cllrs. M. Kinane
P. Killilea.

At the outset of the meeting, the Members extended their condolences to Ms. Denise McNamara, Connacht Tribune, on the passing of her father, Mr. Joe McNamara. The Members also expressed condolences to the family of Mr. Noel Burke, retired Planner with Galway County Council, who passed away recently.

**1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
OF LOUGHREA HELD ON 8th JUNE 2026.**

LMD2494

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 8th June 2026 were approved by the Municipal District Members and signed by the Cathaoirleach on the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. M. Maher and **SECONDED** by Cllr. L. Harney.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF LOUGHREA HELD ON 8th JUNE 2026. LMD2495

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Municipal District of Loughrea held on 8th June 2026 were approved by the Municipal District Members and signed by the Cathaoirleach on the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. J. McClearn and **SECONDED** by Cllr. M. Maher.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Cllr. Donohue clarified that a Meeting between Ministers Canney and 'Boxer' Moran with the South Galway Flood Relief Committee had to be cancelled and is to be rescheduled, and the Committee had been notified accordingly.

Cllr. McClearn enquired whether there was any update from Coillte in relation to the provision of public toilet facilities in Portumna, and in response, Ms. Ruane advised that she would seek a response from Coillte. Cllr. McClearn also enquired as to when the Public Realm Team would attend a meeting to provide an update in relation to Portumna and Ms. McGann advised that she would link in with the Regeneration Team in relation to briefing the Members.

Cllr. McClearn stated that, at the previous meeting, he had requested signage prohibiting swimming, and the provision of lifebuoys at a number of locations where swimming takes place, in particular Rossmore Pier. In response, Mr. Haugh referred to his email to the Members dated 18th June 2026, wherein the Water Safety Development Officer advised that Galway County Council does not erect or maintain signage or ring buoys at locations which do not fall under Galway County Council's management responsibility or which are not Designated Bathing Areas. Cllr. McClearn reiterated that Rossmore Pier was not a safe place for swimming, and Mr. Haugh advised that he would speak with the Water Safety Development Officer again in relation to Rossmore.

Cllr. Kelly sought an update on when works are expected to commence at St. Joseph's Road and the renovations at St. Brigid's Road cottages in Portumna as boarding was now in place at the site. In response, Ms. Ruane advised that she seek an update from the Director of Services for Housing.

Cllr. Regan complimented Loughrea MD staff on their clean-ups at the Long Point, noting that large crowds had gathered there during the recent spell of fine weather with subsequent problems regarding littering and drinking alcohol at the amenity area. Ms. Ruane thanked Cllr. Regan for acknowledging the staff's hard work and emphasized the importance of individual responsibility for disposing of litter properly.

Cllr. Maher requested an update from the Active Travel Team at the next meeting of the Municipal District.

Cllr. McClearn highlighted the national recognition which the recent Famine Commemoration held at the Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna, had received, and commended the excellent organization of the event by Ms. Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, and the South-East Galway Integrated Rural Development Company Limited.

3. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE PART 8 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR KILCONIERON BURIAL GROUND EXTENSION

LMD2496

This agenda item was deferred.

4. FLOODING UPDATE

LMD2497

Further to the request from the members at the previous meeting, Mr Gallagher gave a presentation on the progress of the Oranmore to Kinvara, Storm Debi Study. Mr. Gallagher outlined the details of the storm and the engagement of RPS (now Tetra Tech) from September 2024 to examine the storm event, the effects of the event on local communities, and possible measures to mitigate such effects in the future.

Mr Gallagher outlined the works that had been completed on the project to date. The Interim Report was recently finalised and discussed with the OPW. The 83 properties that were affected by the storm are to be examined under three categories;

- (a) those best suited for Individual Property Protection (flood gates etc.)
- (b) those houses in clusters where a small scheme (flood wall) may be a suitable solution
- (c) large scale individual scheme (Clarinbridge Retail Park).

Mr. Gallagher stated that it is envisaged that these categories may form the basis for three separate funding submissions to the OPW. Tetra Tech is now to progress more detailed assessments and likely funding requirements for each of the properties.

The Interim Report also looked at the damaged walls on the Maree Road and the Coast Road. The report concludes that the wall on the Maree Road should not have adversely affected the houses in Oran Island. The report also provides details of standard of replacement wall required on the Coast Road. He noted that it will not be feasible or effective to provide the replacement wall to full coastal protection standards, so this issue will be discussed further with the relevant Area Office.

Regarding the South Galway Flood Relief Scheme, Mr Gallagher confirmed to the meeting that a presentation was to be given to the South Galway Flood Relief Committee the coming Thursday at 5.30 in the Gort Fire Station (beside the Council offices) and the Members were invited to attend.

5. ACTIVE TRAVEL UPDATE

LMD2498

Mr. Redmond presented an update on the Active Travel projects in Loughrea Municipal District and confirmed the stage of works for each project:

- Loughrea Active Travel Scheme: Feasibility and Options Report submitted to NTA for Phase 2 Gateway approval. Preparations for non-statutory consultation underway, with emerging preferred option to go to NTA for approval, and it was envisaged that a workshop for Elected Members would be held in September 2026.

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- Pedestrian Crossing in Portumna: Civil works completed with outstanding items including signal heads, signage, drainage at new crossing location at Castle Avenue.
- Pedestrian Crossings in Kinvara: 2 no. Feasibility and Options Reports submitted to TII for approval, with further information on Junction Turning Counts requested, which have now been procured and completed. Projects will now progress to preliminary design and Road Safety Audit Stage 1.
- Portumna Community Transport Study: currently at draft stage, submitted to TII and NTA who have reverted with feedback for incorporation.
- Glenbrack Active Travel Scheme: Land dedication secure and preliminary design in progress, which will be followed by AA screening and onwards to Part 8 Planning.
- Bus Stop Enhancement Programme: tender issued for design of bus stop upgrades and provision of bus shelter installations at 17 locations in county, with 5 in Loughrea at Ballinderreen, Craughwell, Kinvara, Eyrecourt and Loughrea.
- Safe Routes To School (SRTS): Four rounds of funding issued to date by An Taisce with 7 projects underway in Loughrea Municipal District.

On behalf of the Members, Cllr. Donohue thanked Mr. Redmond for the informative presentation. Cllr. Donohue queried why Ennis Road Gort was not included in the Bus Shelter Programme, and in response, Mr. Redmond advised that the Regeneration Team have a proposal for a bus shelter in the Square, and further discussions would take place about additional locations to be included in the town centre regeneration project. Cllr. Donohue queried if the provision of NOM funding by Elected Members for a SRTS-type project had any bearing on its future priority for funding, having previously awarded funding for road markings at Kilbeacanty School. In response, Mr. Redmond advised that decisions on SRTS projects were a matter for An Taisce rather than Galway County Council. Cllr. Donohue raised the issue of footpaths outside the 60km town centre zone and enquired if the local authority had a statutory duty to maintain these under the Roads Act 1993. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that the Council had an obligation to ensure the most efficient and appropriate allocation of limited financial resources, and in this regard, had to prioritise available funding for town and village centres which had the highest footfall. Cllr. Donohue welcomed progress on the Glenbrack Active Travel Scheme as it was a project raised by her many times over the years.

Cllr. Canning welcomed the connection of lights at Portumna Pedestrian Crossing in the last few days but observed that the markings on the ramp were worn and should be improved. Cllr. Canning welcomed progress on the Safe Routes to School project at Killeen N.S. but stated that he receives a lot of phone calls regarding Tynagh and Portumna Schools which are on a very busy road and enquired whether these could be looked at under future tranches of funding. Cllr. Canning stated that many projects were noted as subject to NTA funding and enquired regarding the frequency and likelihood of this funding, and in response, Mr. Redmond advised that NTA funding is announced annually and the local authority was ahead of budgeted spend and had received an additional allocation this year.

Cllr. Maher welcomed the detailed update to be given to Elected Members in September 2026 on the Loughrea Active Travel Scheme. Cllr. Maher stated that road realignment was required at Caheronaun in light of pressures placed on other traffic by parking of cars by school students. Mr. Redmond advised that the Bride Street project was aimed at

preventing informal parking and maintaining access for local residents. Cllr. Maher stated that a more robust funding model was required for bus shelters, as there is a need for further shelters in town centres, particularly in wintertime.

Cllr. Kelly welcomed the inclusion of Loughrea Town Centre in the Bus Shelter Enhancement Programme, noting the need for additional shelters, and enquired about the approximate cost of providing a shelter. In response, Mr. Redmond advised that typical timeframes are specified on the NTA website; however, it is very difficult to specify outside of these statutory deadlines as the actual timeframes are specific to each project. Mr. Redmond advised that the tender for bus shelters had been issued last week, and it was hoped that works would start within a few weeks.

Cllr. Regan welcomed the update on Loughrea Active Travel Scheme and referenced additional housing in Caheronaun which created a need for Active Travel projects in this area. Cllr. Regan noted that a link road on this side of the town had been removed from the original Bypass project, and it was now timely to revisit this project. Mr. Redmond advised that the priority at the moment was to concentrate on current projects.

Cllr. Harney welcomed the pedestrian crossings for Kinvara and stated that these were anxiously awaited by the local community. In response, Mr. Redmond advised that the Council have to work through the statutory processes and guidelines set down by TII with regard to delivery of these projects. Cllr. Harney welcomed the Safe Routes to Schools project for Ballinderreen N.S. noting its benefits for road safety on this busy road and noted that there was also a need for a bus shelter on the southbound road.

Mr. Harley expressed his thanks to the Active Travel Team for progressing numerous schemes over the last number of years through complex planning and design processes and doing so well ahead of budgets which was reflected in the award of additional funding this year. Mr. Harley acknowledged that the process may appear slow to deliver, however, the Council was bound to comply with the existing statutory processes and rules.

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

LMD2499

On the proposal of Cllr. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. McClearn, an allocation of €21,000 was approved from the Local Property Tax Discretionary Capital Fund for resurfacing of car park outside Abbeygormican Cemetery and lining of spaces with accessible parking spaces.

On the proposal of Cllr. Finnerty, seconded by Cllr. Regan, an allocation of €5,000 was approved from the Local Property Tax Discretionary Capital Fund towards upgrading pathways at Rakerin Cemetery.

7. MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF LOUGHREA CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

LMD2500

Cllr. Donohue stated that it was her understanding that a footpath built by the Council should remain under the Council's maintenance responsibility under the Roads Act 1993. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that the Roads Act, 1993 outlined the functions of a Roads

Authority but decisions on maintenance were also made based on what is the best use of the Municipal District's funding allocation, with a higher priority given to footpaths in town and village centres which had a higher footfall.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LMD2501

Cllr. Maher requested that the Local Property Tax Workshop be arranged for the next Municipal District Meeting in September, to provide clarification on the level of funding available for allocation to various schemes.

Cllr. Harney sought an update on the installation of bollards at the level crossing in Craughwell, and in response, Mr. Haugh referred to his e-mail to Members dated 4th June 2026, whereby Irish Rail confirmed this would not be in line with current standards. Mr. Haugh noted that Irish Rail have a proposal for upgrade of the rail crossing including repaving of the crossing, however, no funds have been allocated to the project to date.

Cllr. Regan suggested that the Loughrea MD Members write to GAA Headquarters seeking the introduction of Video Assistant Referee (VAR) technology to support referees in Gaelic Games. He noted that, given the significance of decisions in closely contested games, including those decided by a point or a goal, additional support would assist referees in making accurate decisions.

Cllr. McClearn requested that hedge cutting be carried out along the R356 from Killimor to Eyrecourt on safety grounds. In response, Mr. Haugh advised that it remains the responsibility of the landowner or occupier to ensure that trees, hedges & other vegetation on their lands do not interfere with the safe use or maintenance of the public road but that limited hedge cutting was being undertaken, with National and Regional roads being prioritised.

A discussion took place regarding the junction at Gurtymadden following a recent accident at this location. Mr. Haugh advised that the "see-through" issue at this location could only be resolved by a junction realignment, but there are three existing properties immediately bordering this junction that would make this preferred solution almost impossible to deliver. Mr Haugh agreed to personally review the location and any available collision data. He agreed to consider the implementation of other potential road safety measures to highlight the existence of this junction to road users.

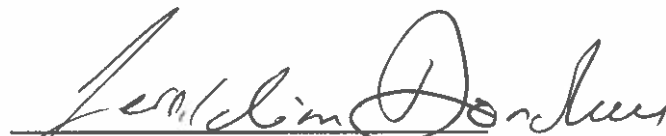
Cllr. McClearn noted concerns regarding the behaviour of e-scooter users at the recent Gaelforce event at Portumna and enquired whether any action could be taken, and in response, Mr. Haugh advised that this was a matter for An Garda Síochána. Cllr. Canning acknowledged the support of Portumna Chamber of Commerce for the event and noted it had been a significant week for Portumna with 505 competitors from across the country participating in the Lake Swim, while the Medieval Pageantry event had taken place at Portumna Castle. Cllr. Canning recognised the work of the Portumna Area Staff and the contribution of local residents in cleaning and weeding the area.

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Cllr. Maher sought an update on the delegation from Cappataggle that attended the Loughrea MD Meeting on the 9th February 2026, and in response, Mr. Haugh stated that he had invited the Members to assign NOM funding towards works at the southern part of the junction. Cllr. Kelly suggested that Gurty Madden Cross and Kilmeen Cross need to be realigned and lit at night and emphasized the importance of Elected Members having more say in prioritization of these works based on local knowledge, rather than solely relying on TII processes. A discussion took place on potential solutions for these junctions, and the Members agreed to amalgamate funding to achieve any local traffic calming solutions. Mr. Harley advised the Members that the Council was limited by what infrastructure is possible at these locations, and stated that he would refer all 3 junctions to An Garda Síochána to include in their ongoing programme for road traffic enforcement monitoring.

Cllr. Harney suggested that an option similar to the recently installed warning signs, anti-skid surfacing, and junction indicators installed at Casey's Cross, Clarinbridge would be a solution to Cappataggle Cross to help reduce accidents at this junction. Cllr. Donohue stated that this was a very dangerous junction with poor sightlines and any traffic calming measures which are available need to be done. Mr. Haugh advised that a consultant has been appointed for the design stage of a project at Casey's Cross under the Low-Cost Safety Improvement Scheme.

CHRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN.



Cathaoirleach:

14-9-2026
Date:

