

CHOMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY ON THURSDAY 12th DECEMBER, 2013 & 2.00 PM

CATHAOIRLEACH:

Cllr. L. Carroll, Mayor of the County of Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, Comh. S. Ó Cuaig, T. Ó Curraoin, Cllrs. J. Cuddy, S. Cuniffe, M. Fahy, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, M. Finnerty, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, Comh. S. Ó Laoi, Cllrs. M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, J. McDonagh, T. McHugh, P. Roche, K. Ryan, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, Cllrs. S. Walsh, T. Walsh, T. Welby & B. Willers.

Oifigigh:

Ms. M. Moloney, County Manager; Messrs. J. Cullen, K. Kelly, E. Cummins Directors of Service; L. Gavin, A/Director of Service; G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance; M. Owens, County Secretary & Meetings Administrator; E. Molloy, Senior Engineer; P. Ó Neachtain, Oifigeach Gaeilge; G. Healy, Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

1633

The Mayor proposed that the Meeting be adjourned for 10 minutes as a mark of respect to the late Mrs. Therese Hoade mother of Cllr. Mary Hoade who passed away recently. The Mayor and Members expressed their condolences to Mary and the Hoade family, noting that Mrs. Hoade's passing was a great loss to her daughter Mary and all of her family.

The Manager offered her condolences to Cllr. Hoade and her family on the death of their beloved mother, on behalf of Management and Staff of the Council. She said that Mrs. Hoade had been a great support to Mary in her political and family life.

Cllr. Hoade thanked the Members and Officials for their kind words of sympathy and for their support at this sad time.

A resolution of sympathy was also extended to the following:

- Linda Catchpole, Carnmore, Oranmore
- Pat McCartan, Carnmore, Oranmore.
- The Curtin Family, Newtownlynch, Kinvara.

- Mr. & Mrs. Gerry Mitchell, Liscune, Ballymacward, Ballinasloe.
- Mrs. Madden, Kylemore, Conamara.
- Chris O'Connor, Rockfield, Moyard.
- Tony Joyce, Cregg, Lettermullen.
- Ann Flaherty, Trá Bháin, Leitir Móir.
- Colm Beatty, Lettermore.
- Padraigh Folan (Tom) Leic, Leitir Móir.
- Manus Ó Conghaile, Aille, Indreabhán.

The Meeting was adjourned and was reconvened after 10 minutes as a mark of respect to the late Mrs. Therese Hoade.

The Mayor was joined by the Members in extended congratulations to Muintir Oileán Inis Oirr on winning the LivCom International Award for Liveable Communities and a further award for its best practice in promoting and sustaining healthy lifestyles at the award ceremony which took place in Xiamen, PR China in 2013.

Comh. Ó Tuairisg said that it was a terrific achievement for Oileán Inis Oirr to win such awards taking into account that the Island is a community of under 300 people and he said that it shows how proactive Island communities can be and he extended his congratulations to all involved. He said that the issue of air transport to the Islands is a worry and he asked all of the Members to support the continuation of air transport to the Islands.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1634

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 25th November, 2013 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor, on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. McClearn.

Arising from the Minutes, Comh. Ó Laoi referred to the Report of the Galway City & Western Environs Fire Review Group & Options Appraisal of the future provision of Fire Services for the Western Environs which was presented to the Members by Mr. Cummins at the November Monthly Meeting. Cllr. Ó Laoi proposed "that €30,000 be set aside in the Budget to facilitate the Council in advancing the selection of a suitable site or a suitable existing building to accommodate a retained fire station in An Cheathrú Rua/Casla area." This proposal was seconded by Cllr. E. Mannion, and agreed.

Arising from a discussion on the motion, Cllr. T. Broderick expressed concern at the approach of seeking to determine funding priorities and the allocation of funding in the absence of notification of the Local Government Fund allocation and certainty in relation to available funding for 2014 and indicated that he was not in agreement with the motion.

The County Manager in reply to comments and questions on the matter confirmed that the draft Budget, as circulated to the Members, did not provide for any addition to the existing fire service for South Conamara and accordingly it would be necessary to consider the motion at the Budget Meeting in the context of budget proposals and available resources.

Also arising from the Minutes, Cllr. Cuniffe referred to the Report on the Taking in Charge of Housing Estates. He said that Residents Associations feel very disheartened that their estates are not taken in charge and many feel that the Council should give more resources to taking in charge of housing estates. He also proposed that as an interim measure that the public lighting in such housing estates be taken in charge by the Council pending the completion of the process for taking in charge the full estate.

Mr. Kelly said that it is recognized in the Report circulated at the November Monthly Meeting that it will take time to complete the work which is outstanding in unfinished housing estates. He said it remains the responsibility of the developers to complete the works and the Council could not expect the taxpayer to foot the bill for same. He said that he does not believe that current legislation would allow the Council to take on board Cllr. Cuniffe's proposal. He said that the Council is making a lot of progress with developers and he feels that the approach being taken by the Council is the correct one.

Cllr. Cuniffe said that the taking in charge of parts of estates can be done as it has happened previously. He said that it will take too long to get all estates to a stage where they can be taken in charge and he said that the Council should put more staffing resources in place to deal with this issue.

Cllr. Roche supported Cllr. Cuniffe on the issue of public lighting in housing estates and he said that it is unfair that residents of housing estates are liable for public lighting charges.

Cllr. McClearn said that it must be recognized that the Council made great progress during 2013 as regards the taking in charge of housing estates. He also outlined that a small number of estates existed with no public lighting due to the absence of a condition of planning requiring the provision of same and that this was a matter that would require attention by the Council at some stage.

Mr. Kelly stated that adequate staffing resources are in place to deal with unfinished estates and he feels that there will be a positive outcome in this regard.

Cllr. Hynes asked that where residents of housing estates request the Council to take the estate in charge and where there is no bond in place, the matter should be addressed at Planning SPC Meetings or by the Corporate Policy Group.

The Conamara Area Members raised the issue of Seanapheisteen Bridge and expressed their concern regarding the impact of the weight restrictions on the bridge of 1 ½ tonne and the hardship to local residents arising from same.

Mr. Gavin replied that the Council intends to replace the bridge and this will entail going through the formal planning process which will take at least three months to complete. However, he said that the weight restriction will be examined and if it can be increased, taking into account safety, this will be considered.

In reply to Comh. Ó Cuaig, Mr. Gavin said that the Council would have no problem in releasing the Engineers Report regarding the bridge.

In reply to Cllr. Fahy who referred to his Notice of Motion regarding a bridge requiring repair at Peterswell requesting that the Council secure emergency funding from the OPW to carry out necessary repairs to the bridge, Mr. Gavin said that it would be necessary to establish the status of the bridge and would revert to Cllr. Fahy on the matter.

Cllr. G. Finnerty referred to Notice of Motion No. 30 on the Minutes and proposed “that Galway County Council invite the various interest groups who represent rural areas and in particular deal with rural decline i.e. CEDRA etc. to give a presentation on their works and findings, and solutions if any, to rural decline and particular reference would be made to a Small Towns Study carried out by the Western Regional Authority in 2011”. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Fahy, and agreed.

In reply to Cllr. Cuddy, Cllr. Gavin said that no formal notification has been received by the Council regarding the proposed new approach to changing the speed limits on local roads and this is awaited.

Cllr. Cuddy referred to his Notice of Motion on the Minutes regarding Galway Mountain Rescue Service and said that it is vital that the Council make provision in the Budget 2014 towards providing some funding to this important service.

The Manager replied that the draft budget provided for funding for community grants as per previous years and it was a matter for the Members to decide on a different approach to the allocation of same, if they so wished, in determining the Budget for 2014.

Cllr. D. Connolly proposed that “a Vote of Sympathy be extended to the Ambassador to South Africa on the passing of Nelson Mandela, an iconic world figure, on behalf of Galway County Council”. This proposal was seconded by Comh. Ó Curraoin, and agreed.

Cllr. D. Connolly asked if there was any progress regarding the problems of debris causing blockages in the River Suck and Mr. Gavin replied that the Council has forwarded a report in this regard to the River Suck Joint Drainage Committee as it is their responsibility to deal with any issues on the River Suck. He said he is aware that some works have been carried out to alleviate blockages on the river and the Council will revert to the Committee to determine what further works are proposed.

In reply to Cllr. T. Broderick, the Manager said the Council has not yet received details of the Local Government Fund allocation but it is expected shortly.

She also confirmed that some progress has been made regarding the deficit in funding from the Department of the Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht towards the capital balance arising from the development of Inis Mór and Inis Meain Piers projects by the Council on behalf of the Council, advising that the Department has agreed to provide an initial contribution towards the deficit by the end of the year.

Mr. Gavin in reply to Cllr. Broderick confirmed that traffic/speed counters would be put in place during the week on the N63 in Ballygar.

Cllr. Canney proposed that in the absence of the Local Government Fund allocation details and until such time as the funding for the Inis Mór and Inis Meain Piers is received, the Budget Meeting be deferred.

The Manager replied that it is her view that the Budget Meeting should go ahead as arranged on the 16th December, 2013 and if clarification is not received from the Department by then, the Members can defer the Meeting for 21 days.

Cllr. Canney referred to the Item in the Minutes regarding the Presentation from West-on-Track on their submission to the Committee on Petitions. He made the following proposal “that Galway County Council propose that the Minister for Transport make a submission to the EU for TEN-T CORE funding to support the concept of the Western Arc to include the West/North West Region in Ireland’s CORE Network”. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. M. Connolly, and agreed.

Cllr. Welby made the following proposal “that Galway County Council call on An Taoiseach Enda Kenny, T.D., to create a Ministry of State for the position of Rural Affairs to deal specifically with Rural Regeneration”. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Broderick, and agreed.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

1635

Cllr. M. Connolly stated that he wished to make a correction to an Item in the Report of the Tuam Area Committee Meeting held on 2nd October 2013. The Mayor stated that any correction to the Report would have to be agreed by the Tuam Area Committee and brought back to the full Council for consideration. It was therefore agreed to defer consideration and adoption of the Report of the Tuam Area Committee Meeting held on 2nd October, 2013.

Comh. Ó Cuaig stated that he wished to make a correction to an Item in the Report of the Corporate Affairs & Cultural SPC Meeting held on 23rd September 2013. The Mayor stated that any correction to the Report would have to be agreed by the Corporate Affairs & Cultural SPC and brought back to the full Council for consideration. It was therefore agreed to defer consideration and adoption of the Report of the Corporate Affairs & Cultural SPC Meeting held on 23rd September 2013.

The Report of the Roads & Transportation SPC Meeting held on 26th June, 2013 was approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Comh. Ó Curraoin, seconded by Cllr. Cunniffe.

The Report of the Environment & Water Services SPC Meeting held on 11th September, 2013 was approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. Cuddy seconded by Cllr. Willers.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 ON THE DISPOSAL OF 0.0011 HECTARES AT ST. BRIDGET'S ROAD, PORTUMNA, CO. GALWAY

1636

Statutory Notice dated the 14th November 2013 was already circulated to each Member in accordance with statutory timeframe and Report dated 22nd November, 2013 was also circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Cllr. M. Finnerty, the disposal of 0.0011 hectares of land at St. Bridget's Road, Portumna, to E.S.B., Networks in accordance with the terms of the statutory notice dated 14th November 2013 was agreed.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 ON THE DISPOSAL OF 0.012 HECTARES AT TOWNPARKS, TUAM, CO. GALWAY

1637

Statutory Notice dated 25th November was already circulated to each Member in accordance with statutory timeframe and Report dated 25nd November, 2013 was also circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Roche, seconded by Cllr. Cuniffe, the disposal of 0.012 hectares of land at Townparks, Tuam, to the Office of Public Works, in accordance with the terms of the statutory notice dated 25th November 2013 was agreed.

TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (SECTION 142) REGULATIONS 2010

1638

Cllr. S. Walsh was not present in the Chamber for the duration of the consideration of this item.

Report was already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Cllr. Welby, attendance at the Conferences as circulated, was authorized by the Council.

BG Seminarz – Rural Crime Prevention & Detection – 2nd – 4th August 2013 – Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal – Fee: €150

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

BG Seminarz – European Convention on Human Rights – 16th – 18th August 2013 – Quality Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry – Fee: €150

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

Irish Centre for European Law – Implementation & Enforcement of EU Environmental Legislation – 8th November 2013 – Royal Irish Academy, 19 Dawson St., Dublin 2 – Fee: €240

Comh. Seosamh Ó Laoi

Loughrea Memorial Group – Aspect's of Galway's Military History & Private John Oliver's Remembrance Weekend – 8th – 10th November 2013 – Loughrea, Co. Galway – Fee: €100

Comh. Seosamh Ó Laoi, Cllr.'s Michael Maher, Jimmy McClearn, Mary Hoade, Bridie Willers, Liam Carroll, Thomas Welby, Kevin Ryan, Peter Roche, Tim Broderick, Eileen Mannion, Dermot Connolly

Teagasc – Future Weather / Future Farming – 5th December 2013 – Teagasc Food Research Centre, Ashtown, Dublin – Fee: €0

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Kadenza Consultancies – Changing trends & approaches to drug & alcohol abuse – 6th – 8th December 2013 – Cahir House Hotel, Cahir, Co. Tipperary – Fee: €145

Cllr. Michael Connolly

Ace Training – Local Authority Employment Law, Practice & Procedure – 6th – 8th December 2013 – Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary – Fee: €100

Cllr.'s Eileen Mannion, Tiarnan Walsh

Celtic Conferences – Tourism Technology & Competitive Strategies for 2014 – 13th – 15th December 2013 – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Cllr. Michael Fahy

Celtic Conferences – Microsoft Excel Training for Councillors – 20th – 22nd December 2013 –

Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Cllr. Peter Roche

Celtic Conferences – Public Presentation & PR Management – 3rd – 5th January 2014 –

Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Cllr. Michael Fahy

Ace Training – 2014 European Elections Information Seminar – 3rd – 5th January 2014 –

Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth – Fee: €100

Cllr. Michael Maher

Ace Training – The Building Control Amendment Regulations 2013 – 10th – 12th January –

Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth – Fee: €100

Cllr.'s Jimmy McClearn, Tom McHugh

BG Seminarz – Financing Local Government, the critical issues – 10th – 12th January –

Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal – Fee: €150

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

Celtic Conferences – Employment Law – Mediation v Litigation – 10th – 12th January –

Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Comh. Tomás Ó Curráoin, Cllr.'s Michael Fahy, Pat Hynes, Kevin Ryan

**TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED IN ACCORDANCE
WITH SECTION 142(5)(F) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001** **1639**

Report was already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Cllr. Welby, it was agreed to note the summary of proceedings at Conferences, as circulated.

A.M.A.I. Annual Conference 2013 – Putting the People First – 12th – 14th September –

Inchydoney Lodge & Spa, Clonakilty, Co. Cork

Cllr. Michael Connolly

BG Seminarz – How the Elected Member can help Combat Crime – 27th – 29th September – Quality Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry

Cllr. Michael Connolly

Clare County Council – LAMA Autumn Seminar 2013 – 11th – 12th October – Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare

Cllr. Tom McHugh

Respond – The Best Way Forward – Inclusive Communities for Older People – 23rd October – Convention Centre, Dublin

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Teagasc – National Agrienvironmental Conference 2013 – 7th November – Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Loughrea Memorial Group – Aspect's of Galway's Military History & Private John Oliver's Remembrance Weekend – 8th – 10th November – Loughrea, Co. Galway

Cllr.'s Thomas Welby, Mary Hoade

Ace Training – A Practical Guide to Budget 2014 – 8th – 10th November – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth

Cllr. Tom McHugh

Green Foundation Ireland – Corporate Taxation – ensuring a fair system for all – 13th November – European Parliament Offices – Molesworth St., Dublin 2

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Celtic Conferences – Debt Solutions – The New Personal Insolvency Legislation – 22nd – 24th November – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork

Cllr.'s Tom McHugh, Tiarnan Walsh

Councillors Conferences – Budget 2014 for Canvassing – 22nd – 24th November – Louis Fitzgerald Hotel, Newlands Cross, Dublin 22

Cllr. Thomas Welby

Kadenza Consultancies – Changing trends & approaches to drug & alcohol abuse – 6th – 8th December – Cahir House Hotel, Cahir, Co. Tipperary

Cllr. Michael Connolly

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL 2013

1640

Mr. Cummins made a presentation to the Members on the Local Government Bill 2013.

He gave an overview of the Bill as follows:

- The Local Government Bill 2013 gives legislative effect to proposals set out in Putting People First — Action Programme for Effective Local Government (published October 2012) which outlines an overall vision for local government as the primary vehicle for governance and public service at local level.
- The Action Programme sets out Government policy for a range of reforms to the local government system including structures, functions, funding, operational arrangements and governance designed to strengthen local government.
- The Bill, which contains 65 sections in 10 Parts, together with 5 Schedules, sets out the necessary provisions to give effect to these measures and related matters.
- The two overarching objectives of the Bill are to provide for the significant reorganisation of local government structures and the strengthening of governance and accountability in local government, with particular emphasis on rebalancing powers appropriately between the executive and the elected council.

He listed the key aspects of the Bill as follows:

- Amalgamation of some County/City Authorities
- Abolition of Town Councils
- Establishment of Municipal Districts
- Reduction in Elected Member numbers
- Chief Executive Officer instead of County or City Manager
- National Oversight and Audit Commission
- Local Community and Development Committees
- Strategic Policy Committee for Economic Development

- Re-configuration of Corporate Policy Groups
- Regional Assemblies/Regional Policy
- Performance and Evaluation Obligations
- Dublin Mayor
- Citizen Participation

He summarized the functions of Municipal Districts as follows:

- Lowest tier of Local Government reflects 21st century functionality/urban identity. Brings Ireland in line with other OECD Countries.
- Functions to be delivered at municipal level are detailed in the proposed legislation and the Members will be enabled at County level to determine further devolution of functions to the Municipal District level, in effect reversing the existing trend of migrating services up to the County level.
- Local regulatory functions will also be the responsibility of the Municipal Districts

He gave examples of Reserved Functions of Municipal Districts as follows:

- Local Enterprise Offices
- SPC on Economic Development
- Integration of spatial planning and economic development
- Co-ordination with State development agencies
- Regional Economic Overview
- Local platform for all local economic development actions by the State
- Continuation of support for micro-enterprise development
- Local vehicle for implementation of the Jobs Action Programme

He said there will be a different role for the Members in relation to Economic Development in that they will have the responsibility of bringing National and Regional Policy together at Local level, through the Municipal Districts, towards creating employment and in order to capture, create and support economic development, tourism initiatives etc.

He listed elements in the Bill geared towards Economic Development as follows:

- Setting up of Local Enterprise Offices
- SPC on Economic Development
- Integration of spatial planning and economic development
- Co-ordination with State development agencies
- Regional Economic Overview
- Local platform for all local economic development actions by the State
- Continuation of support for micro-enterprise development
- Local vehicle for implementation of the Jobs Action Programme

He said that Local Authorities will retain the following Reserved Functions:

- Adopting Draft Budget
- Determining Annual Rate on Valuation

- Functions of Municipal Districts that it has been agreed will be carried out by the Local Authority
- Delegation of additional functions to Municipal Districts
- Approving Corporate Plan
- Disposal of Land
- Order declaring any area or place as a Landscape Conversation Area
- Boundary Alteration
- Adoption of Traveller Accommodation Programme
- Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws
- Making of Development Plan
- Making a Development Contribution Scheme

He concluded by stating that the Executive of the Local Authority will continue to have an oversight role in Local Government.

A discussion took place and the Members made the following observations regarding the Local Government Bill 2013:

- The introduction of the new Local Government Bill represents a major change in Local Government in particular the establishment of Municipal Districts which will bring Local Government closer to local people
- Meetings of the Local Authority will change as they will have less statutory business to consider
- The proposals for changes to the Regional Authorities and Regional Assemblies
- It will be up to the Members to make the new departure in relation to Local Government work well

The Mayor said that there are very exciting and challenging times ahead for Local Government and he referred to the fact that he will be the last Mayor of the County of Galway as this title will revert to Cathaoirleach under the proposed legislation.

The Members raised further issues regarding the implications of the Local Government Bill, and the Manager replied as follows:

- She agreed with the views expressed by some Members that there is fantastic potential for Local Government as a result of changed legislation but she said that it is important that Local Government makes the most of opportunities presented in order to maximise economic development and job creation for local communities.
- It will be a matter for the new County Council to decide on the arrangements regarding Meetings of the Council
- In relation to the assets of the Town Councils, she said that these will be transferred to the County Council when the Town Councils are abolished

- She said that the matter of raising and allocation of finance locally will not be without difficulty as regards matching resources with demand in the various functions and areas.
- In relation to organisations such as the National Roads Authority, she said there is no change evident in the Local Government Bill.

Mr. Kelly replied to queries raised regarding the role envisaged for the Council in the areas of community, enterprise and economic development advising of the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) being incorporated into local authorities and the establishment of Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) with Galway County Council as one of the frontrunner local authorities for same.

Mr. Kelly advised that an LCDC will be established with a membership envisaged of 15 comprised of the County Manager and representatives from the Elected Members, Members of Local Action Groups, Community & Voluntary Fora and State Agencies with a focus on community development while it was envisaged that a Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee will be established to focus on economic development.

He advised that the work programme will include advancing a local community and economic plan that will provide a framework for the operation of the Local Community Development Programme by the Local Action Groups. He confirmed that the Municipal Districts and Council will have a full role in considering the plan with a requirement for the plan to be aligned to the County Development Plan.

He confirmed that it was envisaged that the significant progress would be made early in the New Year in establishing the LCDC with the first task being to map and consider the various initiatives and services already in place in order to establish the current baseline to assist in setting priorities for the future.

Mr. Kelly in reply to questions from the Members confirmed that the LCDC would be formed prior to the local elections as a frontrunner and that it was envisaged that formal responsibilities would be attributed to the LCDC from July 2014. He confirmed that formal decisions in relation to the alignment process were yet to be finalised in the context of the legislation progressing through the Oireachtas but that it was clear that the LCDC would have a role in policy with the delivery mechanism requiring further clarity.

In reply to a request from Cllr. Maher it was agreed to circulate maps detailing the revised electoral areas to apply for the local elections in May 2014.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON SMARTER TRAVEL/ACTIVE TRAVEL TOWN SCHEMES

1641

Report entitled *Smarter Travel Initiatives* was circulated to Each Member and presented by Mr. Gavin.

He outlined the smarter travel initiatives and schemes which were completed in 2013 including works on the bog road adjacent to the Gaelscoil in Oranmore and works in Loughrea on footpaths and pedestrian crossings and the introduction of one way streets.

He said that Walking and Cycling Strategies were prepared for individual towns including Ballinasloe, Tuam, Athenry, Gort and Clifden. These plans and strategies form the basis for future funding by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport when they come to consider funding applications under Active Travel Towns Schemes. These strategies are currently being considered by the Area Committees and the strategies will be available for public consultation for 4 weeks.

For the period 2014 to 2016 the Department has requested applications for funding under two headings related to Smarter Travel initiatives:

- 1 National Cycle Network Projects
- 2 Active Travel Towns Projects

Galway County Council has submitted two projects for funding under the National Cycle Network Initiative including Galway to Moycullen along the old Clifden/Galway rail line and the second project is Clifden to Letterfrack with further phases required from Letterfrack to Leenane. These two initiatives along the national cycle network Galway to Leenane will link in with the planning currently underway on the section of cycle network from Clifden to Oughterard. It is expected that the Department will advise if the Council's application for funding for the two schemes are successful early in 2014. Funding extends from 2014 to 2016 with each scheme costed at approximately €2.5 million.

For the Active Travel Towns, initiative Galway County Council has submitted three schemes to the Department for funding including the towns of Athenry, Gort and Loughrea. The schemes include for the provision of footpaths, cycle lanes, road crossings and speed reduction measures. Again it is expected we will be advise by January 2014 if funding is being made available for any of these schemes. The cost associated with each application is approximately €900,000.

Seperately, funding has been provided by the ERDF through the BMW Regional Authority for works in Tuam, identified in the Tuam Active Travel Plan. The works include pedestrian crossings within the town, footpath and cycle lanes along the Dunmore road and Bobby Burke road along with traffic calming measures and improved pedestrian facilities within the town. These works are likely to start before Christmas and continue into spring of 2014.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Gavin for the presentation. A discussion took place and Mr. Gavin replied to issues raised by the Members as follows:

- Bearna and Oranmore are included in the Galway City and Environs Walking & Cycling Strategy and funding for these will be sourced through a different mechanism
- Two options are being considered in relation to the Bridge at Oughterard, in conjunction with the National Roads Authority

- Letterfrack is on the National Cycle Network and the possibility of providing a pedestrian crossing is being examined
- The Council will liaise with Iarnród Éireann regarding works to the Monivea Road, Athenry.
- The National Cycle Networks Working Group are investigating possibilities for a Cycle Network from Dublin to Ballinasloe onto Clifden. The NRA are working on this project with the National Cycle Network Working Group
- Galway County Council are dealing with the Galway to Clifden Cycle Network which will extend through Clifden, Leanaun through to Westport
- In relation to South Galway, the possible national route will be from Clarinbridge through Ballinderreen and onto County Clare.
- The aim is to link all towns into the National Cycle Network but this will be developed over time while the Clifden to Oughterard Greenway is the starting project.
- The proposals for Loughrea included for the continued development of the Lake Trail.

MANAGER'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE

1642

The Manager referred to the matter of the joint purchase of the Galway Airport facility by Galway County Council and Galway City Council and stated that the purchase of the property is progressing through the normal legal process at present and contrary to newspaper headlines, no undue delays are being encountered in this legal transfer.

Mr. Owens informed the Members that the Council's bid to host the 2014 National Famine Commemoration in Portumna was not successful.

Mr. Gavin advised the Members that the Part VIII Planning Process will commence in the coming week in relation to the Tullycross/Lettergesh Road where a coastal landslide occurred recently.

The following items of correspondence which were circulated at the meeting were noted:

- Correspondence dated 25th October 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Social Protection acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in relation to the closure of Community Welfare Offices in Ballinasloe, Connemara and other areas.
- Correspondence dated 29th October 2013 from the Department of Social and Family Affairs in relation to the Free Travel Scheme.
- Correspondence dated 31st October 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in relation to horses.
- Correspondence dated 18th November 2013 from the Department of Social Protection regarding the closure of the community welfare clinics in Ballinasloe, Connemara and other areas and a contact details for the Clinics in the Galway area.

- Correspondence dated 3rd December 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Housing and Planning acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in relation to observations on planning applications.
- Correspondence dated 13th November 2013 from Clare County Council regarding a resolution passed to extend the derogation period to allow adequate time to resolve the height restriction of 4.65 metres for vehicles using the country's road network.
- Correspondence dated 19th November 2013 from Macroom Town Council regarding a motion passed that in light of recommendations published on Wednesday October 30th 2013 by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, part of the Council of Europe which states that Ireland needs greater Constitutional Protect for Local Government and it is failing to protect Local Democracy and the continued centralization of power and decision making at National Level, instead of greater devolution to local communities" That the draft Local Government Reform bill issued on the 17th October 2013 should now be referred to the Constitutional Convention so that a discussion can take place on the issues raised by the Council of Europe which runs entirely contrary to the key principals of the European Charter for Local Self Government which was ratified by Ireland on the 14th May 2002.
- Correspondence dated 27th November 2013 from Offaly County Council regarding a resolution that the Minister for Health lifts the ban on nurse recruitment.
- Correspondence dated 21st November 2013 from Waterford City Council regarding a motion passed to have a total review of legislation in the area of Anti-Social Behaviour with the objective to strengthening the powers of the Gardaí and Local Authorities to tackle this issue in an effective manner.
- Correspondence dated 2nd December 2013 from Donegal County Council regarding a resolution to support a proposal that Motor Tax should be left with Local Authorities who have excellent records as far as this work is concerned.
- Correspondence dated 2nd December 2013 from Donegal County Council regarding a resolution adopted to acknowledge the vital work of the Credit Union movement within the county and understands that a credit union's main strength is that it is local. Further Donegal County Council supports the Irish League of Credit Unions in their fight against the overzealous regulatory regime and moved towards consolidation begin imposed on them by the Government and the Central Bank.
- Correspondence dated 18th December 2013 from Leitrim County Council regarding a resolution passed calling on Minister Phil Hogan to withdraw their proposal to introduce a levy on all vacant commercial premises.

MAYOR'S BUSINESS

1643

Cllr. Roche proposed "that Galway County Council write to the Minister with responsibility for Mental Health, Minister Kathleen Lynch, to urgently review and reverse the decision to close the 22 bed acute services unit in St. Bridgid's Hospital, Ballinasloe. The eminent closure of same is causing widespread distress and anxiety in the wider community. The recent tragic loss of life of two young people in East Galway has again highlighted the urgent need for action in this regard.". This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Feeney, and agreed.

Cllr. Ryan supported Cllr. Roche's proposal and said that moving beds from Ballinasloe Hospital to Roscommon Hospital is a ridiculous decision. Cllr. Ryan proposed "that an

independent review committee be assembled to review what was a flawed process initially. I call on the relevant Minister, Kathleen Lynch, to immediately implement this request.” This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Broderick, and agreed.

Cllr. Broderick proposed “that a vote of no confidence be carried from Galway County Council in the PCCC Management HSE, which has responsibility for mental health services in Galway/Roscommon.” This proposal was seconded by Cllr. M. Connolly.

In relation to Cllr. Broderick’s proposal, Cllr. E. Mannion said that she understood the difficulties being encountered by people in east Galway as regards mental health services but she said that west Galway has a very positive mental health service and accordingly was not in a position to agree with the motion as currently worded.

The Mayor called for a vote on the proposal.

The result of the vote was as follows:

AR SON: Cllrs. T. Broderick, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, J. Cuddy, S. Cunniffey, Comh. T. Ó Curraoin, Cllrs. P. Feeney, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, M. Maher, P. Roche, K. Ryan, T. Welby **[13]**

AGHAIDH: Cllrs. L. Carroll, E. Mannion **[2]**

GAN VOTÁIL: Cllr. B. Willers **[1]**

As a result of the vote, the Mayor declared the proposal carried.

Cllr. Cuddy proposed “that Galway County Council pass a motion strongly objecting to the proposal in the new Inland Fisheries Legislation to bring in a Compulsory Angler Registration Charge to be made on every angler in Ireland as part of the new Inland Fisheries Legislation and that the decision made on the motion be immediately sent to the Minister in charge of bringing forward this legislation”. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Welby, and agreed.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

1644

On the proposal of the Comh. O’Curraoin seconded by Cllr. D. Connolly, it was agreed to suspend the Standing Orders to allow the Meeting to continue after 6pm.

Cllr. D. Connolly made the following proposal “I call on Galway County Council to call on the National Rural Water Monitoring Committee to give consideration to the number of locations such as Liskelly/Killinahown and Killreekil where local communities that do not have access to proper water supply. We are also requesting that the Department of the Environment and Local Government to provide funding to supply water to those locations as a matter of urgency”. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. M. Connolly, and agreed.

Cllr. Cunniffe said that he wanted it to be noted that the junction at the bottom of Shop Street/Tullinadaly Road, Tuam is very dangerous as the footpaths are too narrow on one side, with no footpaths at all on the other side. He also said that the signage at this location is very poor turning onto the relief road and traffic calming measures are required.

Mr. Gavin replied that the Council is investigating options to alleviate this problem as part of the Improvement Works to be carried out in Tuam Town.

The Mayor proposed that a Civic Reception be held to honour the Claregalway Ladies Intermediate Football Team who won the All-Ireland recently. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Cuddy, and agreed.

The Mayor also proposed that a Civic Reception be held to honour the Tidy Towns Committees and Pride of Place Committees. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Cuddy, and agreed.

NOTICES OF MOTION

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 10 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

1645

The following reply was given:-

“Noted.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 11 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

1646

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council are awaiting the proposals emanating from the recent DTTAS report group in regards to speed limits.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 12 – CLLR. M. FAHY

1647

The following reply was given:-

“The schemes for Low Cost Accident remedy have been submitted to the National Roads Authority for 2014. As yet no allocation or indication of the schemes to be funded for 2014 has been notified. The Cregclare scheme will be included in our listing of future schemes to be considered and discussed with the NRA.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 13 – CLLR. M. FAHY

1648

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council have submitted a scheme to the NRA for funding. The scheme provided for a safe crossing at the Post Office in Gort. Our allocation and schemes for 2014 has not yet been agreed and we will continue to discuss the delivery of this scheme with the National Roads Authority.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 14 – CLLR. M. FAHY

1649

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council are working on the design of this alignment. To date we have proposed ecological reports and are liaising with An Bord Pleanála. We await their reply before we can progress this scheme further.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 15 – CLLR. T. WELBY

1650

The following reply was given:-

“The works to be carried out are to replace the raised percolation area and installation of manholes on the pipeline to the treatment plant. Works will commence on January 6th, 2014 and will take 2-3 weeks to complete.”

Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin
