

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

Galway County Council

Ceantar Bardasach Bhaile Átha an Rí Órán Mór

Municipal District of Athenry Oranmore.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Athenry Oranmore held in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, on Tuesday 16th October, 2018.

I LATHAIR:

BAILL: Cllr. M. Kinane (Leas Chathaoirleach)
Cllr. J. Cuddy
Cllr. G. Cronnelly
Cllr. J. Charity
Cllr. M. Noone

Apologies:

Cllr. F. Kearney (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. P. Feeney

OIFIGIGH: Mr. M. Owens, A/Director of Services,
Mr. D. Mitchell, Senior Engineer,
Ms. M. Ní Chionna, Senior Engineer,
Ms. P. Higgins, Senior Executive Engineer,
Mr. P. Gavin, Executive Engineer,
Ms. G. Cooley, Asst. Staff Officer,
Ms. G. Healy, A/Administrative Officer.

Cllr. Kinane, Leas Chathaoirleach, took the Chair as Cathaoirleach Kearney had sent his apologies as he was not available to attend the Meeting.

Cllr. Kinane extended her sympathies to Mr. Michael Owens, A/Director of Services for the Municipal District, on the recent passing of his father, Mr. Paddy Owens of Mountbellew. She said that Paddy Owens was very well known in Mountbellew and the surrounding area and would be sadly missed both by his family and all who knew him.

She also extended her sympathies to Mr. Alan Farrell, A/Director of Services, on the recent passing of his father, Mr. Sean Farrell of Athenry and to the family of the late Dr. Anne Hogan-Brennan, G.P. Athenry.

Item No. 1: To confirm Minutes of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Meeting held on 10th September, 2018

AOMD 1835

Leas Chathaoirleach, Cllr. Kinane, referred to Page 5 of the Minutes and stated that she wished to amend the first sentence to read as follows: *Cllr. Kinane said she was disappointed that her submission for the Speed Limit Review in the village of Clarinbridge was not taken on board by the TII.*

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Charity, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cronnelly, the Minutes of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Council Meeting held on 10th September, 2018, were **AGREED** by the Members, with the amendment referred to by Cllr. Kinane.

Report on the draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limits County Galway Bye-Laws 2018.

AOMD 1836

Ms. Maire Ni Choinna addressed the Members and presented the Report on the draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limits. She indicated that she was guided in her recommendations on the draft Special Speed Limits by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (DTTAS) *Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland* issued in March 2015.

She said that speed limits can vary from 50 – 80 kph, but the default speed on local roads is normally 80 kph. Special speed limits can be introduced outside of these Guidelines. However, motorists are obliged to take into consideration road conditions, bends and hills on the road etc. when travelling on roads. She said that the main issue when driving is the consideration of road safety and she said traffic calming is important to get this message across to the driver.

Ms. Ní Chionna said it is easier to implement speed limits in urban areas due to lighting, footpaths etc. but that improved road safety can be achieved on local roads through the use of signage, road markings, cycle lanes and flashing feedback signs.

She said that there were 11 no. submissions to be considered for the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District, including 7 no. under one submission from Cllr. Cuddy.

Cllr. Cuddy requested that each specific submission be dealt with separately, but in order to do this he said he needed to see the original submission and know how it would be dealt with as he wanted to relay this information back to the public.

Cllr. Charity also said he would like to get more clarity in relation to the submissions made and the recommendations of the Council.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

AOMD 1837

It was **AGREED** that the Standing Orders be suspended to allow the Roads Staff to come back to the Meeting with the list of submissions together with maps, and in the meantime to move on to the next Item on the Agenda.

Consideration of a draft 3-year Roads Programme 2019 -2021

AOMD 1838

Mr. Mitchell presented the report on the draft 3-year Roads Programme 2019 -2021, advising that the figures were based on the funding available for 2018. However, he said that in 2018, a facility was made available to transfer 19% of the overall allocation to the discretionary budget, due to the shortfall arising as a result of the Members decision regarding the Local Property Tax rate. However, he said this facility will not be available to the Council for 2019.

He said the allocation available to the Athenry-Oranmore Municipal District for 2019 is €1.2 million. The programme is based on the current Municipal District boundaries, however the figure may change when the new boundary changes are introduced in 2019 and also may change in 2020-2021 when the proposed amalgamation of Galway County and City Council's takes place. Mr. Mitchell said that during the preparation of the 3-Year Roads Programme, quite a deal of engagement took place with staff of the Tuam and Loughrea Municipal Districts and he thanked the staff in the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District for their work in preparing this Roads Programme.

Mr. Mitchell said the funding available to the Council for the Roads Programme is not adequate, however he said the figures are indicative and are subject to change based on the allocation that will be received and also additional funding which may come on stream due to emergencies such as storm damage or other severe weather events that may occur.

Ms. Paula Higgins spoke on the proposed Roads Programme and said that the locations chosen were based on road conditions, submissions from the Members and also complaints received at a local level. There were a number of late requests and efforts would be made to try to include same.

Cllr. Kinane said she felt her views in relation to funding for roads in Oranmore, Clarinbridge and Maree were not taken into consideration when preparing in 3-Year Roads Programme.

Cllr. Noone thanked the Engineering staff and asked if a road earmarked for upgrading in 2020-21 were to deteriorate in the meantime, could such a road be pushed up the list. He gave the example of Gortatleva, Claregalway, where the road is a rat-run for Primary and Secondary Schools in the Claregalway area.

Cllr. Cuddy also said that further reconstruction works were needed at both Gortatleva and Cloon Roads, Claregalway. He said that the Engineering Staff are in a difficult position as the funding available to them for road maintenance is totally inadequate

Cllr. Charity said he had mixed views on the 3-year Programme. He welcomed that the plan took in a spread of roads throughout the Municipal District and that the Carrowbrowne Road was included. However, he said that the network of roads is not fit for purpose at the moment, especially in the Annaghdown area and the works carried out at Mace, Corrandulla, during the summer were not holding and that the road was already breaking up in some patches. He asked what recourse the Council had in respect of contracts where the work carried out was not up to standard.

Cllr. Cronnelly complimented the Engineering staff on their work in preparing the 3-year Programme, but said he would like to see a map showing where other Municipal Districts will overlap the Athenry Oranmore District to see their proposed Road Programme.

Cllr. Kinane said there was no reflection on the Engineering staff who prepared the Programme, but she felt that the programme created a vacuum in certain areas and she felt isolated as an Elected Member due to the upcoming changes in the boundaries, where the town of Oranmore would be

disadvantaged because three estates in Oranmore will be located in a different Municipal District. She said she was not happy with the proposed funding in the Stradbally area, where residents resorted to filling potholes themselves recently. She said that consultation should have taken place before the preparation of the programme, having regard to the proposed changes in the Municipal Districts and Cllr. Kinane requested the Members agreement to defer the decision on the draft Roads Programme due to her concerns regarding funding for certain areas which will be removed from the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District in 2019.

Mr. Mitchell said that there was significant consultation between the areas such as Tuam and Ballinasloe, but not everyone will be fully satisfied with the proposals. He said the Council sought additional funding from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (DTTAS) for road works, however no additional funding has been forthcoming. He said that the winter maintenance funding had been expended since March due to the snow-storm which had occurred. He said he did not accept that any area was omitted from the 3-year Programme and he emphasised that the Programme was indicative and that DTTAS will decide on funding to be provided to Galway County Council under the 3-Year Programme. He said he travelled the County in recent weeks with DTTAS representatives and they are aware of the issues in the County. He said that should additional funding be allocated to the Council, it will be added to current funding and any representations made by the Members will be retained on file.

Cllr. Charity said he concurred with Cllr. Kinane, and felt that the Oranmore area should have provisions made for in the Loughrea 3-Year Roads Programme, and he asked if the maps for the Loughrea and Tuam Municipal Districts were available.

Mr. Mitchell circulated a copy of the maps showing the roads programme proposals for the Tuam and Loughrea Municipal Districts. He said that on looking at these maps, it was clear that the Oranmore/Clarínbridge areas would be well served.

Cllr. Kinane stated that the roads included in the Loughrea Municipal District proposals only made provision for Stradbally South.

Cllr. Noone said that a number of roads in the Claregalway area were not included for repair until 2021, but as this was an indicative proposal, roads could be added or taken out at a later stage. He expressed the view that Oranmore was not disadvantaged judging by the proposals.

Ms. Higgins re-iterated that all of the proposals were as a result of complaints received, the Elected Members submissions and the conditions of certain roads and she said that all areas were treated equally.

Cllr. Kinane said that she felt a responsibility to stand up for the areas that were to be affected by the change in the boundaries.

Mr. Mitchell said that the 3-year Road Works Programme was based on the amount received in 2018, and that on a County wide basis he felt that a good balance had been achieved in the Programme across the Municipal District and that no area was disadvantaged. He said it had to be acknowledged that there is not sufficient funding available to the Council for roadworks, however if additional funding was made available, additional roads would be added. He said that the 3-year Roads Programme will be decided by DTTAS.

Cllr. Charity said that, having examined the maps provided by Mr. Mitchell, he was of the view that Oranmore was not excluded and that areas would be catered for even after the boundary changes.

Mr. Mitchell said that it was not a requirement for the Members to approve the 3-Year Roads Programme 2019-2021 at this Meeting, as the Report before the Members was for information purposes. However, he said that if the Members required any additional information regarding the Programme, same would be provided.

Cllr. Noone said that Cllr. Kinane's concerns should be noted.

Cllr. Kinane thanked the Staff for the Report and she also thanked the Members for their support.

Report on the draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limits County Galway Bye-Laws 2018.
AOMD 1836 (continued)

Ms. Ní Chionna returned to the Meeting and circulated the list of submissions received in respect of the Speed Limits, together with maps.

Ms. Ni Chionna agreed with the Members that the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District is in a unique position as many of the roads have become rat-runs due to proximity to Galway City and experience large volumes of traffic during the day, while at night time there is less traffic, allowing for higher speeds. She said she travelled the roads and felt that the natural speed is between 60 – 70 kph, but if a speed limit were to be reduced to 60 kph, it would have to be enforced by An Garda Síochána round the clock, and if a lower limit was to be introduced, it would compromise the speed limit process. For that reason, Ms. Ni Chionna was reluctant to recommend a reduction to 60 kph on all local roads, as she felt that motorists would not adhere to the speed limits. However, she said a 60 kph limit could be allowed in special cases.

Following queries from the Members on their role in relation to changing the speed limits for the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District, Mr. Owens clarified that the draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limits County Galway Bye-Laws 2018 would be put before the Plenary Council for consideration in respect of the County as a whole, and it was intended to be placed on the Agenda for the following Plenary Council Meeting to be held on Monday 22nd October 2018. He said that the purpose of placing the Item on the Municipal District Agenda was to get the Councillors views on the proposals for that particular Municipal District. He said no decision could be made at Municipal District level to make any amendments to the speed limits as they have to be formally proposed at the Plenary Council Meeting.

Ms. Ní Choinna said that the final set of maps available for the Plenary Council Meeting will be based on the Members proposals at Municipal District level.

Following further discussion, Mr. Owens advised that if the Municipal District Members required additional information in respect of the draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limits at the November Meeting of the Municipal District, it would not be appropriate for the Plenary Council to consider the draft Bye-Laws at its Meeting on Monday 22nd October 2018.

Leas Chathaoirleach, Cllr. Kinane, **PROPOSED** that the draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limits County Galway Bye-Laws 2018 be deferred for discussion at the November Meeting of the Municipal District Council and that the Plenary Council would not consider this Item pending the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District having considered the item fully. This proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy, and **AGREED**.

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Ms. Ní Chionna said she would circulate a full set of maps to the Members of the Municipal District based on their proposals.

Municipal District Director's Business & Correspondence

AOMD 1839

Mr. Owens said that the Budget Meeting of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Council would be held the following week.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Noone and **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cronnelly, and **AGREED** that the Budget Meeting of the Municipal District be held on Tuesday 23rd October, 2018 at 10 a.m.

Cathaoirleach Business

AOMD 1840

Cllr. Noone expressed the view that signage *As Gaeilge* in English speaking areas is not appropriate for road users not living in Gaeltacht areas.

Mr. Owens said that the Motions passed by the Members earlier in the year:

"That the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Council write to the Minister for State at the Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, seeking that the Languages Act be amended so that the directional signs for Gaeltacht Placenames, located outside of the Gaeltacht, be bilingual".

had been sent to the Minister for State at the Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, Deputy Joe McHugh, but that no favourable response had been received.

However, he said that a letter would issue to the new Minister of State for the Irish Language, once his appointment had been formalised.

Cllr. Charity asked about the quality of work being carried out by Contractors hired through the tender process, particularly the quality of work carried out in Mace.

Mr. Gavin said that he is dealing with this matter at present.

Cllr. Noone raised the issue of fallen trees on roads following the recent storms and asked that this matter be highlighted with landowners.

Ms. Higgins replied that landowners have been written to in this regard.

Mr. Mitchell said that there was a proposal to cut back trees within 60 feet of the roadside, but that the responsibility lies with the landowners and road users should take due caution and heed the weather warnings.

In response to a query from Cllr. Noone, Mr. Mitchell said that on a public right of way, the responsibility for trees is with the landowner.

In reply to Cllr. Cronnelly, Ms. Higgins said that signage at Athenry is incorporated in a proposal under submitted by the Council under the Urban & Rural Regeneration Scheme.

Any Other Business

AOMD 1841

Cllr. Kinane, Leas-Chathaoirleach read out the following Motion:

“Arising from the Motion passed at the last Plenary Meeting of Galway County Council and the consequent decision taken by the Executive of Galway County Council to seek funds for the carrying out of a feasibility study of the development of a Greenway from Athenry to Milltown we the undersigned propose that this study focus on the feasibility of developing a greenway on or beside rail alignment connecting those towns”.

Mr. Owens said the significant discussions had taken place at the Meeting of the Plenary Council held on 24th September 2018 and Galway County Council and the Members had passed a Motion in this regard. He said that the decision taken at the Plenary Council Meeting would take precedence over any decision taken at Municipal District level.

In reply to the query by Cllr. Cronnelly that the same proposed motion was passed at the Tuam Municipal District Meeting, Mr. Owens said that the Motion could be adopted but would not overrule the Motion passed by the Plenary Council.

Cllr Kinane asked if the proposed motion was irrelevant given Mr. Owens’ advice that the decision of the Plenary Council takes precedence.

Cllr. Charity said he was not happy that the Motion be withdrawn as it had been passed by the Tuam Municipal District.

Cllr. Kinane then **PROPOSED** the Motion and the proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr. Charity and Cllr. Cronnelly and **AGREED**.

In response to Cllr. Cuddy’s request for additional pedestrian crossings in Oranmore, Mr. Mitchell said that the pedestrian crossing at the Maldron hotel was a function of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) who at the moment were carrying out traffic counts at this location. Mr. Mitchell said that there is a pedestrian crossing within 50 metres of Cloonarkin Drive and another on the Maree Road.

In response to a query from Cllr. Cuddy about the surface water in Clareglaway, he said that the design plans for traffic calming in Claregalway will be available at a forthcoming Municipal District Meeting, and plans for surface water drainage will be on this plan.

Also in response to Cllr. Cuddy regarding flooding at the Carrowmoneash Estate, and the Coast road, Oranmore, Mr. Mitchell said these issues will be investigated.

Cllr. Kinane welcomed the funding being made available to alleviate flooding on the Coast Road, Oranmore.

Mr. Mitchell, in reply to the Members, said that the Council is investigating proposals for a bus corridor on the N17 similar to the proposals for Parkmore, but he said that land acquisition is a factor in this regard.

Cllr. Charity raised issues in regard to the flooding at Muinteach and at Centra, Claregalway and Ms. Ní Chionna confirmed that a survey had been carried out in respect of Muinteach, but that no information on the survey has been received to date.

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Cllr. Noone thanked the Engineering staff for their work in relation to Bawnmore Cross and he raised an issue regarding parking at the school. He asked if landscaping could be carried out to eliminate the need for grass cutting at this location and also at other junctions to improve safety.

Mr. Mitchell said that the parking at the Bawnmore school is a matter for the Department of Education, but took on board the comments on landscaping at junctions.

Cllr. Charity also wished to be associated with Cllr. Noone's comments regarding works carried out at Bawnmore Cross.

Cllr. Kinane proposed that a get-well message be sent to Cllr. Kearney from the Municipal District Members and the Meetings Administrator said this would be arranged.

Cllr. Noone extended his congratulations to Ms. Emma Slevin of Kiniska, Claregalway, on her recent success at the Junior Olympic Gymnastics competitions.

The Leas Chathaoirleach thanked all for attending the Meeting.

CHRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINIÚ ANSIN.

Submitted Signed and Approved:

Cathaoirleach:

Frank Keenan

Date:

12-11-18