

Minutes of the Municipal District of Tuam meeting held  
on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018

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**MINUTES OF MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TUAM HELD AT TUAM  
COUNCIL OFFICES HIGH STREET TUAM ON MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL AT 2.30PM**

***I LÁTHAIR:***

***BAILL:***

Cllr Donagh Mark Killilea

Cllr Mary Hoade

Cllr Shaun Cunniffe

Cllr Des Joyce

Cllr Peter Roche

Cllr Tom Mc Hugh

Cllr Peter Keaveney

Cllr Billy Connelly

Cllr Karey McHugh

***OIFIGIGH:***

Ms. Eileen Ruane, Director of Services, Planning, Environment and Emergency Services Unit

Ms. Rachel Lowe, Acting Senior Executive Engineer, Municipal District of Tuam

Mr. John Coyle, Acting Executive Engineer, Municipal District of Tuam

Ms. Nuala Heffernan Administrative Officer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit

Mr. Enda Moloney, Administrative Officer, Infrastructure and Operations Unit

Ms. Mairin Doddy, Conservation Officer, Planning, Environment and Emergency Services Unit

Ms. Martina Creaven, Senior Staff Officer, Planning, Environment and Emergency Services Unit

Ms. Valerie Loughnane, Senior Planner, Planning, Environment and Emergency Services Unit

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Cllr Killilea welcomed Ms Ruane, Director of Services, to her new position. Ms Ruane she said that she was looking forward to working with the elected members and the Council executive in progressing the development of the Municipal District of Tuam.

### **Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Tuam on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

**MDT18015**

On the proposal of Cllr T McHugh, seconded by Cllr Roche, the minutes of the meeting of the Municipal District of Tuam, held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018, were agreed and adopted.

Cllr T McHugh expressed his sympathy to Cllr Roche on the recent loss of his mother, Mrs Mary Roche, this was seconded by Councillors Hoade, K McHugh, Cunniffe and Killilea. The meeting was adjourned for 5 minutes, as a mark of respect.

Cllr Cunniffe commended all the people who took part in a clean-up along the railway line and at Tubberjarlath in Tuam and also thanked Wers Waste for collecting the waste.

### **Draft Tuam Local Area Plan**

**MDT18016**

Cllr Killilea informed the meeting that the Councillors had pre meeting and had decided what submissions need further discussion.

Ms Loughnane advised the meeting the 36 submissions in total were received in the statutory period.

Some general discussion took place, Cllr T McHugh disagreed with tightening the town boundary as zoning would be lost forever. He proposed that the town boundary be left as it is in the current plan, as the town is developing and these lands would be suitable for development.

Ms Loughnane explained that the town boundary was reduced so that development could be consolidated within the town and this would give best guidance for development. She stated that there are more than adequate lands zoned in the Draft Plan to facilitate development. She said that the inner relief road and the motorway formed the curvature of the town. She proposed that individual pockets could be investigated, rather than a blanket widening of what is presently proposed the Draft Plan. She also expressed caution in relation to the amount of zoned lands and the need to conform with core strategy of the County Development. The idea is developing from inside out thereby giving certainty. There are lots of lands inside the original plan boundary not zoned in the previous plan.

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Cllr T McHugh stated that he did not agree with Ms Loughnane's statement. He explained that the situation in Tuam is that when houses are built that it is possible to sell them at affordable prices and this should be maintained. People from Mayo and other parts of Galway who could not afford to buy in Galway city came to live in Tuam as it was affordable. There is a strong compliment of industry in the town who employ people who have bought houses. He said that he appreciated what Ms Loughnane had advised but if the boundaries were reduced the town could be left with this. He expressed concern in relation to the Department in that they were urban thinking which is not suitable for the West of Ireland. He discussed the GTPS and the issue of having no family lands and the expense of getting a flood risk assessment and then being refused planning.

Cllr Cunniffe suggested that there should be a transition period of reducing the boundaries and that is unfair on people that had bought lands based on the current zoning and now these lands would be outside the boundary. He posed the question of R1 zoning and population growth and what the departments thinking on this and would the plan be over ruled.

Cllr Roche stated that there must be a reasonable compromise and that individual cases should be looked at and nobody should be left in a compromised position.

Cllr Killilea informed the meeting that it has come as a shock to some people that the boundaries are being narrowed.

Cllr Hoade stated that many people are finding it difficult to get housing and a provision needs to be included to address this issue.

Ms Loughnane explained that it is not good practice to have lands in the plan with no zoning. She stated that there are adequate lands zoned within the plan for the population. This misleads people if they are not zoned and does not give good guidance to people. Three submissions received out of the 36 were outside the boundary which are 7, 14 and 15. There can be discussion on the merits of having them include these.

Cllr Cunniffe asked the question on the old plan if zoned agriculture could applicants get planning permission.

Ms Loughnane informed the meeting that applicants with family lands are considered.

Cllr T McHugh questioned where people in the urban fringe and within the GTPS where were they supposed to build

Ms Loughnane explained that with the 25km should be restricted for once off rural housing. If born in the area and can buy a site then this would be considered for planning but if not from the area then this is restricted.

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Cllr T McHugh further questioned where they would go.

Ms Loughnane advised that settlement centres can accommodate these people.

Cllr T McHugh stated that people wanted to wait close to their families, he referred to discussion with Mr Conor Skeehan who said that house ownership is over in this country. Cllr T McHugh said the Department think that people should rent and be vulnerable to landlords. This is driving people to despair. The question was asked can the Councillors materially contravene a Plan to give planning permission.

Ms Loughnane stated that in un zoned lands material contraventions was not the correct mechanism to provide for applications to be granted permission.

Cllr Hoade posed a question in relation to core strategy and what is allowed for changing zoning when considering the County Plan.

Ms Loughnane advised that if there was an increased allocation of population and there was no available R1 lands then R2 could be considered as there would be a case to be made.

Cllr Killilea suggested that the individual submissions be discussed as agreed at the earlier meeting starting with Submission 10.

Ms Loughnane This submission is an observation it should be zoned appropriately. Retail and amenity are permissible.

Cllr Cunniffe stated that all businesses schools and clubs in Tuam are behind the Greenway.

Sub 12 Ms Loughnane stated that these were lands on the Weir Road, lands at the back of the site submitted were on a flood risk zone.

Cllr T McHugh advised the meeting that he was awaiting information on engineer works on this site.

Sub 13 Ms Loughnane stated the objective of the Plan had been amended to support this submission.

Sub 14 Cllr T McHugh proposed that these lands be zoned residential and explained that they were close to existing cottages and the 5 acres in this submission were on the town side of these. The proposal is to zone these land R1.

Ms Loughnane said that this would pose a difficulty as they are a significant distance outside the town and the Department would have concerns.

Sub 15 Cllr K McHugh was supporting this submission at Ballymoat on the edge of the town.

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Ms Loughnane told meeting that these lands had planning previously but this had expired. It is too far removed from the town centre for the R1 zoning and it would raise concerns with the Department.

Cllr K McHugh proposed to extend the boundary and zone R1.

Sub 16 Ms Loughnane explain the zoning on the three parcels of land A zoned R2 B Existing Residential and C R2. The submission is requesting that this be all R1.

Cllr T McHugh stated that a flood assessment could be done.

Ms Loughnane explained that at this point in the process any further amendments can only come from the members. She continued to explain the zonings B is partial R1 and part flooding and that is why that portion is not zoned. C is within a flood zone area.

Cllr Roche asked the question as regards R1 and R2 if planning would be granted on R2 lands.

Ms Loughnane explained that if appropriate the next R2 land would be considered

Sub 17 Ms Loughnane told the meeting that she had viewed this site which is just outside the town boundary and 50% would be subject to flooding and there would be restricted site distance. The Bord had previously refused planning in this area on the grounds of flooding.

Cllr T McHugh stated that the submission as presented be adopted. He explained that the portion of lands that flooded was used for the storage of pipes. If restricted this company would be prosecuted under planning enforcement.

Ms Loughnane stated that the Department would have concerns regarding zoning land in a flood zone.

Cllr T McHugh said this was for the storage of pipes and this business should not be impeded.

Sub 19 was proposed by Cllr Cunniffe as R1 zoning and seconded by Cllr T McHugh.

Ms Loughnane explained that when zoning R1 lands it must comply with the core strategy.

Sub 21 Cllr Cunniffe stated that most of the development was concentrated on one side of town. He supported this submission to be zoned as R1

Ms Loughnane said these lands were outside the boundary.

Sub 26 Ms Loughnane informed the meeting that these lands were behind Gilmartin Road and were zoned business and enterprise. They previously requested this zoning but now want lands zoned R1.

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Sub 27 Cllr Roche posed the question the zoning could be done on a phased basis between R1 and R2.

Ms Loughnane reminded the meeting of the requirements of the core strategy

Cllr Cunniffe stated there would be better connectivity within the town and this is good planning.

Sub 29 Cllr Killilea proposed to remove R1 zoning and revert to commercial and mixed-use zoning.

Ms Loughnane explained that the Bord previously refused planning permission here and to zone this commercial would be misleading.

Cllr Killilea stated that these were the only available lands for a shopping centre.

Sub 30 Cllr Cunniffe advised that C2 commercial/mixed used is proposed. The adjacent lands are zoned C2.

Ms Loughnane update the meeting in relation to these lands, one side of the adjacent lands are residential and the other side are commercial. There are concerns here in relation to distance from the town.

Sub 31 Cllr T McHugh proposed to retain the zoning, less than half an acre was zoned residential and would be outside the boundary.

Sub 32 Cllr Killilea explained that this submission was in relation to a Right of Way and asked if the questions raised could be answered.

Ms Loughnane stated that this would take a lot of resources to investigate. This is a complex and a huge body of work.

Sub 35 Cllr Hoade supported this submission stating this should revert to R1 lands.

Sub 36 Ms Loughnane told the meeting that this submission is an observation.

Cllr T McHugh updated the meeting in relation to the lands at St Jarlaths College. R Lowe had marked out the lands subject to the inner relief road. This is a great source of concern to the college. He said he explained the difficulties to the principle in relation to the Part VIII. He said that they were accommodating and wanted to develop the lands for pitches. They asked the questions if planning permission would be granted here for lighting. He also highlighted the number of people who walk here.

Cllr Killilea said that this was a wide corridor and that there would be space there to develop pitches. He also asked the question if they were to put in lighting what would be the position ?

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Ms Loughnane this is something that could be considered, the corridor should be reserved. If the lighting is reversible it could be considered.

Cllr T McHugh said that these lands were low lying and could see no problem with this.

Cllr Killilea stated that he believed there was room for change here.

Cllr T McHugh informed the meeting that they do not have a full sized playing pitch and are under pressure for facilities. He believes they would make these available for community use.

Cllr Cunniffe stated that clubs are looking for joint facilities. This is a substantial piece of infrastructure.

Ms Lowe said looking at the layout that it hugs the line and pulls back in to minimise the impact on the larger piece of land.

Cllr Connelly put a proposal forward in relation to the Tuam Railway station to be developed as a hub. Services such as Park and Ride Taxi and bus could use this hub.

Ms Loughnane informed the meeting that zoning would not have to be changed to support this type of development

Cllr Killilea questioned if it was advisable to put specific zoning

Ms Loughnane stated that C1 town centre for a proposal of this nature it is compatible.

Cllr Cunniffe asked if the business and clubs in the town were asked for their comments on this as they were all supporting the greenway. He was not supporting this.

Cllr T McHugh asked if the land use matrix had been changed and if recreation could be accommodated on industrial zoning.

Ms Loughnane said that a gym was a commercial type development but would double check this.

Cllr T McHugh stated that if someone looked for change of use on this type of development he would not like if they were curtailed by this.

Ms Loughnane advise if there were further amendments that they should be submitted to the Forward Planning Team by 12 noon on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> April.

Cllr Cunniffe asked the question with Tuam in play for a large department store is there an obvious site ?

Ms Loughnane advised that there is opportunity in core zoned town centre/commercial land.

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Cllr Cunniffe discussed the cycle infrastructure in the town. The road is being resurfaced and he enquired if a cycle lane could be put on the road. He was advised this was not included in the budget. He questioned if at least there could be some road markings and was informed there would be concerns in relation to speed and for this reason it would have to be raised. He proposed to send a letter to Minister Ross re advancing money for the cycle lane. Cllr Roche seconded the proposal.

### **Superloo in Tuam Town**

**MDT18017**

Cllr T McHugh asked for an update on the status of the superloo in Tuam town. Mr Moloney informed the members that there was a €22,000 budget allocated in 2018 to the public convenience in Tuam Town. He confirmed that the facility has been not be utilised for some years and is currently inoperable. He confirmed that this allocation could possibly be used to relocate the superloo elsewhere but relocating the facility would be subject to planning permission and would require a site with waste water treatment facilities and an electrical supply.

Cllr Hoade said that it was time to make a firm decision on what to do with the facility. Cllr Keaveney and Cllr Roche suggested, that should this facility be removed, the allocation should be spent elsewhere within the Municipal District of Tuam. Cllr Joyce queried if this budget could be used for hedgecutting. Cllr K McHugh suggested the superloo be relocated to Castlehackett or to the Palace Grounds as there would be use for it at either location. She said that it would be a disservice to the people of Tuam to remove it from the Municipal District. Cllr Connelly supported Cllr K McHugh's proposal to relocate it to Castlehackett.

Cllr Killilea suggested that a report be prepared on the options available for relocating the facility, in consultation with Ms Lowe, to include consideration of the various suitable alternative sites. This report is to include costings of the various options and is to be brought to the plenary Council for consideration.

### **Consideration of Installation of plaque in honour of Tom Murphy**

**MDT18018**

Cllr Killilea informed the members that locals had expressed interest in honouring Tuam playwright Mr Tom Murphy. He advised that some suggestions to honour the artist included the installation of a plaque on the Town Hall or at another suitable location, or renaming a street or building.

Ms Doddy confirmed that the Town Hall in Tuam was a protected structure which already had 4 plaques installed on its wall. She suggested that perhaps another location may be more suitable or that consideration could be given to inviting an artist to commission a piece or a travel bursary could be named in his honour.

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Cllr Cunniffe added that there was a huge appetite to honour Tom Murphy and that there were a lot of streets with no names in the heart of Tuam which may be suitable. Ms Lowe added that perhaps the redevelopment at the Mill in Tuam would be a good location.

Cllr. Killilea suggested that a proposal be drawn up by the Councillors, in conjunction with the Old Tuam Society, as suggested by Cllr Cunniffe. He said that Ms Doddy could provide advice in relation to installing a plaque on the Town Hall. Ms Doddy suggested that they also consult with Ms Sharon O'Grady, Galway County Councils' Arts Officer.

### **Municipal District of Tuam Cathaoirleachs Business**

**MDT18019**

Ms Heffernan circulated an e-mail from Mr Chris Smith, the Private Secretary to Minister Shane Ross, regarding the railway bridge at Ballyglunin, Tuam. In the e-mail he stated that it was not intended to progress a replacement bridge at Ballyglunin at this time, in the absence of any plans to reopen the Athenry to Tuam railway line. He confirmed that, in the event of a plan to reopen the line, Transport Infrastructure Ireland has committed to fund the construction of a replacement bridge.

Cllr Roche queried how the abutments of the old Ballyglunnin Railway Bridge will be dealt with. Cllr K McHugh added that the bridge had been a visual reference for the public. Ms Ruane said that she would revert with further detail at the next meeting of the Municipal District.

Cllr Roche raised the issue of the lack of signage for villages/settlements off the Motorway. He enquired if a list had been submitted to the TII of the locations for which additional signage was required, as had been discussed at the meeting with TII executives. Ms Ruane said that she would revert regarding this matter at the next meeting.

### **Municipal District of Tuam Directors Business**

**MDT18020**

Ms Heffernan confirmed that Galway County Council is in receipt of an allocation of €942,000 towards Local Improvement Schemes in 2018, which is the same amount allocated initially in 2017. She noted that a further allocation may be received later in the year.

Mr. Coyle stated that Malone, O'Regan were the consultants working on the Dunmore Town and Village Enhancement Scheme and that the contractors are Gibbons Civil Engineering Ltd. Mr Coyle confirmed that some amendments had been made to the proposed scheme, subsequent to the drawings having been on public display. He confirmed that the updated drawings would be placed on public display for the information of the public. Ms Lowe said the reconfiguration of the carpark in the town centre would not result in the loss of spaces within that carpark.

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## **AGM**

The date for the AGM was set for the 14<sup>th</sup> May at 2.30pm with the monthly meeting the same day at 3.30pm.

**CRÍOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIÚ ANSIN.**

**Approved by:**

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**Cllr Donagh Killilea**

**Cathaoirleach**

**Municipal District of Tuam**