

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BALLINASLOE

MINUTES OF DRAFT BUDGETARY PLAN 2019 MEETING OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BALLINASLOE
HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY ON THURSDAY 25TH
OCTOBER 2018 AT 10 A.M.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. M. Finnerty

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill: Cllrs. T. Broderick, A. Donohue, D. Connolly.

Oifigigh: Mr. Ger Mullarkey, Head of Finance; Mr. A. Farrell, A/Director of Service, Mr. D. Mitchell, Senior Engineer, Mr. F. McEvoy, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. P. McLynn, A/Executive Engineer, Ms. A. Gardiner, Meetings Administrator, Ms. A. Monaghan, Staff Officer; Ms. F. Mannion, Clerical Officer.

Apologies received from Cllrs. Burke and M. Connolly.

In the absence of Cllr. Burke, the Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr. Finnerty chaired the meeting.

Cllr. Finnerty welcomed the elected members, council officials and the press to the meeting.

Cllr. Finnerty proposed that prior to commencing the business of the day, the meeting would be temporarily adjourned for a period of 5 minutes as an expression of sympathy and mark of respect to Cllr. Burke and his family, on the recent passing of his brother Mr. Liam Burke, R.I.P. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. D Connolly.

Cllr. Finnerty also noted an expression of sympathy was previously recorded to Cllr. Donohue, on the recent passing of his brother Michael, R.I.P.

1. "To consider & adopt (with or without amendment) under Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 a Draft Budgetary Plan 2019 for the Municipal District of Ballinasloe, as prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive". (Report attached)

MDB 18047

Mr. Mullarkey advised that the main changes to the 2019 Draft Budget over the 2018 Draft Budget related to Services B0301 to B0406 in the draft budget report which he stated reflected increases in the roads grant funding. Mr. Mullarkey stated that the road grants budgets were based on 2018 actual allocations and that the Department had indicated that this level of funding would be maintained in 2019. Mr. Mullarkey also noted that in the area of street cleaning an additional €10,000 was allocated to the Municipal District.

Cllr. D. Connolly acknowledged that while the increase of €1.1 million in additional Roads Grants was welcome, he noted that the estimated cost of Storm Ophelia damage was in excess of €6 million for the Municipal District alone. Cllr. D. Connolly stated that the €1.1

million awarded for the whole county to be divided between the Municipal Districts would leave in excess of €5 million requiring repair. Cllr. D. Connolly also expressed his concern at the lack of an adequate Recycling Facility, lack of CCTV for Illegal Dumping offences, the cost of Repair of the Ballinasloe Town Clock and the fact that there had been no increase in the provision for parks pitches and open spaces.

Cllr. Donohue thanked Mr. Mullarkey and expressed his concern that though funding for upkeep & maintenance of Local Authority Housing Estates had remained the same, there was a notable decline in the level of services being provided. Cllr. Donohue observed that although a new 3-year contract was awarded in August, 2018 to date no improvements had been seen. Cllr. Donohue queried why this was as he stated there was no reduction in funding. Cllr. Donohue also asked what determines the Regional Road General Improvement Works and why there was no increase this year.

Mr. Mullarkey indicated that the additional Road Grand funding was a significant (45%) increase on last year's allocation. Mr. Mullarkey noted that the Department's base line for funding has been the level of funding provided in 2014 and that has not taken into account the significant increase in costs since that date. Cllr. D. Connolly expressed his concern that that Ballinasloe District is suffering more than any other Municipal District in the County.

Cllr. Finnerty expressed his concern at the impact the 'Big Dig' is having on businesses in Ballinasloe Town and suggested that Car Parks located on each side of the town should be free of charge for the duration of the dig. Cllr. Finnerty also requested that the Ballinasloe rate be frozen this year as any increase in the rate would not be acceptable. Cllr. Finnerty stated that he estimated that the Town Clock maintenance would amount to approximately €1,500.

Cllr. Broderick stated that he was dissatisfied that the Draft Budget deals only with expenditure. Cllr. Broderick stated that he would like to be informed as to what amount of income is taken in at local level. Cllr. Broderick also stated that he would prefer detail of both Local Income and Local Expenditure and stated that it was difficult to accept a draft budget that presents one side only, not the whole picture.

Mr. Mullarkey noted again the significant increase in roads grant funding and stated that there had been no further indications of any additional funding being made available for 2019. Regarding the car parks, Mr. Mullarkey undertook to raise the issue with the Director of Services for Roads and Transportation. Mr. Mullarkey noted that it would be possible to fund the Town Clock maintenance through service F0401. In relation to rates, Mr Mullarkey explained that the Council were in year 4 of a 5-year streamline transition to change from the old Ballinasloe Town rate to the County Rate and stated that there would be an increase in the Ballinasloe Town rate for 2019 as part of that process.

Cllr. Broderick asked if the Draft Budget took into account the geographical changes to the boundaries of the electoral areas that are to be implemented half way through 2019. Cllr. Broderick expressed concern that while the Municipal District of Ballinasloe would take on an increase in its Housing Units; Traveller Accommodation, Burial Grounds and Villages that require operational street cleaning services, the Draft Budget he stated did not cater for this

increase. Cllr. Broderick stated that while there was no increase in these budget allocations he stated that a larger area has to be covered. Cllr. Broderick questioned whether it was a budget for the Municipal District of Ballinasloe as is now or the Municipal District of Ballinasloe as it will be next June, 2019 as he stated there will be significant differences then with the boundary changes.

Mr. Mullarkey outlined that the draft budget was presented on the current Municipal District boundaries and that his understanding was that when the Statutory Budget was adopted and the actual Road Grant allocations had been received in 2019 that the Schedule of Municipal District Works to be presented in early 2019 would reflect the revised boundaries. Mr. Mullarkey also noted that for items such as payments to Burial Ground Committees, these he stated would be based on where the burial ground was located and would not be changing in 2019.

Cllr. Broderick again expressed his concern that if the Draft Budget was adopted, the Municipal District of Ballinasloe would be at the mercy of other Municipal Districts and there would be no come back regarding matching the financial losses as a result of the new electoral area boundaries. Cllr. Broderick stated that the Draft Budget should not be adopted and that it did not represent the Municipal District that the members will be representing after June of next year.

Cllr. Finnerty proposed that the Budget be accepted as presented, and this was seconded by Cllr. Donohue.

Cllr. Connolly proposed that the Budget be rejected as presented, and this was seconded by Cllr. Broderick.

Cllr. D. Connolly again stated his concerns regarding the lack of adequate recycling facilities and lack of staffing. Cllr. Finnerty queried the recycling concerns with Mr. Farrell, Acting Director of Services, who indicated that the matter should be queried with the Director of Services with responsibility for the Environment Department. Mr. Mullarkey pointed out that the upturn in the employment market leads to staff gaining employment in the Private Industry which in turn has a knock-on effect on public service staffing, and that this in turn affects all of the Municipal Districts.

Cllr. Finnerty again proposed that the Budget be accepted as presented, and this was seconded by Cllr. Donohue. Cllrs. Broderick and D. Connolly voted against the proposal: "To consider & adopt (with or without amendment) under Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 a Draft Budgetary Plan 2019 for the Municipal District of Ballinasloe, as prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive". Cllr. Finnerty exercised his casting vote as Cathaoirleach in favour of the adoption, and the Draft Budgetary Plan 2019 for the Municipal District of Ballinasloe was declared adopted. Cllr. Finnerty thanked all in attendance and declared the meeting closed.

CHRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN

Submitted, Approved and Signed



(Cathaoirleach to sign here)

14/11/18

(Date)