

CHOMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT
ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY ON MONDAY 21st OCTOBER, 2013
AT 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, T. Mannion, J. McClearn, J. McDonagh, T. McHugh, M. Noone, P. Roche, K. Ryan, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, Cllrs. S. Walsh, T. Walsh, T. Welby & B. Willers.

Oifigh:

Ms. M. Moloney, County Manager; Messrs. F. Gilmore, J. Cullen, K. Kelly, E. Cummins Directors of Service; G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance; M. Owens, County Secretary & Meetings Administrator; E. Molloy, Senior Engineer; M. Raftery, Chief Fire Officer; S. Kennedy, A/Senior Planner; M. Donoghue, Senior Staff Officer; G. Healy, Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

1556

The Mayor proposed a Vote of Sympathy to the family of the late Mrs. Joan Broderick, mother of Cllr. Tim Broderick and was joined by the Members in paying tribute to Mrs. Broderick stating that Mrs. Broderick was held in very high esteem by all who knew her and especially by the people of Kilconnell and the Ballinasloe area.

The Manager offered her condolences to Cllr. Broderick and his family on the death of his mother, on behalf of Management and Staff of the Council. She said she had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Broderick and she was impressed by her warm personality, her interest in people and her love of traditional music.

Cllr. Broderick thanked the Members and Officials for their kind words of sympathy and support, for sending Mass Cards and all those who attended his mother's funeral.

A resolution of sympathy was also extended to the following:

- Mary Rabbitte & Family, Ballynakilla, Abbeyknockmoy
- Hubert Hussey, Parkroe, Glenamaddy
- John Mee & Family, Moylough, Ballinasloe
- Margaret Monaghan & Extended Family, Cooloo Mountain, Moylough, Ballinasloe
- Elizabeth Coyle and Family, Moylough, Ballinasloe
- Babs McGinn, Tullycross, Renvyle
- Coilin McDonagh (Michael), Drom, Lettermore
- Nellie McDonagh, Tir an Fhia, Lettermore
- Peter McDonagh, Gentian Hill, Knocknacarra, Galway

Comh. Ó Curraoin extended a vote of congratulations on the Clare Senior Hurling Team on winning the All Ireland recently.

Cllr. Willers extended a vote of congratulations on the Ardrahan Senior Camogie Team on winning the County Final the previous day.

Cllr. Canney extended a vote of congratulations to the Corofin Senior Football Team who won the County Final and wished them luck in their next match against Castlebar Mitchells, Mayo County Champions.

The Mayor extended congratulations on the Oranmore Maree Junior Team on winning the County Junior Championship.

Cllr. McClearn extended a vote of congratulations on the Portumna Intermediate Camogie Team on winning the County Final.

Cllr. Ryan extended congratulations on the Mountbellew Moylough Minor Football Team who beat Claregalway in the North Board Minor A League Final the previous day.

Cllr. Fahy extended congratulations to Mr. Eugene Cummins, DOS, on his successful application for the post of Monaghan County Manager.

The Meeting was adjourned by the Mayor as a mark of respect to the late Mrs. Joan Broderick and was reconvened after 10 minutes.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1557

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 23rd September, 2013 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor, on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. McHugh.

Arising from the Minutes, Cllr. McClearn referred to the Famine Bid which had been endorsed by the Members at the Meeting of 23rd September, 2013 and which included a proposal that a State Ceremony be held at the Portumna Workhouse. He asked why it had subsequently been decided to include a proposal to hold the State Ceremony at Portumna Castle.

Mr. Owens replied that the Famine Bid which was presented to the Council at the September Meeting consisted of a 10-day programme of events, with a large number of events programmed for Portumna Workhouse, including the formal State Ceremony. He confirmed that following a review of the logistics of hosting the State Ceremony event at the Workhouse, it was decided that in order to strengthen the Bid, a second option should be included as a venue for the State Ceremony and that option was to host the Ceremony at Portumna Castle. He said that in the event that the bid was successful the events programmed for the Workhouse would continue to be hosted at the Workhouse Centre and that it would remain the preferred to host the formal State Ceremony provided the logistics associated with the venue could be addressed to the satisfaction of the OPW. He advised that the decision to provide the option of the Workhouse or Castle for the State Ceremony was to strengthen the Bid and submit the strongest possible proposal for the 2014 National Famine Commemoration to be held in County Galway and Portumna.

In reply to a point raised by Cllr. Cuddy regarding the property tax, the Manager said that proceeds from the property tax will become part of the Council's budgetary process which will be agreed by the Members at the Budget Meeting of the Council each year. Therefore it will be the Members who will determine how the property tax is spent. Cllr. Cuddy also referred to the fact that €3.5 billion in revenue was raised on an annual basis in various form of motor vehicle related taxation, yet only approximately a third of this revenue was available for investment in the road network.

In reply to Cllr. D. Connolly, Mr. Owens said that no detailed response had been received from the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht in relation to the Council's Motion to support those who cut turf for domestic use.

Cllr. D. Connolly also re-iterated his concerns regarding blockages caused in the River Suck channel due to fallen branches and the failure to undertake appropriate channel maintenance. In reply, Mr. Gilmore undertook to follow up on the matter with the River Suck Joint Drainage Committee.

Cllr. Canney expressed concern for the businesses that are being taken to court for non-payment of commercial rates. He said that Government must do something to help ratepayers who cannot afford to pay rates and to help local Councils who are suffering as a result of reduced funds in this regard.

In reply to Cllr. Welby, Mr. Mullarkey said that the Roads Safety Authority is commencing a publicity campaign this coming week to inform the public of the transfer of the driver licencing function from County Councils to the National Driver Licencing Service (NDLS) from Tuesday 29th October 2013. He said that there will be a full-time NDLS Centre located at Ballybrit Business Park and a part-time facility will be provided at Clifden. The centre at Ballybrit will be open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and from 9am to 2pm on Saturdays and will remain open through lunchtime. People will be required to present themselves at the centres bringing with them additional documentation to confirm identity such as proof of address, passport and old driving licence or permit. The process also involves a face-to-face meeting as well as having a digital photograph and signature captured.

Cllr. E. Mannion welcomed the fact that there will be a facility in Clifden as it will be of great benefit to the people in the surrounding area.

In reply to Cllr. Broderick, Mr. Gilmore said that he had no update regarding the roads survey mentioned at the September Monthly Meeting, however he wished to assure the Members that there are no plans to put any additional tolls or toll plaza in place on the M6 and that he will pursue the issue with a view to identifying the purpose of the traffic surveys and revert directly to Cllr. Broderick on same.

In reply to Comh. Ó Cuaig, Mr. Cullen said that he understood that Irish Water had been invited to make a presentation to the Members at a forthcoming Meeting of the Council.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION **1558**

The Report of the Planning, Economic Development & Community SPC Meeting held on 13th May 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Comh. Ó Tuairisg, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh.

Cllr. Canney referred to the apparent delay in presenting reports of Committee Meetings for consideration by Council and suggested a timeframe be established for same.

The Report of the Housing SPC Meeting held on 27th March 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. T. Walsh, seconded by Cllr. Willers.

The Report of the Housing SPC Meeting held on 12th June 2013 was approved by the Council, on the proposal of Cllr. T. Walsh, seconded by Cllr. Welby.

The Report of the Conamara Area Committee Meeting held on 31st July 2013 was approved by the Council, on the proposal of Comh. Ó Cuaig, seconded by Comh. Ó Curraoin.

The Report of the Corporate & Cultural SPC Meeting held on 22nd April, 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Comh. Ó Laoi, seconded by Cllr. McHugh.

The Report of the Roads & Transportation SPC Meeting held on 9th April, 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McClearn, seconded by Cllr. Feeney.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 3rd December 2012 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Willers, seconded by Cllr. G. Finnerty.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 12th February 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McClearn, seconded by Cllr. Feeney.

In reply to comments from Cllr. McClearn in relation to flooding on the N65 at Killimor following an overlay undertaken by a contractor where the standard of work was below that of work undertaken by the Council, Mr. Gilmore clarified that the work was undertaken to specification provided by the NRA in accordance with the NRA HD28 Programme.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 23rd May 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. G. Finnerty, seconded by Cllr. McClearn.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 29th May 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Willers, seconded by Cllr. Feeney.

The Report of the Tuam Area Committee Meeting held on 8th February 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. M. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. McHugh.

Cllr. McHugh referred to verge trimming undertaken by contractors but that necessitate Council vehicles accompany the contractors at front and back in order to comply with health and safety requirements. He said that this requires significant resources and he suggested that in future Health & Safety Requirements be incorporated into the contracts for verge trimming, as the responsibility of the contractor. Cllr. G. Finnerty suggested that contractors for verge trimming should be engaged based on a rate per mile and not based on an hourly rate.

Mr. Gilmore replied that this would be a matter for discussion at Area Committee Meeting and would be decided by the Area Engineer for the area concerned. However, he said that the suggestion was a good one and will be considered by the Council.

The Mayor brought the Members' attention to an award which Galway County Council received from the Health & Safety Authority which was on display in the Council Chamber during the Meeting. He said it is necessary that the Council comply with Health & Safety Regulations in carrying out roadworks, for the safety of the public and staff. He also said that the Health & Safety Authority will be invited to address the Members at a future Meeting of the Council in order to answer any questions the Members may have in this area.

In reply to Cllr. McHugh, Mr. Gilmore said that it is the policy of the Council to have work carried out by staff of the Council, however staff numbers are reducing all the time and as a result, more road works will have to be given out to contract.

In reply to Cllr. Canney, the Mayor said that the issue of taking in charge of housing estates would be listed as an agenda item for a forthcoming meeting.

Cllr. Hoade said that local issues regarding hedge trimming and road repairs should be brought up at Area Committee Meetings, rather than at Monthly Meetings and this view was endorsed by the Mayor.

The Report of the Tuam Area Committee Meeting held on 8th April 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Roche, seconded by Cllr. Hoade.

DECLARATION OF ROADS TO BE PUBLIC ROADS – SECTION 11 OF THE ROADS ACT 1993 –

1559

Details as follows:-

On the proposal of Cllr. McClearn, seconded by Cllr. Willers, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:

Cois na hAbhainn Housing Estate, Fairyhill, Portumna

Road pavement and footpath commencing at its junction with the N65 in the townland of Fairyhill and extending in a Northerly and Easterly direction for a distance of approximately 260.0 meters in the townland of Fairyhill and ending in the townland of Fairyhill.

Electoral Area: Loughrea

DECLARATION OF ROADS TO BE PUBLIC ROADS – SECTION 11 OF THE ROADS ACT 1993 –
1560

Details as follows:-

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Connolly seconded by Cllr. Hoade, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:

Road commencing at junction with Local Road L-7209 in the townland of Brierfield South and extending west for a distance of 569 meters in the townland of Brierfield South and finishing at the end of the road at Martin Mannion's shed.

Electoral Area: Tuam

DECLARATION OF ROADS TO BE PUBLIC ROADS – SECTION 11 OF THE ROADS ACT 1993 –
1561

On the proposal of Comh. Ó Tuairisg, seconded by Comh. Ó Curraoin, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:

Road commencing at junction with the local road L52019 in the townland of Coil Rua and extending north for a distance of 555 meters in the townland of Coil Rua and finishing at Michael Glynn's house in the townland of Coil Rua.

Electoral Area: Conamara

DECLARATION OF ROADS TO BE PUBLIC ROADS – SECTION 11 OF THE ROADS ACT 1993 –
1562

Details as follows:-

On the proposal of Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:

Road commencing at junction with C. Connolly's gate on Local Road 81056 in the townland of Ballynaccloughy and extending west for a distance of approximately 170 meters in the townland of Ballynaccloughy and finishing at entrance to K. Walsh's house, in the townland of Ballynaccloughy.

Electoral Area: Oranmore

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 ON THE DISPOSAL OF 0.003 HECTARES AT CASTLECREEVY, CORRANDULLA, CO. GALWAY –

1563

Statutory Notice dated the 30th September and Report were already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Hoade, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh, the transfer of 0.003 hectares of land at Castlecrevy, Corrandulla to Michael and Carmel Hennelly in accordance with the Statutory Notice was agreed.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 – LOUGHREA TOWN HALL

1564

Report dated 17th October, 2013 was circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Willers, seconded by Cllr. Fahy, the proposed development of the former Loughrea Town Hall, Barrack Street, Loughrea, to enable sustainable future use of the building as a combination of a heritage centre for tourism, cultural and related community activities, at ground floor level, and for use as business start up offices at first floor level, with associated staff and visitor facilities and ancillary accommodation, as set out in the report, was agreed.

TO CONSIDER THE MANAGER'S REPORT ON THE PRE-DRAFT SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON THE GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015 – 2021.

1565

Report already circulated to each Member.

The Mayor invited the presentation of the Manager's Report on the pre-Draft submissions received on the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021.

Mr. Kelly advised the Meeting that the Council published an Issues Paper, held pre-draft consultations including public meetings and had internal meetings with various groups such as such as the Planning SPC, the DECLG, some Environmental Authorities and others.

He said that the Members consider the Manager's Report (which had been circulated in advance) on the Pre-Draft Submissions at this Meeting and thereafter the Draft Development Plan is prepared. He said that the Draft Plan would be circulated to the Members in January 2014 to consider and decide before the Draft Plan goes on public display.

He advised that this Meeting gives the Members an opportunity to give direction on the preparation of the Draft Plan. He said that any such directions must be strategic in nature, consistent with the Core Strategy and shall take account of the statutory obligations of any Local Authority in the area and any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or of any Minister of the Government. He said that the Elected Members when performing their functions shall be restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the Development Plan relates.

Mr. Kelly advised that a total of 54 valid submissions were received within the statutory timeframe, 8 submissions were received from statutory bodies and 46 submissions were received from the general public or other persons/bodies.

Mr. Kelly advised the Meeting that he would outline the Submissions received in a group basis and the Manager's response and recommendations. He suggested that the Members were familiar with the issues from having read the report and the discussion at Area Meetings.

Mr. Kelly outlined the various issues raised by the West Regional Authority (WRA), and the Prescribed Authorities which included the following:

- The Development Plan must comply with all EU Directives.
- The Core Strategy shall be consistent with the RPG hierarchy.
- Vacancy levels within the local authority area should be considered and factored into the preparation of the Core Strategy for County Galway.
- The Housing Strategy must be consistent with the population targets as set out in Core Strategy of the new Plan.
- Retail development in the county should be consistent with the retail hierarchy and settlement hierarchy.
- The Plan shall promote the integration of land use and transportation policies.
- The Settlement Strategy needs to be framed by the DECLG Water Services investment Programmes, the River Basin Management Plans and the Replacement Connacht Waste Management Plan etc.
- The new Plan shall take cognisance of the National Climate Change Strategy.
- The Plan shall take account of the National Biodiversity Plan 2011 – 2016, County Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 – 2013, the National Heritage Plan 2002 and County Galway Heritage Plan.
- Themes such as healthcare, education, leisure facilities, social inclusion, social infrastructure, An Gaeltacht and the islands shall be provided for in the Plan.
- Draft Plan needs to take cognisance of DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and its obligations under the Planning Legislation.
- The Council needs to consider the implications of land use zoning designations on the strategic National Road network in the area.
- Draft Plan incorporates certain policies and objectives including Galway Outer City By-pass, N18/N17 Gort – Tuam PPP Scheme, N17 Tuam to Claremorris Scheme, N59 Moycullen Bypass Scheme and N59 Clifden to Oughterard Scheme.
- The Draft Plan to include a policy to protect routes of National Road Schemes.

- The Draft Plan to include a strategic principle regarding the sustainable integration of land use and transportation.
- The Council should consider undertaking a Strategic Transport Assessment (STA) as part of the Plan preparation process.
- Guidance on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping process was given and relevant reports/documents/legislation/policies/circulars/directives highlighted that should be considered in the preparation of the Plan and SEA.
- Provision of adequate/appropriate drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.
- Protection of surface and groundwater.
- Protection of bathing water quality.
- Protection of designated European and National Conservation Sites (Natura 2000 and Natural Heritage Areas).
- Protection of existing ecological corridors/linkages/riparian buffer zones.
- Protection of sites listed on the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas.
- Protection of the Dawros and Owenriff Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments.
- The Planning Authority shall have regard to Technical Guidance Documents – Identification and Suitability Assessment of Sites for Primary Schools and Post Primary Schools.
- No significant residential development should take place without an assessment on the impact of school provision.
- Lands adjacent to existing schools should be, where possible, protected for possible future educational use to allow for expansion of schools.

Mr. Kelly said that Eirgrid's submission provided information on future electricity grid developments, and referenced the *Government Policy Statement on Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure*, and referred to the *Energy Strategy of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010-2022*, which acknowledged the role of Eirgrid and the key transmission projects identified in the Grid25 Strategy. He said the Submission also set out the existing transmission network in Galway and the main projects for the Galway Area and it included suggested text for inclusion in the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 and requested that a list of priority infrastructure be listed in the Development Plan.

Mr. Kelly said that the ESB's Submission provided information about the operations of the ESB and advised that the ESB is currently implementing an investment programme in National Energy Infrastructure worth €4bn. He said that the Submission advised that ESB Telecoms provides network solutions for the wide variety of mobile network operators and ESB Electric Vehicles is responsible for providing the EV charging infrastructure in Ireland. He said the Submission outlined that the policies/objectives which support and recognise the importance of a secure energy supply objectives in the current Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015 should be continued and it highlighted EU policy in relation to renewable energy, climate change, National policy and the energy targets set out for 2020 and made reference to the electric vehicle charging infrastructure. He said that the Submission suggested the encouragement of the uptake of electric vehicles and car-sharing policies in the Development Plan.

Mr. Kelly then outlined the Manager's Response and Recommendation to the WRA and Prescribed Bodies Submissions as follows:

- The Draft Development Plan will be informed by EU and National legislation and the various Departmental Guidance documents and shall be consistent with the objectives of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010-2022. It shall be an overall objective of the Draft Plan to implement the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in its totality including the Core Strategy and to fully adhere to EU and National legislation in preparing the Plan and the new Draft Plan shall align with the objectives as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West region 2010-2022.
- There will be cohesion between the Housing Strategy, Settlement Strategy, Core Strategy and the overall content of the Plan.
- The Planning Authority will review the issues of sustainability, climate change, biodiversity, healthcare and leisure services, education, social infrastructure and social inclusion/community development, which are already included in the current Plan, in the new Draft Plan and this will extend to the Gaeltacht and the Islands in respect to protection and promotion of same.
- Land use zoning is primarily dealt with at Local Area Plan level with the exception being the Wind Energy Strategy.
- Policies/objectives shall be included in the Plan to provide for the development of relevant National road schemes and to protect route options/route of national roads schemes.
- Sustainable integration of land use and transportation shall be provided for throughout the Plan having reference to both the Smarter Travel and National Cycle Policy Framework documents.
- An objective shall be incorporated into the Plan to undertake a review of the GTPS (Galway Transportation and Planning Study).
- A statement will be provided for in the Development Management Chapter with regard to compliance with the requirements of S.I. No. 140 of 2006 Environmental Noise Regulations.
- The key issues and specific comments identified in the EPA's submission will be considered and addressed, as appropriate, through the text, policies and objectives in the Draft Plan and also in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report, most of these are addressed in the current County Development Plan but may require updating or amendment.
- References to the various/documents/legislation etc will be made where relevant in the Draft Plan.

- A policy/objective shall be contained in the Draft Plan whereby site reservations for primary and post primary schools shall be considered at the Local Area Plan (LAP) stage.
- Appropriate policies/objectives to be included in the Draft Plan to ensure the protection of the existing and future transmission network.
- The Planning Authority shall consider provision in the Draft Plan for the projects referred to in the submission by Eirgrid.
- The Planning Authority shall consider the continuation of Policies IS24 and IS29 or similar type policies/objectives in relation to allowing for the improved development of telecommunications infrastructure including broadband capability.
- The Planning Authority shall consider the continuation of Policies IS32, IS33 and Objective IS24 or similar type policies/objectives in relation to recognising the importance of a secure energy supply.
- The Planning Authority shall consider including suggested text in relation to electric vehicle car parking/battery charging, or other appropriate text in the Draft Development Plan.

Mr. Kelly outlined the 11 Submissions which had a variety of issues and are listed as General Submissions received, to include the following:

- Encouragement of Urban Renewal Schemes in the towns in Galway along railway lines, in particular Tuam, Ballyglunin, Athenry, Ardrahan and Gort and supported for the reopening of the railway from Collooney, Co. Sligo through Claremorris, Tuam and Athenry.
- Proposal to undertake a study of the potential of Clifden Harbour.
- A number of issues were raised that were within the jurisdiction of the City Council and/or are considered to be matters for consideration in the context of a Local Area Plan. He said that issues raised, of relevance to the review of the County Development Plan, included the Galway Outer City Bypass, traffic congestion along N84, Commercial development along the Curraghline and Radon.
- Information and suggestions given on a wide variety of topics which included suggested formatting for the Plan, specific details/wording on suggested updated policies/standards and new policies/standards under various sections within the current Plan such as Economic Development and Tourism, Infrastructure, Recreation and Amenity, Heritage Landscape, Agriculture, Infrastructure and Landscape/Conservation and Management.
- A wide range of other issues were raised which included, inter alia, the following: Identification of new rights of way and maintain access to and protect existing of rights of ways, walking and cycling infrastructure, Smarter Travel, extractive industry, Recreational/Tourist attractions, archaeological sites, and Byelaws restricting quads, jet skis and power boats.

- RGDATA's Submission detailed a variety of retail related topics which included, Design statements, Sustainability Impact Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Vacant Sites, Rogue Traders/Black Market and Car Parking.
- Proposal that the selection process for the R336 road be terminated.
- Housing need eligibility was raised.
- Proposal that lands along a restricted road should not be a reason for refusal, provided sight lines can be achieved and that the lands in question can only be accessed off the restricted road.
- Proposal that applicants shall be offered the opportunity to produce a field study Hydrological Report in respect to sites that are prone to flooding.
- Recommendation that appropriate provision for playgrounds and sports and recreation purposes, the expansion of burial grounds and provision for bring bank facilities are made in Local Area Plans.
- Recommendation that the designation of: part of a road in Cuileán as an 'area of high scenic amenity'; and a site in Cuileán as an 'area of high scenic amenity' and an 'ecological corridor' as marsh fritillary is in the area.
- Retail Planning issues to include:
 - The need for a Retail Strategy in conjunction with Galway City Council.
 - The need for the right retail development in the right locations.
 - A policy to prepare Design Briefs as part of pre-planning process.
 - A policy to strengthen the retail base of Tuam and Loughrea.
 - It was suggested that where a retail development is located within the town centre, a retail impact assessment is not automatically required.
 - County policy should align more closely with City policy in regard to Ardaun.
 - Car parking standards for retail development.
- The Galway Transport and Planning Study (GTPS) is too extensive an area and the review process should reduce the area of restriction associated with the GTPS.
- Requests that the level of financial contributions in respect of Development Contributions be lowered.
- There should be a more flexible approach towards design of new housing developments in terms of density and housing mix.
- Matters of design should not be addressed in an overly prescriptive way as Design is a subjective issue.
- The new Plan should include an objective to deal with taking in charge matters without undue delay.
- Protection and promotion of our Gaelic culture and heritage and the vision to meet the challenges facing us in safe and healthy surroundings and the County Plan needs to be equitable to the whole society.
- Reference made to the negative impacts of wind farm development in the west of the County and wants the Camus region (Lettermuckoo, Muckanaghkillew and Derrynea) to be removed from the Wind Energy Strategy.
- Rural services have been impacted negatively by planning and local enterprise should be nurtured and the Bearna to Scriob road should be abandoned as it will damage natural heritage.
- People who own land shall be given permission for one-off housing and locals who do not own land shall be catered for in small rural clusters of not more than 6 houses.

Mr. Kelly then outlined the Manager's Response and Recommendation to the General Submissions as follows:

- A general objective shall be incorporated into the Draft Plan to support urban renewal throughout the county.
- An objective shall be contained within the Plan to maintain the Western Rail Corridor as an option for passenger train and cargo transportation from the south east to the north-west of the country.
- The Draft Plan will support the development potential of harbours, ports, piers and slipways throughout the county and shall recognise the strategic importance of Galway Sea Port/Galway Harbour and Ros a Mhíl within the Galway region. Consideration will be given to including reference to a study of the potential of Clifden Harbour.
- It will be an objective of the Draft Plan to support the completion of the Galway City Outer By- Pass.
- The Draft Plan will provide for an objective to facilitate a quality public transport system.
- The Draft Plan will continue with the objective to prepare an Area Action plan for Carrowbrowne.
- Galway County Council in its statutory role under the Building Control Act 2007 will have regard to the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes, and will consider the inclusion of relevant policies/objectives in the County Development Plan.
- The Draft County Development Plan shall seek to protect, enhance, and promote the landscape of County Galway, its recreational areas, access to same and any walking and cycling routes.
- The objective to identify, map, reserve and maintain Public Rights of Way shall be addressed in so far as possible in the Draft Plan.
- Consideration shall be given, as appropriate, to the variety of suggestions provided in the submission in relation to the wording of policies/objective/standards in preparing the Draft County Development Plan. However, some of the issues raised such as Bye-Laws are separate issues and not land use plan issues.
- An objective/development management standard in relation to design statements, which takes cognisance of the *Retail Planning Guidelines 2012* and companion document the Retail Design Manual 2012, shall be provided for in the Draft Plan.
- Galway County Council will have regard to the specific guidance on transport and traffic management as contained within the *Traffic Management Guidelines 2003* in the preparation of the Draft Plan.

- The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) will be undertaken alongside the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) when adopted.
- An objective to undertake a review of retail vacancy levels in the hub and other key towns of the county will be considered, as will policies/objectives to seek to reduce vacancy in town centres.
- The Draft Plan will promote best practice design with regard to car parking arrangements.
- It will be an objective of the draft Plan to support the completion of the new R336 Bearna to Scrib via Ros an Mhíl road.
- The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines do not refer to biological relationships as criteria of assessment regarding intrinsic links to a particular area. In the context of the Development Plan, family has been considered as immediate family.
- Rural housing policy/objective will be considered as part of the preparation of a Draft Plan and shall have regard to the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and other relevant guidance documents. However, protection of our roads infrastructure is important in the context of proper planning and sustainable development.
- The Draft Plan will be informed by the DoEHLG Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines in relation to flooding.
- The Draft Plan will support the provision of bring bank facilities at appropriate locations.
- The specific locations of high scenic amenity shall be assessed as part of the SEA/AA process associated with the formulation of a new Plan.
- It will be an objective of the Draft Plan for Galway County Council to seek to compile and adopt a Retail Strategy within the lifetime of the Plan 2015 – 2021, which will consider the retail issues in detail. This will be joint approach with Galway City Council as required in the National Guidelines.
- Need to provide the right retail development in the right location and identify suitable (opportunity) sites for retail development. The Retail Strategy shall take cognisance of these important factors.
- A policy/objective can be incorporated into the Draft Plan that it is desirable that large proposals be accompanied by a design brief at pre-planning stage.
- The Draft Plan will be informed by the *Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)* as regards Retail Impact Assessment.
- The Draft Plan will promote best practice design with regard to car parking arrangements.

- The Draft Plan will be informed by the *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, the Urban Design Manual (2009)* and the *Design Guidelines for the Single Rural Houses* in regard to residential and wider development design.
- Include a Section in the Draft Plan on Renewable Energy.
- Objective RT4 of the current Plan, or a similar objective, which relates to a new strategic route along the Cois Fharraige corridor from Galway to Scriob via Ros an Mhíl, to be included in the Draft Plan.
- Ensure the provisions of the Draft Plan are consistent with national guidance/policy in particular the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005 and the Galway Clustered Housing Guidelines.

Mr. Kelly outlined the 9 Submissions received which were predominately Greenway related which included the following:

- Request was made that disused infrastructure be considered for multiple amenity uses including walks and greenways and the Tuam to Claremorris rail line should be dismantled and sold off and the monies attained from this process be used to create a greenway which would create employment in the locality and be an amenity asset. He said that the Submission also mentioned the 'West on Track' campaign which is an initiative to recommence a commuter rail and freight line from Limerick to Sligo of which the commuter aspect of the overall proposal is to be aborted and the route to operate solely as a freight line and to do so would be unacceptable.
- Consideration is given for the use of disused roads and railways to allow multiple amenity and uses including walking and cycling.
- Request that the eastern foothills of the Connemara mountains to be designated as a tourist area in the form of a cycle loop and walking route along the L1320 roadway and Lay-bys, speed ramps and informational points to be provided for along the route and that Galway County Council refrain from permitting wind farm developments along the L1320 roadway and to revoke the current Wind Strategy zoning for the Shaunnagurraun-Knockalough-Lettergunnet-Furbo area.
- Recommendations received with regard to wind energy provisions and sets out a vision for Camus and County Galway to include:
 - Large scale wind farms should not be allowed in SACs and scenic rural areas and same should be positioned 2000 metres away from residential dwellings.
 - The proposed Galway to Scriob road should be withdrawn and replaced with a more frequent and efficient green transport system to include for cycle routes and pedestrian pathways.
 - The vision for Galway shall cater for everyone irrespective of social standing, race, gender or political affiliation.
 - Public consultation/workshops should take place over longer periods.

- Provision shall be made for clustered housing development of ≤ 6 with additional allotments/patches of land for vegetable growing and/or community gardens.

Mr. Kelly then outlined the Manager's Response and Recommendation to the Greenway related Submissions as follows:

- An objective shall be contained in the new Plan to support the implementation of the Galway County Walking and Cycling Strategy Report.
- An objective shall be contained in the Plan to maintain the Western Rail Corridor as an option for passenger train and cargo transportation from the south-east to the north-west of the country.
- An objective shall be contained in the Plan to examine the possibility of identifying a route linking Ballindine, Milltown and Tuam and its environs to the National Cycling Network and/or the Tuam/Athenry cycle route.
- There are no immediate plans to provide for the walking and cycling route Galway/Maigh Cuillin/An Spidéal L1320. An objective shall be contained in the new Plan to support the implementation of the Galway County Walking Cycling Strategy Report.
- Ensure the provisions of the Draft Plan and Wind Energy Strategy is consistent with national guidance and policy.
- Ensure the provisions of the Draft Plan and Wind Energy Strategy are consistent with national guidance and policy and that the plan shall provide for the incorporation of any updated guidelines or policy issued.
- Ensure Objective RT4 of the current Plan, or a similar objective, which relates to a new strategic route along the Cois Fharraige corridor from Galway to Scriob via Ros an Mhíl, is included in the Draft Plan. Reference shall also be made, as appropriate, to the cycleway element of the overall scheme under this objective.
- The Council mission statement shall be reflected in the policies and objectives of the new Plan.
- Ensure the provisions of the Draft Plan are consistent with national guidance/policy in particular the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005 and the Galway Clustered Housing Guidelines.

Mr. Kelly advised the Meeting that the Draft Plan and the Wind Energy Strategy would be consistent with National Policy and Guidelines and he outlined the 26 Wind related Submissions received as follows:

- Identification of the adverse effects on the quality of life of the son of the Submission maker, resulting from shadow flicker, noise, vibrations, which have arisen as a result of an exempted development local wind turbine.
- Reference given to the east of the country being used for wind turbines instead of the west and the economic return on such developments have yet to be tested. It also referenced the minimum distance requirement of 2km from residential properties and a compensation fund for residents impacted by such developments/or for decommissioning. It also commented that the scale of developments proposed for Furbo, Maigh Cuilinn, Roscahill and Seanaphesatin will ruin any chance of tourism revival/enjoyment of surrounding residents.
- Recommendation that improvements be made to the R336 as the “brown route” is unlikely and to include provision of a cycleway along this route.
- Advice that most of Connemara’s headwaters of sensitive river systems have been planted by coniferous monoculture by Coillte, which are now being clear felled and should not be replanted.
- Reference is made to salmon farming being unsustainable and causing environmental degradation and that the industry will have to come on shore away from river systems.
- Reference is made to the Casla River system being dammed in order to provide water to South Connemara, but not providing water within the catchment from its source.
- It was stated that no attempt has been made to reinstate the quarry at Ballinahown towards Costelloe.
- It was stated that more employment opportunities could be created by the provision of broadband.
- Wind farms should not be permitted out along the N59 west of Oughterard. Consideration to be given to extending Connemara National Park back to Oughterard, Screebe/Costello to protect landscape.
- Suggestion of inadequacies and deficiencies in the County Wind Energy Strategy, SEA and associated documents and makes reference to a specific planning application. It also referred to the minimum separation distances applied in the Wind Energy Strategy and to consultation and requested that it is a policy of the Council to make it clear that full pre-planning consultation is expected. He said that the Submission asked that that the Strategic Areas in the Wind Energy Strategy are kept under review, particularly in light of planning decisions.
- Request that tourism, property prices and the desirability of the area are taken into account for wind energy developments and that all works carried out, need proper supervision and should be implemented in strict accordance with planning permission.
- Recommendation that the Council consider incentivising other renewable energy sources into the future
- New development should set proportionate distances between wind turbines and nearby residences based on base to tip height of the turbine and a setback distance of a minimum of 1500m be used.
- Planning conditions to stipulate noise levels that wind farms should not exceed once they are operational, in line with updated DOE guidance.
- Development Plan to set out appropriate limits for wind turbine noise in low background environments.
- Development Plan to reflect that no shadow flicker to be endured by any homes.

- Department's review of the Guidelines should be given due consideration in the update of the Plan.
- Request removal of the 'Open to Consideration' area between Bearna, An Spidéal and Maigh Cuillinn from the Wind Energy Strategy.
- No minimum distances from roadways/pathways on land or sea.
- No requirement for further planning permissions 2020 target has been met by Galway.
- All areas not in the planning process should be dezoned.
- Lack of quality control of EIS's which breaches the Galway County Development Plan.
- Proposed legislation is inadequate.
- A minimum distance from off-shore islands and the coastline for off-shore wind farms.
- European investors should not be allowed to develop wind farms when other European countries have brought in legal controls to protect their landscape.
- Remediation works and removal of structures after 20 years and compensation for communities for their losses.
- No distance restriction for wind turbines 20m and under which is not acceptable.
- Query regarding cost benefit analysis of wind farms.
- Areas of high and moderate visual amenity value should be excluded from wind farm development.
- Support schemes for renewable technologies should be ended.
- A National Wind Energy Strategy should be prepared.

Mr. Kelly advised that some of the Submissions received referred to specific planning applications but said that it would be the more general content from these Submissions that would be considered in the preparation of the Draft Plan. He said that it was also stated that the Wind Energy Strategy is having a negative effect on trying to attract families into the area which has an impact on the linguistic and cultural heritage, and suggested that buffer zones of 2km to 2.5km from dwellings might help alleviate the potential impact and potential health impact related issues such as noise and shadow flicker.

Mr. Kelly advised that the Irish Wind Energy Association's Submission provided information and recommendations on issues including electricity generation, renewable energy targets, the economic value of wind, job creation, grid security, projected capacity required and the County Wind Strategy. He said it stated that having 45% of the County zoned as an area where wind is not 'normally permissible' restricts potential for small scale/singular turbine developments across the entire county. It recommended that the new Wind Strategy should be reflective of new technology and turbine types and not consider distance from the grid as a limiting factor in zoning and increase the extent of areas designated as 'Strategic' and 'Acceptable in Principle'.

Mr. Kelly advised that Coillte's Submission addressed a number of issues, inter alia, European and national renewable energy targets, Galway's excellent wind resources and capacity targets discord, environmental designations and proximity to the national grid, classification of wind farms and definition of turbines, key guidance documents and applications being assessed on their own merits. He said that some of the key points of the submission were:

- To include clear objectives that fully support renewable energy targets in new CDP.

- Suitably designate more lands for wind energy development.
- Include clear policies to fully support wind energy developments.
- Grid connectivity should not unduly constrain wind farm viability of lands.
- Include new policies that encourage/facilitate small scale/singular turbine developments.
- Recognise wind energy's positive contribution to the economic development of rural areas.

Mr. Kelly responded by advising that a Wind Energy Strategy was prepared as a variation to the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021. The methodology was based on fieldwork, consultation, environmental assessment and a wide range of considerations which included existing wind farm developments and applications, wind resources, transmission network, urban and rural settlements, transport and utility infrastructure, natural heritage designations and biodiversity, ground conditions and landslide susceptibility, built heritage, landscape character, sensitivity and amenity, recreation, tourism and amenity, etc. as a basis for spatial analysis of suitable areas in the County for wind farm development, in order to assist in achieving the national targets in relation to energy production from renewable resources.

Mr. Kelly then outlined the Manager's Response and Recommendation to the Wind Energy related Submissions as follows:

- Exempted developments are outside the scope of the County Development Plan as it is a legislative/regulatory provision.
- The Department are currently carrying out a targeted review of the 2006 Guidelines focusing on noise, proximity and shadow flicker with Draft Guidelines expected in Quarter 4 of 2013. The Draft Plan shall provide for taking account of any updated guidelines.
- Ensure the provisions of the Draft Plan and Wind Energy Strategy are consistent with National Guidance and Policy and that the Plan shall provide for the incorporation of any updated Guidelines or Policy issued.
- Separation distances provided for in the Wind Energy Strategy are in line with current national guidance and shall be updated should national guidance change in the forthcoming review by the Department expected in Quarter 4 of 2013.
- The Draft Plan shall support the provision of the Galway Walking and Cycling Strategy and the provision of cycleways.
- The Draft Plan shall also make provisions to support sustainable afforestation in suitable locations, and appropriate forestry development/management.
- Consideration shall also be given to the land use matters in relation to aquaculture and water abstraction, as appropriate, and similarly to the rehabilitation aspect of quarries.

- Provision/improvement of broadband services shall be promoted in the policies and objectives of the Draft Plan.
- The specifics of a particular planning application are beyond the scope of a Draft Plan.
- Ensure Policy WE5 of the current Wind Energy Strategy /Plan, or a similar policy, which relates to community consultation and involvement in relation to wind farm developments, is included in the Draft Plan.
- The Strategy will be updated in light of any forthcoming updated guidance from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the issues raised.
- The heritage of the Gaeltacht including its archaeology and ecology is afforded protection under, inter alia, European and national legislation/policy and the policy and objectives of the current Galway County Council and shall follow through to the Draft Plan.

Mr. Kelly advised that six Public Consultation Meetings were held in the Electoral Areas. He said that the issues raised were varied and in some instances related to local concerns rather than broader county wide issues. He advised that local issues are more appropriately addressed in the relevant Local Area Plans and some issues are very similar to those which were raised in the written submissions and will be considered in the compilation of Policies and Objectives in the Draft Development Plan.

Mr. Kelly advised that the Issues raised included the following:

- Recreation and Amenity
- Fluoridation of Water
- Biogas Anaerobic Plants
- Greenways along disused railways
- Lack of retail/shopping facilities
- Vitality of town centres and problem of dereliction
- Public notices not satisfactory way to publicise plan
- Flood Risk Zones and Assessment
- Cost of Flood Risk Assessment
- Strengthen the possibility of providing a greenway and the Galway City Outer By Pass
- Rural industry.
- Youth activities for teenagers need to be catered for in Oranmore.
- Afforestation
- Water abstraction
- Rehabilitation of quarries
- Support/enhance broadband provision
- Wind farm development

Mr. Kelly said that the Elected Members will have an opportunity to review all Policies and Objectives when they receive the Draft County Development Plan.

Cllr. O'Laoi referred to Submission No. 23 from Comhlacht Forbartha an Spidéil Teo who in their submission proposed that the route selection for the new R336 be terminated. He said that this Submission also proposed that the Galway Ring Road continue west as far as Liopa in An Spidéal so that it extends past Na Forbacha and all the land required would be located in a National Heritage Area (NHA).

Comh. O'Laoi said that the environmental designations were flawed and that the areas were selected without scientific evidence by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). He said that this is now causing difficulty for the Elected Members and a route cannot be agreed for the R336 or N59 routes due to SAC/NHA designations. He explained that there is only a tiny strip between Bearna and Ross a Mhíl that can be developed due to these designations.

Comh O'Laoi explained that there is a huge need for this road in South Connemara as the current road is not fit for purpose and is very dangerous but that he would only be in favour of the 'Brown route' option as the one with the least effect to the area. He said that it is important that the route selected is away from houses and fields.

Cllr. O'Tuairisg advised the Meeting that eight routes have been selected for the R336 and this is causing difficulty for persons trying to obtain planning permission for a single rural house if the site is in an area designed as a proposed R336 route. He said that the process should be terminated or else a decision made to shortlist to one or two routes so planning applications could be submitted by persons in the other route areas.

Comh. O'Cuaig concurred with Cllr. O'Tuairisg and Comh. O'Laoi and expressed his concern of the difficulty for persons to obtain planning in Connemara due to the Special Area Conservation (SAC) and National Heritage Area (NHA) designations and also because of the R336 selected routes. He said that he was aware that National Guidelines on Wind Energy was forthcoming and expressed his concern that the Council would have to inevitably implement these Guidelines. He said that N59 was also at a standstill because of the environmental designations.

Comh O'Cuaig said that there were three overall issues which all the Connemara Area Councillors were united on namely 1. Attainment of planning permission for people living in Connemara due to NHA/SAC designations, 2. Wind Energy and 3. R336 Road selection but there was very little that they as Elected Members can do to solve them.

Comh. O'Curraoin concurred with the previous Connemara Area Councillors issues and said while the R336 road is badly needed; the route selected must not impinge on houses, famine sites or old burial sites. He said that a Fire Station was also badly required in Connemara based in either Ross a Mhíl or An Cheathrú Rua which would also be convenient for the Islands.

Cllr. Feeney expressed concern that the Galway City Outer Bypass development was being delayed due to a selected route impinging on a ½ acre SAC but not impacting on houses. He said that National high profile roads, like the Galway – Dublin Motorway and Gort-Tuam Motorway, are essential for the benefit and improvement of the West of Ireland and if

Connemara is to prosper and build for the future, it is vital that connectivity is given to Connemara. He asked what role the Elected Member has in the R336 route selection and if the IROPI (Imperative Reasons for Overriding Public Interest) process could be used. He said that this opportunity cannot be lost and the road needs to be planned and ready for when finance became available for its development.

With regard to the R336, Mr. Kelly said that it is expected that the Plan, as with all Strategic Infrastructural Projects, will support the new road. He explained that he expected that if the road has gone through the route selection process, then it will show as a route/line on a map but if it has not gone through the process, then the Plan will include Policies and Objectives which supports the provision of the new road. He said he was aware of the constraints imposed by the 8/9 routes being considered but until a route is selected the Plan will support the project at whatever location it is but it will not show as a line on a map. He said that the challenge will be to adhere to environmental legislation whilst also trying to develop infrastructural projects.

Mr. Gilmore said that it is an obligation under Planning and Development that the all route options remain open pending the finalisation of a preferred option. He said that the Purple Route is the preferred option and it runs through the margins of the SAC and also runs through the NHA as it approaches Galway City. He said that in order to progress the scheme in planning it would be necessary to show that the route chosen would have a minimal impact on the designated areas. The Brown route could not be said to achieve this objective.

Cllr. E. Mannion expressed her concern with regard to the flood risk areas and asked if there would be more flood risk areas included in the County Development Plan. She said that landowners were very concerned and some landowners had to undertake hydrologists' reports at a huge cost.

Mr. Kelly said that the OPW were undertaking a *Catchment Flood Risk Areas Management Study* (CFRAM) for Areas of Further Assessment (AFA) which includes Clifden and these should be available in early 2014. He said that a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for County Galway would be undertaken by CAAS, Environmental Consultants and this would issue with the Draft County Development along with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report, Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report, Housing Strategy and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). He said that these documents would be available for the public to consider as part of the public consultation period.

Cllr. Cunniffe referred to the Greenway Submissions and the potential of using disused Railway lines as a Greenway. He referred to the comprehensive *2030 Rail Network Strategy Review* of October 2011 which stated in an appraisal that the Athenry-Tuam phase of the Western Rail Corridor has the potential for reinstatement. However, Cllr. Cunniffe advised the Meeting that when the Gort – Tuam Motorway is constructed, the need to reopen a section of the rail line is significantly diminished.

Cllr. Cunniffe said that the *2030 Rail Network Strategy Review* concluded that the re-opening of the Athenry to Claremorris section of the rail line does not merit a feasibility study. He explained that new rail lines were appraised by the Review Group, using

methodology which examined the competition provided by the road network, and the Athenry – Tuam line was awarded 61/100 marks taking into account the poor local road and only 41/100 when the motorway was built. He said that 80 to 90 marks out of 100 would be required to merit a feasibility study. He said that these facts should be comprehensively examined and the railway line be considered favorably as a Greenway.

He said that while there is a need for balanced regional development, he said there was not a requirement for railway line from Tuam – Athenry – Claremorris. He expressed his concern on having two competing objectives in the County Development Plan but said that by excluding the possibility of a Greenway, it would negatively affect the local economy and tourism.

In reply, Mr. Kelly said that the Submissions and the *2030 Rail Network Strategy Review* were considered in preparation of the Manager's Report. He said that the *2030 Rail Network Strategy Review* stated that of a number of new railway lines, only Athenry – Tuam merited further consideration. He said that it would not be appropriate to insert a competing objective to the railway line as it would be confusing to have two conflicting objectives.

Cllr. McClearn asked if that the principle regarding the Railway line between Athenry and Tuam be maintained without having to state a definitive location.

Cllr. Feeney said that it was a fact that the Review Group said that the Athenry – Tuam Railway had the potential to re-open and it scored 61% in the Evaluation process. He expressed the view that investment in Strategic Infrastructure in the West is deserved so as the West can compete with the East of the Country. He said that there was overdevelopment in the East and a counter balance of development was needed in the West. He said that that this Railway line was opened in the 1860's and was used up to 30 years ago and said that freight operators were already examining the possibility of using the railway line if it re-opened and rail freight needs to be promoted and encouraged. He said it was also the possibility that the Western Rail Corridor could be used to transport Biomass from Foynes, Limerick to North Mayo. He said that transport options as a whole needs to be examined for the future such as alternative transport measures and mass public transport. In respect of the Oughterard to Clifden Greenway, he expressed the view that the Department of Transport has a preference for longer Greenway routes and they have indicated that this route is too short.

Cllr. Canney said that the debate is not about selecting either the Greenway or the Railway. He said that he would support the Western Rail Corridor as there is potential in it and Tuam needs a railway as it is a developing town which has over 800 persons employed. He said it would assist business in the movement of cargo. In respect of the Greenway, he said that the issue is where it should be sited. He said that it was not appropriate to have it where there is an asset and infrastructure. He said that Road and Rail Infrastructure, Communication networks and Broadband are needed in the County and said the County should be examined as a whole to determine how it can be potentially developed so as to achieve balanced regional development using the facts and Government policies in place.

Cllr. Roche advised the Meeting that he was involved in the West on Track campaign. He said that while he supports the concept of Greenways, he said that public infrastructure cannot be abandoned. He said that an option could be that the Greenway be developed alongside the railway line. He said that he was very much for investment in the West and the development of its infrastructure in order to achieve balanced regional development.

Cllr. M. Connolly said that the issue was not to have the Greenway or the Railway but that local and regional development is very important and the Government and public representatives should work together to seek road and rail development for the west in the interest of balanced regional development. He advised that he was the Vice-Chairman of the Inter County Rail Committee.

Cllr. McHugh said that our Railways need to be protected in the Plan and said that the promotion of the Greenway on a route yet to be decided could be considered for inclusion in the Plan.

Cllr. Hoade said that it was vital that support is given in the Plan for Infrastructure and links to encourage freight transport. She said that while support can be given to Greenways, it should not be to the detriment of infrastructure development.

Cllr. Hynes expressed his support of the railway line from Athenry to Tuam/Galway to Tuam onto Sligo as it made good forward planning. He said that it was prudent for many reasons that the rail corridor is put in place.

In reply, Mr. Kelly said that the Galway County Walking and Cycling Strategy Report 2012 has indicated that a Tuam – Athenry Cycle route may be deliverable by 2016. He said that it is proposed that Objectives shall be contained in the new Plan

- To support the implementation of the Galway County Walking and Cycling Strategy Report.
- To maintain the Western Rail Corridor as an option for passenger train and cargo transportation from the south-east to the north-west of the country.
- To examine the possibility of identifying a route linking Ballindine, Milltown and Tuam and its environs to the National Cycling Network and/or the Tuam/Athenry cycle route.

Cllr. Fahy asked that the new County Development Plan 2015-2021 should be open for a review in 2018 as the economic conditions may have changed by then. In reply, Mr. Kelly said that it is a statutory provision that a Report is issued to the Elected Members on the achievement of the County Development Plan objectives in three years (2018).

In reply to Cllr. D. Connolly, Mr. Kelly said that Area Meetings provided a consultation process to listen to the Elected Members issues and these suggestions would be proactively considered in the preparation of the Draft Plan.

Mr. Kelly advised that if it was acceptable to the Elected Members, the Forward Planning Section would endeavour to take account of the views raised and proceed to prepare the Draft County Development Plan 2015-2021. He said that the Elected Members would have a further opportunity on receipt of the Draft Plan to discuss the Draft Plan. This was agreed.

ADOPTION OF CAR PARK BYE-LAWS: GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CAR PARK (EDDIE O'DEA'S, LOUGHREA) BYE-LAWS 2013 **1566**

Report dated 15th October, 2013 accompanied by Draft Bye-Laws were already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Hynes, it was agreed that the Carpark Bye-Laws: Galway County Council, Car Park (Eddie O'Dea's, Loughrea), be adopted by the Council.

Cllr. Maher with the consent of the Mayor, referred to the Aspects of Galway Military History John Oliver's Remembrance Weekend to be held in Loughrea on the 8th – 10th November 2013 and requested the support of the Members for same and also requested the County Secretary to arrange for the circulation of the conference brochure to other local authorities.

ADOPTION OF CAR PARK BYE-LAWS: GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CAR PARK (CAHEROYAN ROAD, ATHENRY) BYE-LAWS 2013 **1567**

Report dated 15th October, 2013 accompanied by Draft Bye-Laws were already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Cllr. Maher, it was agreed that the Carpark Bye-Laws: Galway County Council, Car Park (Caheroyan Road, Athenry), be adopted by the Council.

Cllr. Feeney said that the Council must look at the issue of paid parking in town centres which is driving people to shop in out-of-town shopping centres where parking is free. He said that the problem is not only the cost but the inconvenience.

Cllr. Feeney then made the following proposal "To encourage business development in our town centres, that the 1st half hour of on-street parking be free". This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Canney, and agreed.

ADOPTION OF CAR PARK BYE-LAWS: GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CAR PARK (CHURCH ST., ATHENRY) BYE-LAWS 2013 **1568**

Report dated 15th October, 2013 accompanied by Draft Bye-Laws were already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Cllr. McClearn, it was agreed that the Carpark Bye-Laws: Galway County Council, Car Park (Church St., Athenry), be adopted by the Council.

ADOPTION OF CAR PARK BYE-LAWS: GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CAR PARK (BACKLAWN, ATHENRY) BYE-LAWS 2013 **1569**

Report dated 15th October, 2013 accompanied by Draft Bye-Laws were already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Cllr. McClearn, it was agreed that the Carpark Bye-Laws: Galway County Council, Car Park (Backlawn, Athenry), be adopted by the Council.

ADOPTION OF APPOINTED STANDS (STREET SERVICE VEHICLES) (TAXI) BYE-LAWS FOR TUAM – **1570**

Report dated 15th October, 2013 accompanied by Draft Bye-Laws were already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. McHugh, seconded by Cllr. Canney, the adoption of Appointed Stands (Street Service Vehicles (Taxi) Bye-Laws for Tuam, was agreed.

ADOPTION OF APPOINTED STANDS (STREET SERVICE VEHICLES) (TAXI) BYE-LAWS FOR OUGHTERARD – **1571**

Report dated 15th October, 2013 accompanied by Draft Bye-Laws were already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Welby, seconded by Cllr. E. Mannion, the adoption of Appointed Stands (Street Service Vehicles (Taxi) Bye-Laws for Oughterard, 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 – As circulated. **1572**

Cllr. S. Walsh left the Meeting for the duration of the consideration of this item.

On the proposal of Cllr. McHugh, seconded by Comh. Ó Curraoin, attendance at the Conferences as circulated, was authorized by the Council.

Rattoo Heritage Society – Kerry Environmental, Cultural & Heritage Conference – 18th – 21st September – Golf Hotel, Ballybunion, Co. Kerry – Fee: €150

Cllr. Tiarnan Walsh

James Fintan Lalor School Committee – James Fintan Lalor Inaugural School 2013 – 20th – 21st September – Dunamais Arts Centre, Portlaoise, Co. Laois – Fee: €0

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Clare County Council – LAMA Autumn Seminar 2013 – 11th – 12th October – Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare – Fee: €150

Comh. Seosamh Ó Laoi, Cllr.'s Mary Hoade, Jimmy McClearn, Jarlath McDonagh, Tom McHugh

Ace Training – Sport & Community Planning – 11th – 13th October – Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary – Fee: €100

Cllr. Tomás Mannion

Superior Training – Local Government & Enterprise Development – 18th – 19th October – Holyrood Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal – Fee: €120

Cllr.'s Eileen Mannion, Tiarnan Walsh

BG Seminarz – Future Energy Needs: Wind Turbines to Nuclear – 25th – 26th October – Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal – Fee: €120

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

Celtic Conferences – Design Guidelines for the Planning & Development of Rural Housing – 25th – 27th October – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Cllr.'s Shaun Cunniffe, Tomás Mannion, Thomas Welby

BG Seminarz – Council Budgets – Preparation, Adoption & Amendments – 1st – 3rd November – Quality Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry – Fee: €150

Cllr.'s Thomas Welby, Peter Feeney, Seamus Walsh

Teagasc – National Agrienvironmental Conference 2013 – 7th November – Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly – Fee: €0

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Green Foundation Ireland – Corporate Taxation – ensuring a fair system for all – 13th

November – European Parliament Offices – Molesworth St., Dublin 2 – Fee: €0

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5)(F) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 - As circulated. 1573

On the proposal of Cllr. McHugh, seconded by Cllr. McClearn, the summary of proceedings at Conferences as circulated was noted.

Esperanza Enterprises – Mortgage Resolution Bill 2013 – 28th – 29th June – Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry

Cllr. Peter Roche

Esperanza Enterprises – Taxing Goods & Services – 19th – 20th July – Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry

Cllr. Peter Roche

Dept. of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht – World Heritage Seminar – 12th September – Dublin Castle, Dublin

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg, Cllr. Thomas Welby

Rattoo Heritage Society – Kerry Environmental, Cultural & Heritage Conference – 18th – 21st September – Golf Hotel, Ballybunion, Co. Kerry

Cllr. Tiarnan Walsh

James Fintan Lalor School Committee – James Fintan Lalor Inaugural School 2013 – Dunamaise Arts Centre, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Kerry Literary & Cultural Centre – A Decade of Commemorations – 1913 – 1923 – The Role of Local Authorities – 26th – 27th September – St. John's Theatre & Arts Centre, Listowel, Co. Kerry

Cllr. Mary Hoade

Greystones Town Council – 25th Annual La Touche Legacy Seminar – Local Govt. – A New Dawn? – 27th – 29th September – Charlesland Golf & Country Club Hotel, Greystones, Co. Wicklow

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn

Ace Training – New Tendering Requirements for Local Authorities – 4th – 6th October – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth

Cllr. Tiarnan Walsh

Councillors Conferences – Internet Elections – 4th – 6th October – Louis Fitzgerald Hotel, Newlands Cross, Dublin 22

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn

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

Cllr.'s Mary Hoade, Jimmy McClearn, Jarlath McDonagh,

FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY – REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM WEST –

1574

Report dated 15th October, 2013 was already circulated.

Cllr. Hoade proposed that Cllr. M. Connolly be nominated to fill the casual vacancy on the Regional Health Forum West, following the resignation of Cllr. T. Mannion from that Committee. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. G. Finnerty.

As there was no other proposal, the Mayor declared Cllr. M. Connolly nominated to fill the Casual Vacancy on the Regional Health Forum West.

TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO APPROVE THE DRAFT DECADE OF COMMEMORATIONS 2013 – 2023 GALWAY COMMEMORATIVE STRATEGY –

1575

Report dated September 2013 was already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Comh. Ó Laoi, seconded by Cllr. M. Connolly, it was agreed to approve the Draft Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2023 Galway Commemorative Strategy.

Comh. Ó Laoi welcomed the Strategy stating that it is very important to commemorate the period 1913 to 1923 which defined the course of Irish history and also welcome that as part of the Decade of Commemorations Strategy that flagship projects had been identified and given status by Galway Co. Council, including the Conamara Cultural Centre at Pearse's

Cottage, Rosmuc. He said that Údarás na Gaeltachta and Roinn na Gaeltachta are involved in this project and plans have been drawn up and the estimated to cost of the project is in the region of €4m. The Údarás has set aside some funding for the project and he outlined that based on recent discussion he was confident that Government funding will be forthcoming in support of this very worthwhile project.

Comh. Ó Cuaig welcomed the Strategy and the inclusion of Pearse's Cottage project and he said that he hopes funding allocated by the Údarás will be supported with necessary funds from the Government.

Comh. Ó Tuairisg commended Comh. Ó Cuaig on his efforts to promote the Pearse's Cottage project over the years. He suggested that it would be a good idea to display Minutes of Meeting of Galway County Council in Town Councils from the period.

Cllr. Feeney said he was delighted that Pearse's Cottage was one of the flagship projects being put forward under the Strategy. However he said that it was important to commemorate 1916 where it happened stated that he felt strongly that if the 1916 Rising is not commemorated in Athenry, it will be seen as remiss of Galway Co. Council. He referred to a submission from a Athenry Group in support of the development of a memorial garden and requested consideration of the inclusion of same in the Strategy.

Cllr. Welby welcomed the inclusion of Pearse's Cottage but noted the tight timeframe to advance the project in order to allow for completion by 2016 and the unique opportunity presented to secure funding and approval to deliver the project.

Cllr. Cuddy welcomed the strategy while requesting clarity on funding for implementation of the flagship projects and measures.

Cllr. Hynes stated that as Chair of the Corporate & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee he welcomed the Strategy and wished to acknowledge the role of the Committee members and staff in developing an appropriate and inclusive Strategy to mark the decade. He outlined his support for the proposed development at Pearse's Cottage and welcome progress on the development of Loughrea Town Hall, noting he was hopeful that the refurbishment of the Town Hall would be completed by 2016.

Cllr. Fahy said that he hopes that there will be a commemoration ceremony at Limepark Ardahan noting that it was included in the programme of events held in 1966, while detailing the events and involvement of South Galway in the Rising.

The Manager said that the Draft Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2023 Galway Commemorative Strategy was brought forward at the request of the Corporate Policy Group by the Corporate & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee and it is very important to have a Strategy in place for the Commemorations. She said that the Pearse's Cottage project is very important to Galway and should be progressed in conjunction with Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Office of Public Works and anticipated funding from the National Committee. She said that there are a number of landowners involved and their support would be very welcome.

She recognized that every community has recollections of the 1916 – 1923 period and the model used for the Gathering Events could be replicated to ensure that all community initiatives are supported as were the Gathering Events, in line with the needs of each community. She said that Communities should bring forward their proposals and the Council will support them.

She said that the aim of the Strategy is to be as inclusive as possible and it is important that it grows from community level.

Cllr. Noone noted that communities should not rely solely on Government funding in order to hold a commemoration ceremony in their locality.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

1576

On the proposal of Cllr. Hynes, seconded by Noone it was agreed to suspend the Standing Orders to allow the Meeting to continue after 6pm.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1577

Report entitled *Regional Waste Management Planning Briefing Note – October 2013*, was already circulated to each Member.

Mr. Cullen presented the Briefing Note to the Members stating that in early 2013, the County & City Managers Association agreed the reconfiguration of the Regions for the purposes of Waste Management Planning, as outlined in the Government's Action Programme for Effective Local Government - *Putting People First*. He said that there are now three Waste Plan Regions, i.e. Eastern & Midlands, Southern, Connaught & Ulster and the Lead Authority for the Connaught & Ulster Region is Mayo County Council.

He informed the Members that a Public Notice of the Intention to Commence Preparation of Regional Waste Management Plans will be published shortly, inviting written submissions from the public in relation to the Plans.

In reply to Cllr. Cuddy, Mr. Cullen stated that there is no link between Waste Management Planning and Irish Water.

The Members noted the Briefing Document.

TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE REPORT OF THE GALWAY CITY & WESTERN ENVIRONS FIRE REVIEW GROUP & OPTIONS APPRAISAL OF THE FUTURE PROVISION OF FIRE SERVICES FOR THE WESTERN ENVIRONS.

1578

The Mayor welcomed the Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Michael Raftery to the Meeting and he stated that he wished to commend the fire fighting staff throughout the City and County for the bravery they show in carrying out their day-to-day duties.

Mr. Cummins then presented an Appraisal of the Future Provision of Fire Services for the Western Environs.

He also informed the Members that the Report of the Galway City and Western Environs Review Group (GCWEFRG) had been concluded in June 2013 and the Appraisal of the Report was subsequently carried out by him and is the subject of the Presentation. He stated that heretofore the provision of fire services was designed on the basis of geography and population but now "Keeping Communities Safe" (KCS) defines and calls for the design of fire service delivery in terms of prevention, protection and response. He explained that for the purposes of the Report, the Western Environs is essentially the area from the West of Galway City (An Spidéal) to the Clifden Station boundary. He also stated that to further assist analysis, three hypothetical station grounds were considered namely An Spidéal, Oughterard and An Cheathrú Rua. The Report prepared by the Galway City & Western Environs Review Group assessed the Western Environs against nine criteria that are listed in KCS, namely:

- Population of main urban area
- Population density(s) of the area (per km2) surrounding main urban area
- Total population of the station ground
- Annual Service Demand Level (based on number of incidents occurring in the station area averaged over three years)
- No of Dwellings in the station ground and the annual dwelling fire rate
- Other building fire rates
- % of tertiary incidents
- RTA activity/ non clean-up & Special Service rates
- Extent of Individual Special Hazards (e.g. Institutional, Educational, Industrial, Large Scale Retail/ Commercial, SEVESO, POPA etc).

Mr. Cummins advised the Members that having considered the three years of incident data, potential changes in demographics and the various potential station permutations throughout the whole of the Western Environs area, the GCWEFRG concluded that, in applying the principles of KCS, there is not a conclusive case for an additional Fire Station in the Western Environs at this time.

Having considered the three years of incident data, potential changes in demographics and the various potential station permutations throughout the whole of the Western Environs area, the GCWEFRG concluded that, in applying the principles of KCS, there is not a conclusive case for an additional Fire Station in the Western Environs.

He also informed the Meeting that all three notional station grounds had a risk categorization of D2 and he noted that if a station was to be provided in the Western Environs at some time, that An Cheathrú Rua would be the preferred location because it is the most effective option in terms of population covered within 20 minute travel time. He also stated that if or when a station, or additional resources, can be located in the Western

Environs area, that the GCWEFRG were of the opinion that An Cheathrú Rua offered the best location at this time. He then proceeded to list the three options considered by the GCWEFRG, namely:

Option 1: Maintain the status quo

Option 2: Build a new station in the Western Environs area. However, he pointed out that the building of such a station was not fully justified in terms of risk, but more importantly would do little to lower the risk in the area, in other words would not stop incidents occurring.

Option 3: To utilize a suite of measures such as Community Safety Measures, Community Safety Advocates and Volunteer Firefighters.

Mr. Cummins then showed what he described as an important slide which listed all of the stations in the County together with population served, the number of incidents over the last three years and, most importantly, the risk categorization of each of the station grounds.

He stressed that this was an initial assessment, but in any event, it highlighted the risk categorization or the measure of the risk that had to be managed by the Galway Fire Service. He noted that the Galway City Station Area has a risk categorization of A2, higher than that of the Tuam Station Area which has a risk categorization of C1. He also brought to the Members attention that Portumna and Mountbellew have a risk categorization of D2 and that if there was a station ground in An Cheathrú Rua, that it too would have a risk categorization of D2. He also pointed out that the Inis Mór Station Ground has a risk categorization of E2 and that over the last three years there was an average of five incidents per year and last year there were three.

Mr. Cummins emphasized that all assessments, reassessments, adjustments and/or variations will have to be subject to the application of the nine criteria of KCS, in the context of existing resources. At some stage provision will have to be made by the City Council to allow for and pay for an expanded City Brigade to cater for and to facilitate the growth of the City.

He also noted that the necessary phased growth of the City Station would warrant a new base in the vicinity of, and preferably at, Liosbaun.

In conclusion, Mr. Cummins advised that it would be necessary to carry out a reassessment of all aspects of the cost base within the Fire Services in the context of KCS and that at some stage this assessment would warrant the relocation/reallocation of resources from and within existing stations to areas that have a higher priority. He also advised that Fire Services, whether in Galway or elsewhere, have to be delivered in the context of an Integrated Risk Management Approach where risk is assessed, prioritised and managed within existing resources to optimum effect.

A discussion then took place regarding the Report and the following points were made by the Members:

Cllr. E. Mannion said that she was shocked with the finding that there was not a conclusive case for an additional fire service for Conamara as the people of south Conamara have been lobbying for years for a fire station in their area. She said that there is no need for a second service within the city and suggested that if a new station were provided at Liosbaun, the existing site at Fr. Griffin Road should be sold to provide funds for a Fire Station for Conamara.

Comh. Ó Laoi referred to the criteria and mapping of notional areas as used for the basis of the assessment and indicated that an amendment of the notional areas, as presented, would allow for a revised population and he suggested more coherent notional areas, that would support Casla as the preferred location, with the benefit of a categorisation of D1. He referred to the long standing campaign for a station in Conamara and expressed disappointment with the outcome of the review and appraisal process. He noted that Conamara has the same population as Longford and Leitrim, yet there was no suggestion that these areas do not require or merit a fire station.

Cllr. Ó Cuaig said that the people of Conamara cannot accept that while there are 10 fire stations in County Galway, including Galway City, only 2 are located in the Conamara region and they will not be willing to accept chimney sweeping programmes, alarms and voluntary services as an alternative to an adequate fire service. He said that the people of Conamara do not want other areas of County Galway to suffer, however the Report finds that the western environs has the same risk as Portumna and Mountbellew, for example, and they have Fire Stations, so why not south Conamara. It takes over an hour to get from Galway City to Clifden, while in Tuam it is possible to have six fire brigades out within half an hour, including two that can be called from Mayo in a real emergency.

Cllr. S. Walsh said that the Irish language is required by law to be given priority in Gaeltacht areas and this presents a further case for having a fire station located in Conamara so that those who speak Irish will be able to speak to somebody through Irish to avail of a fire service located in the Conamara Gaeltacht. He referred to the allocation of financial resources, suggesting that the current allocation was to the disadvantage of Conamara. He indicated that it would appear that the provision of the service was being determined based on financial resources alone and this was a cause of concern.

Comh. Ó Tuairisg said that Conamara is a coastal area and therefore can only get call-outs from land side leaving the region at a disadvantage, compared to other areas of the county that could access services in adjacent counties as appropriate in addition to the stations based in the county. He referred to the awareness and community initiatives while highlighted that the provision of smoke alarms and support for chimney cleaning would not address issues relating to road traffic accidents, requiring support from the fire service or address gorse fires. He noted that Leitrim had five fire stations serving the same population as in Conamara.

Cllr. McClearn outlined his support for the provision of a station in Conamara. He expressed disappointment that further progress on the provision of a fire station was not made in previous years when greater financial resources were available and the region benefited from representation at Cabinet level. In relation to Portumna he detailed that the station

served a wide hinterland extending in other counties and also provided a water rescue service.

Cllr. Welby said that road access should have been one of the criteria in the appraisal and asked if the review group travelled the roads to see the road network or the geography of the western environs. He referred to the frequency of goarse fires noting that same can threaten property and private dwellings, requiring a community response by people with no training.

In response, Mr. Cummins said that Fire Services, whether in Galway or elsewhere, have to be delivered in the context of an Integrated Risk Management Approach where risk is assessed, prioritised and managed within existing resources to optimum effect.

An Comh. Ó Cuaig proposed “That Galway County Council supports the provision of a fire station in South Conamara and urges the Government to provide the funds to build such a station”. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. S. Walsh, and agreed.

MANAGER’S BUSINESS

1579

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

- Correspondence dated the 3rd October, 2013 from Limerick City & County Council regarding a resolution adopted that Section 42 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2013 and Article 45 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2000-2013 be amended to allow further information to be sought on substantive planning issues and to allow conditions to be imposed on the extended permission to address planning inadequacies in the original permission.
- Correspondence dated the 3rd October, 2013 from Wexford County Council regarding a motion agreed that Wexford County Council endorses the principle of the right to water and sanitation as a fundamental core value within Irish society and this should be reflected as a central pillar in national water policy. As citizens of the EU, they believe in the right of all inhabitants to enjoy this right and that they oppose any attempt to include water in legislation aimed at market liberalization. That Council supports the call for the full national political commitment to ensuring that water and sanitation are publicly owned, democratically run and that all in the sector are fully accountable.
- Correspondence dated the 9th October, 2013 from Donegal County Council regarding a resolution adopted calling on the Government to reverse its policy which does not classify Down’s Syndrome as a Low Incidence Disability, and as a consequence prevents these children from availing of essential resource teaching hours. It was further resolved to send a copy to An Taoiseach, the Minister for Education and Skills and the Constitutional Convention Committee and the ETBI for their attention.
- Correspondence dated the 9th October, 2013 from Donegal County Council regarding a resolution adopted that the Council discuss the problems concerning the influx of camper vans taking up spaces in prime car-parks.

- Correspondence dated the 25ú Meán Fómhair, 2013 from Minister Joan Burton's Office chun adhmháil a dhéanamh ar litir Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe maidir le seirbhísí Leasa Pobail I nGaillimh agus a chur in iúl dúinn go bhfuil fiosrúchain a dhéanamh isteach sa chás.
- Correspondence dated the 9th October, 2013, acknowledging Galway County Council's letter to the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, Mr. Leo Varadkar, T.D.
- Correspondence dated the 25th September, 2013 acknowledging Galway County Council's letter to the Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, Simon Coveney, concerning the Council's resolution in relation to funding for the disposal of horses which are abandoned throughout the Country and further correspondence from the Minister in reply to the matter, stating that from the 1st September, 2013 DAFM introduced a ceiling rate of refund to all Local Authorities of € 450 per horse seized. In addition, no contribution will be made towards the cost of aborted call-outs by contractors where no horse is seized. While the Department regret the reduction in funding, they are unable to reverse the decision.

MAYOR'S BUSINESS

1580

The Mayor referred to the Mayoral Awards and reminded the Members to encourage applications for same in order to allow for appropriate recognition of community and voluntary endeavour.

Cllr. Canney proposed "that Galway County Council invite representatives from the West-on-Track Committee to the November Meeting of the Council to present information on their recent complaint to the Committee on Petitions in the European Parliament and response to same. The Complaint was that "The West/North West had been discriminated against in terms of capital infrastructure investment and EU Funds" which was upheld by the Commission. The Presentation is very interesting and factual which will throw light on the distribution of EU Funds in Ireland". This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Roche, and agreed.

Cllr. Cuddy proposed "that the Minister for Agriculture & Marine would look at a once-off amnesty for horse owners in the country who have their animals chipped, but were not registered before the now mandatory 6 months, which results in the registration being stamped "not fit for human consumption". If this problem is not addressed, the cost of local authorities (€1k approx. per animal) to remove abandoned animals, will result in an unsustainable financial position for certain local authorities in the country".

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Welby, and agreed.

Cllr. D. Connolly proposed "that Galway County Council oppose the closure of Community Welfare Offices in Ballinasloe, Connemara and other areas. This move is very regressive and people with no means to travel are being left in isolation. Please forward this motion to Minister Joan Burton". This proposal was seconded by Comh. Ó Curraoin, and agreed.

NOTICES OF MOTION

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 23 – CLLR. G. FINNERTY

1581

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council have sought funding previously for the NRA, for the provision of improvements and traffic control measures at Crowe Street. Whilst no funding has been granted to date Galway County Council will continue to seek funding from all available sources so that traffic improvement measures can be considered at Crowe Street in Gort.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 24 – CLLR. G. FINNERTY

1582

The following reply was given:-

“Minor works will be carried out on the footpath at the Post Office in Gort in 2013. An application has been submitted under the Active Travel Towns Programme for major funding in 2014. If this application is successful the proposed works mainly include the upgrading of footpaths in the town.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 25 – CLLR. G. FINNERTY

1583

The following reply was given:-

“This roundabout is maintained by Colas Roadbridge under the NRA maintenance contract. For safety reasons flowerbeds cannot be planted on this roundabout.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 26 – CLLR. S. CANNEY

1584

The following reply was given:-

“Noted.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 27 – COMH. S. Ó TUAIRISG

1585

The following reply was given:-

“Is leor gur rud fíor neamhdhrealraitheach é go mbeidh maoiniú caipitil ar fáil don scéim seo go luath sa todhchaí.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 28 – COMH. S. Ó TUAIRISG

1586

The following reply was given:-

“Cé gur bronnadh deontas de €1000 ar Tharrtháil Sléibhe na Gaillimhe faoin Scéim Tacaíochta Pobail 2013, ní sé indéanta leibhéal macasamhail maoinithe a thiomnú sna blianta romhainn faoin scéim. É sin ráite, beidh sé oscailte do Tharrtháil Sléibhe na Gaillimhe iarratas a dhéanamh ar mhaoiniú faoin scéim sna blianta seo romhainn, de réir maoiniú a bheith ar fáil sa bpróiseas buiséid bhliantúil chun ceadú don Scéim Tacaíochta Pobail leanacht ar aghaidh.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 29 – COMH. S. Ó TUAIRISG

1587

The following reply was given:-

“Níl aon ceantair draenala Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe i gConamara le caomhnú a dhéanamh ar draein no aibhneacha ann. B’fhéidir go bhfuil na cainéal aibhneacha sa gceantar faoi chúram Oifig na Oibreacha Poiblí afach. Muna bhfuil na cainéal aibhneacha faoi chúram an Comhairle Chontae nó Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí is é an úinéir talaingh freagrach as iad a chaomhnú. Afách, má tá contúirt ann go dtarlódh tuile ar maoin sna áiteacha seo mar gheall nár deanadh aon caomhnú nó go bhfuil coachail ann, b’fhéidir go bhfeadfaí caomhnú a dhéanamh faoin Sceim Mion Oibreacha atá ag Oifig na Oibreacha Poiblí. Caithfidh an Innealtóir Aitiúil (níos mó) scrúdu a breise dheanamh ar an áit le cinntiú an stadás den cainéal a crinntiú agus an méid contúirt atá ann go dtarlódh tuile ar maoin thart timpeall na háite.”

CRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIÚ ANSIN.