

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

Report of Oranmore Area Committee Meeting held at Áras an Chontae on the 17th July, 2008

I LATHAIR:-

Baill: Cllr. J. Cuddy, Chairman.
Cllr. M. Hoade.
Cllr. J. McDonagh
Cllr. M. Carey

Oifigigh:- Mr. P. Ridge, DOS Planning & Sustainable Development Unit
Mr. M. Lavelle, Senior Engineer
Mr M Dolly, Senior Engineer
Ms C McConnell, Senior Planner
Mr. D. Croghan, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads &
Transportation
Mr. E. Gallagher, Executive Engineer Roads & Transportation
Mr E Moloney, Planning

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 28th April 2008 were proposed by Cllr. Carey, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh and agreed.

There were no matters arising.

The Chairman and committee members then extended their sympathies to Cllr. McDonagh on the recent passing of his mother. Cllr. McDonagh in response thanked the members for their sympathy and support on behalf of himself and his family.

2. Election of Chairman

On the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh and seconded by Cllr. Hoade; it was agreed that Cllr. Michael Carey would take the Chair of the Oranmore Area Committee for the year ahead. Cllr. Carey thanked his proposer and seconder, paid tribute to the outgoing chairman and expressed the wish that members and staff would work and co-operate together in the coming year.

It was agreed that the position of Vice Chairman would not be filled pending the clarification of who held the position currently.

It was agreed that item number 3 on the agenda would be deferred to the final item in order to deal with the roads issues first.

Mr. Dolly brought the members attention to the matter of the Specific Road Improvement Grants 2009 (formerly the EU Co-Financed Grants) and stressed that it was now time to be putting proposals forward for inclusion. He referred to projects already underway under this heading e.g. Maree Road which would require a further allocation to complete it in 2009. He stated that two, perhaps three projects was all that would be accommodated under this funding heading.

Cllr. Hoade stated that she would like the road from Peggys bar to Corrandrum National School to be included as she had been promoting this scheme for a number of years.

The members then raised the question of safety on a number of bridges including a bridge on the Headford to Tuam road and also in particular Cregmore Bridge. Mr. Dolly explained that there were a large number of bridges in the county that require work but that as there is no separate funds available for bridges, only those in a precarious structural position will be prioritised. A commitment was given to examining whether signing, lining and making would provide mitigation of the risks in this case.

Mr. Dolly then informed the members that the review of speed limits in the county would proceed on the basis of the towns and villages only being progressed at present. The members expressed disappointment at this as they were under the impression that all of the county was to proceed. Mr. Dolly explained that when costings were estimated for a county wide scheme the funding was not going to be available and therefore the towns and villages would be progressed first.

Cllr. Hoade asked that this item be place on the agenda for the next meeting in September.

Mr. Lavelle updated the members in relation to three items : - the CPO for Beal na Bradan Bridge in Oranmore would be ready to proceed shortly, the traffic lights in Headford would be installed in Headford by year end once all other statutory undertakers had finished their works and that traffic lights on the northern section in Claregalway should proceed after the holiday period.

Cllr. Cuddy queried the retention of the right turning lane at Kiniska. Mr. Lavelle explained that this was not possible.

Cllr. Hoade stated that the Traffic Management Plan for Heaford was urgently needed all the more so now that the Traffic Corps had regularly given out fixed penalty notices for illegal parking on the main street. She urged in particular that carparking be found convenient to the main street. Mr. Lavelle outlined the options in relation to land for carparking and Cllr. Hoade recommended a negotiated solution rather than going the CPO route. Cllr. Hoade recommended that proposals be brought to the September meeting.

4. Castleview Walkway

Mr. Dolly confirmed that this roadway would be taken in charge by the Council on a pedestrianised / restriced access basis provided funding was available.

5. A.O.B.

Cllr. Cuddy expressed to the area Director that he felt the Oranmore Area was grossly understaffed and finding it difficult to get the necessary work done. Mr. Ridge accepted this comment and said it was a universal problem but a very difficult one to solve given the constraints in relation to staff numbers and staff complements.

3. Draft County Development Plan

Mr. Ridge introduced the Draft Plan. He stated that it was intended to continue to include Ardaun and Garraun as part of the Settlement Strategy and explained that the plan contained the concept of a Metropolitan Gateway Area to try to deal with the City / County interface as the existence of the City and the wide ranging dependencies between both City and County must be addressed.

Mr. Ridge explained the role and links between the Draft Plan and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the fact that heritage and environmental implications must be carefully considered and adequately dealt with in the plan. He confirmed that at each stage of the process any changes or amendments to the plan must be put through the SEA process in order for the plan to be valid and that wholesale last minute changes at the time of the adoption of the plan would not be possible.

Mr Ridge confirmed that the housing allocations in the various areas will have to be built out as opposed to permitted before limits can be changed.

A number of members queried whether extra places could be included in the list of small settlements. Mr. Ridge, while not objecting to their inclusion, cautioned that this could be raising expectations that planning might be granted when in many of these cases the Board will reject same. The members then proposed the re-inclusion of a number of places on the list of small settlements.

Ms. McConnell then continued with the presentation of the draft plan to the members and highlighted the main objectives and policies contained in each section of the Draft Plan.

Section 2 Spatial Planning and Settlement Strategy

Ms. McConnell explained the need for a settlement strategy in a county the size of Galway. She highlighted the various maps showing the context of the county, the socio economic characteristics of the county, the economic engine etc. She explained that over the lifetime of the plan that sub county level plans would be prepared for cohesive e.g. the south east of the county where many of the characteristics and constraints to development are similar. She emphasised that the East Galway Main Drainage was a key element of the plan. Cllr. Hoade queried whether there were enough staff available to produce all these extra plans along with the other LAPs and AAPs that were necessary. Cllr. Cuddy stressed the need for an Action Area Plan for the Headford Road.

Section 3 Settlement Strategy

M. McConnell explained the basis for the house construction allocations and informed the members that a prudent extra margin had been allowed to ensure that they are

sufficient to meet demand. She also informed the members that half of the total had been allocated to rural areas outside the towns and villages..

Section 4 Economic Development and Tourism

Ms. Connell went through this item and highlighted that it was the intention that the new plan would allow for more flexibility for the establishment of new businesses in the county and also for the regularisation of existing and established businesses that are unauthorised. This was welcomed by the members.

Section 5 Housing

A number of items were discussed as follows :

- That references to family farms be changed to family lands.
- That family be extended to include nephews, nieces, sisters and brothers.
- That family lands have to be owned for at least 20 years.
- That development on regional/restricted routes be for sons/daughters only.
- That developments in settlements would have amenity facilities conditioned.
- That lands adjoining cemeteries and schools be reserved for expansion of same.
- That no development be allowed on flood plains.
- That no minimum road frontage be required- just sight distances.

Ms. McConnell undertook to examine each of the points raised and where it was considered possible or appropriate the development plan would reflect same.

Section 6 Infrastructure – Roads and Transportation

Under this heading Cllr. Cuddy proposed that an objective be included to provide for bus shelters and pick up points for public transport.

Section 7 Infrastructures – Water Waste Energy Telecommunications

Under this heading Cllr. Hoade proposed that the plan should encourage co-location of this type of infrastructure where possible.

Mc. McConnell went through the remaining sections of the plan and the Development Management Guidelines. Cllr. Carey thanked Ms. McConnell for going through the draft plan in such detail and looked forward to further reviewing the draft plan at full Council as it was important that the members take an active role if the adopting of the new County Development Plan.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would be on Monday 8th Sept 2008 at 10 a.m.

Criochnaigh an Chruinniu Ansin