

CHOMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD AT ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL ON MONDAY 22nd
FEBRUARY, 2010.**

CATHAOIRLEACH:

Cllr. T. McHugh

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, L. Carroll, P. Connaughton, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, J. Cuddy, Comh S O'Cuaig, Comh T. Ó Curraoin, Cllrs. M. Fahy, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, C. Keaveney, S. Kyne, E Mannion, T. Mannion, J. McClearn, J McDonagh, M Mullins, M. Noone, P. Roche, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, Cllrs. S. Walsh, T. Walsh, T. Welby, B. Willers.

Oifigigh:

Ms. M. Moloney, County Manager;
Messrs. J. Cullen, K. Kelly, F. Gilmore,
P. Ridge, Directors of Service; G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance; M. Dolly,
J. Eising, E. Molloy, M. Lavelle, Senior
Engineers; B. McDermott, County
Secretary; M. Owens, A. Comer, Senior
Executive Officers; P. O'Neachtain,
Oifigeach Gaeilge; G. Healy, Staff
Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

255

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:-

Mr. Evan Molloy, Galway County Council, Prospect Hill, Galway.
Francis O' Dea, Carrowbeg, Belclare, Tuam, Co. Galway
Ms. Alona Noone, 37 Hugh Hession Road, The Glebe, Tuam, Co. Galway
Una Molloy, Ballinacregg, Corofin, Tuam, Co. Galway

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETING

256

Arising from the Minutes of 25th January, 2010, the Mayor proposed an amendment be made to the Minutes, i.e. to omit Cllr. Welby from the list of attendees as he was not present at that Meeting. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Carroll, and agreed.

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 25th January 2010 were approved by the Council, subject to the amendment, and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, and seconded by Cllr. Mullins.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

257

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 24th September 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McClearn and seconded by Cllr Fahy.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 12th November 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Willers and seconded by Cllr. Finnerty.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 18th November 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McClearn and seconded by Cllr. Willers.

The Report of the Planning & Economic Development SPC Meeting held on 15th April 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Canney and seconded by Cllr. Welby.

The Report of the Ballinasloe Area Committee Meeting held on 13th November 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Mullins and seconded by Cllr. D. Connolly.

The Report of the Ballinasloe Area Committee Meeting held on 23rd November 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Connaughton and seconded by Cllr. T. Mannion.

The Report of the Oranmore Area Committee Meeting held on 11th November 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Carroll and seconded by Cllr. McDonagh and agreed.

Arising from the Report, Cllr. Carroll stated that on the last paragraph of Page 2, it should state Cregboy and not Cregmore and he proposed that this be amended. This was seconded by Cllr. McDonagh.

The Report of the Corporate & Cultural Affairs SPC Meeting held on 20th February 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Fahy and seconded by Cllr. McDonagh.

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

258

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On the proposal of Cllr. Willers and seconded by Cllr. Hynes, 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 LS 8782 in the townland of Killeen and extending south east for a distance of 170 metres in the townland of Killeen and finishing in the townland of Killeen.

Electoral Area: Loughrea

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AND SECTION 211 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 206 (1) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 AND SECTION 88 OF THE HOUSING ACT 1996 ON THE DISPOSAL OF 0.138 HECTARES AT COILL BHRUACHLÁN, MAIGH CUILINN, CO. GALWAY

259

Report dated the 4th February, 2010 was already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Kyne, seconded by Cllr. S. Walsh, the disposal of 0.138 hectares at Coill Bhruachlán, Maigh Cuilinn, Co. Galway was approved.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 – 7 & 8 GILMARTIN ROAD, TUAM, CO. GALWAY LA 14/09

260

Report dated the 15th February, 2010 was already circulated to each Member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Canney, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh, the proposals under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 for No's 7 & 8 Gilmartin Road, Tuam were approved.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

261

Report dated 5th February, 2010 was already circulated to each Member.

Mr. Kelly stated that the Audit Committee is required to submit a report annually to the Members and the Report before the Members today outlines the activities of the Committee during 2009. He said that it is evident that the Committee carries out an extensive workload and will continue to do so.

The Members noted the report.

FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY ON THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

262

Report dated 16th February, 2010 was already circulated to each Member.

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On the proposal of Cllr. Mullins, seconded by Cllr. Welby, it was agreed that Cllr. Cuddy would fill the Casual Vacancy on the Audit Committee following the resignation of Cllr. McHugh.

UPDATE ON FLOODING

263

Report dated 19th February, 2010 was circulated to each Member.

The Manager outlined the contents of the Report stating that a Flood Relief Committee was set up in the aftermath of the flooding disaster caused by the unprecedented rainfall during the month of November, 2009. The Committee is comprised of officials from the Council and the Office of Public works and one of its functions in relation to flooding is to prepare a works programme and identify resource requirements. The Council has submitted 27 applications to the OPW so far and submissions will continue to be made as the list of flooding locations are inspected. She thanked the OPW and the Council staff involved in this work.

A number of issues were raised by the Members and the Manager replied as follows:

- The studies on the Dunkellin River, Clare River and River Suck are necessary in order to assess the impact of any remedial action to be taken. However, some works can be carried out immediately and will not be held up pending the studies
- The Council and the OPW welcome local knowledge in relation to flooding
- The issue of the relocation of the intake pipe at the Terryland Waterworks site is a matter for Galway City Council.
- No funding has yet been received from the OPW, however the Council has made a number of submissions to the OPW for funding and in some instances, the OPW will carry out the work on behalf of the County Council.
- Regarding flood mapping, the Council has been in communication with the OPW to ensure that up-to-date information regarding flooded areas is made available.
- The issue of relocation is a matter for the OPW and a decision is awaited from OPW Headquarters in Trim, Co. Meath.
- The list of applications for minor works sent to the OPW by Galway County Council will be circulated to the Members.

Mr. Kelly outlined the position in relation to Ballinasloe indicating that the proposed Study on the River Suck is necessary in order to ensure that the correct works are identified and will be beneficial. A further examination of the entire Suck will also be carried out in the next few months in conjunction with Roscommon County Council and the Suck Drainage Committee. Arrangements are being made with the OPW in relation to carrying out some immediate work and a submission has been made to the OPW in respect of an overall flood relief scheme for the town

In reply to the points raised regarding the growth of African Pond Weed, Mr. Cullen said that this is the biggest single threat to Lough Corrib and the Council has been working closely with the NPWS and the Fisheries Board for some time in this regard.

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He said that the Council has included a provision in its 2010 Budgets to make a contribution towards the efforts of the Fisheries Board to deal with this problem.

The flooding update was welcomed by the Members and a monthly update was requested.

NATIONAL ROAD GRANT ALLOCATION 2010

264

Report dated 22nd February, 2010 was circulated to each Member.

Mr. Gilmore gave a brief summary of the National Roads Grant Allocation 2010 & Notification of Regional & Local Roads Grant Allocations 2010 contained in the Report dated 22nd February, 2010 and he said that there may be further funds available later in the year. He said that the big change in this year's Regional & Local Road Grant allocations is that local authorities have been given greater flexibility to deal with the urgent repair of damage to roads arising from the recent flooding and severe cold weather.

A discussion then took place and the Members made the following points:

- The Members welcomed the allocation of over €176m towards major roads but they expressed their concern regarding the reduced allocation of €2.1m for road maintenance works
- The Members also expressed their disappointment at the reduced allocation of €308,000 in respect of Local Improvement Schemes and they asked why there was no mention of Community Involvement Schemes in the Report.

Mr. Gilmore, in response stated that Community Involvement Schemes will be part of the Roads Programme to be discussed at each Electoral Area Meeting.

Cllr. Mullins stated that the allocation for road repairs is inadequate and he proposed Notice of Motion No. 22 as follows:

"That Galway County Council seeks a deputation with Minister Gormally and Minister Dempsey with a view to securing additional funds to repair the roads that have been so badly damaged by the recent bad weather. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Cuddy and agreed".

TUAM SWIMMING POOL

265

Cllr. Keaveney stated that he is dissatisfied with the new operators of the Tuam Leisure Facility and that they are turning the facility into a private club by curtailing the number of hours available to the public. He made the following proposal:

"I call on Galway County Council to seek a legal opinion with regard to the current licensing and contractual relationship that exists with Kingfisher Ltd. and the operation of the Tuam Swimming facilities. That the objective of this review is to establish the principles set out in the National Policy Review Local Authority Swimming Pool Programme. Section/Chapter 7 sets out the impact on usage, participation on commodities in this regard. It is clearly implied in this that maximum

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usage of public swimming facilities underlies the policy objective of the local authority swimming pool programme.

I call on Galway County Council to review this arrangement under the provisions of Section 132(2) of the Local Government Act which provides elected Members the right to direct the Manager to obtain legal opinion in respect of a Reserved Function of the Council.

Finally, the Local Government Act, Section 137, requires the Manager to show to the elected Members plans and specifications for any particular work which can lawfully be executed by that local authority by providing the estimated costs of the work involved in overturning an existing lawful relationship.

I propose that Galway County Council review this arrangement with Kingfisher Ltd. with a view of universal public access for all members of the commodity in Tuam". This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Connolly and agreed.

Cllr. Canney stated that a Liaison Committee has been set up to deal with issues arising at Tuam Leisure Centre and he suggested that the matter should be left to this Committee to deal with.

Mr. Kelly stated that Kingfisher Ltd. was selected as operators of Tuam Leisure Centre through a public tendering process. He pointed out that the facility was open for an extra 5.5 hours per week and that Kingfisher had responded positively to a number of requests and had extended the public hours, had moved the public hours to alternative times, had provided access to the gym and had introduced lower prices. He outlined that public access was available for 7 hours Monday to Friday and 5 hours on Saturday and Sunday giving a total of 45 hours per week. He also said that there are 700 school children using the pool every week and in addition, there are 730 children taking lessons with Kingfisher.

Cllr. Connolly asked if the opening hours of the facility could be placed on the Website and Mr. Kelly said that he would request same.

MANAGERS BUSINESS

266

The Manager referred to the Local Government Efficiency Review and advised that the closing date for submissions is 5th March, 2010 if the Members are interested in making a submission. She confirmed that a submission is being made by the Executive of Galway County Council.

MAYORS BUSINESS

267

Cllr. D. Connolly sought the Members support for the the following proposal: "That, subject to a commitment to myself by Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney on Friday 19th February, 2010, that Senior Health Service Executive Officials would meet with a representative group of elected Members from the Ballinasloe Electoral Area in relation to outstanding concerns at Portiuncula Hospital. This cruinniú would be facilitated by Cathaoirleach of the Ballinasloe Electoral Area Committee, Cllr. Paul Connaughton". This was seconded by Cllr. Mullins and agreed.

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Cllr. McClearn proposed that the Development Contribution Scheme be reviewed having regard to the current economic climate and that this be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Council. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. S. Walsh, and agreed.

The Manager stated that the Council would be happy to facilitate a review but she stated that the Members should be mindful that funding arrangements for the Water Services Investment Programme include a provision that a portion of the cost must be raised locally and this can only be done through development contributions or through water charges.

Cllr. Mullins referred to his Notice of Motion No. 23 and proposed the following "That GCC oppose the plan of the Health Service Executive and Minister Harney to centralise all medical card applications to Dublin, in light of all the difficulties with the over 70s' cards which were centralised last year. The current system of processing medical card applications in the local HSE offices works well, and should be continued". This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Hoade and agreed.

Cllr. Walsh referred to the new E.P.A. Guidelines and proposed that the implementation of the Guidelines be deferred until July when the new Building Regulations come into force.

However, Mr. Kelly stated that the Council is required to implement the requirements of the new Guidelines with effect from 8th January, 2010 and the Planning Department will address any issues which arise.

On the proposal of Cllr. Canney, seconded by Cllr. Hoade it was agreed that the Standing Orders be suspended to allow the Meeting continue after 6 p.m.

Cllr. D. Connolly made the following proposal "I propose that the correct status of the road formerly known as the N6 (Béal Átha an Slua-Gaillimh) be notified to all Departments of Galway County Council". This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Broderick and agreed.

Comh. O'Curraoin requested that an item be placed on the Agenda for the next Meeting in relation to the provision of a fire station for An Cheathrú Rua. The Mayor pointed out that it would be more appropriate to discuss this matter at the relevant SPC Meeting initially and this was agreed.

In response to a query from Cllr. Kyne, Mr. Cullen confirmed that the Roundstone Water Supply is adequate.

Cllr. Fahy proposed that the matter of Head Shops be placed on the Agenda for the next Monthly Meeting of the Council for discussion and this proposal was seconded by Cllr. Carroll and agreed.

Comh. O'Cuaig proposed that "we call on the U.S. Government to withdraw the warrant issued by it seeking the extradition of Sean Garland, former President of the

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Workers' Party of Ireland. Sean Garland is 75 years old and is in poor health". This proposal was seconded by Comh. O'Tuairisg and agreed.

CONFERENCES

268

On the proposal of Cllr McDonagh and seconded by Cllr Mullins the proposed attendances at conferences was agreed.

"Esperanza Enterprises – Waste Management & The Law – 22nd – 24th January – Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Galway"

Cllr. P Roche

A.M.A.I. Spring Seminar – Perspectives on National Recovery – 12th – 13th February – Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo

Cllr. T. Walsh

21st Colmcille Winter School – The Role of Small Enterprises in Overcoming the Recession – 26th – 28th February – Colmcille Heritage Centre, Gartan, Churchill, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Comh. T Ó Curraóin, Cllr. M. Fahy, Cllr. M. Hoade, Cllr. P. Hynes, Cllr. M. Maher

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 13 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

269

The following reply was given:-

"There is currently no funding available to facilitate the provision of such signage, which is estimated to cost €750. This would be a suitable project for Notice of Motion funding."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 14 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

270

The following reply was given:-

"This proposal will be examined and a full report on same will be made available."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 15 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

271

The following reply was given:-

"A chevron sign is not warranted at this location, however, the location will be examined to ensure that the appropriate junction ahead and stop signage is in place on the approach to the N63."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 16 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

272

The following reply was given:-

“The numbers and locations of our staff complement remain under continual review having regard to the current financial situation and the embargo on recruitment which is in place at present and which prohibits the recruitment of any staff.

The Council has commenced a major repair programme to roads damaged by the severe weather and expect to be able to complete the programme in a timely manner.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 17 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

273

The following reply was given:-

“The proposals to reduce the speed limits on County roads was previously submitted to the Elected Members. Consensus on such proposals was not forthcoming in the various Electoral Areas.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 18 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

274

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council currently has four full-time Leak Detection Inspectors in the County. These inspectors are fully involved in water conservation and undertake night surveys regularly to detect leaks. Ultimately it is proposed to increase this number of leakage inspectors to five. The Council considers this to be an adequate number to cover the leak detection work required throughout the County at this time.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 19 – CLLR. M. FAHY

275

The following reply was given:-

“This matter will be examined in conjunction with the Office of Public Works as part of the Flood Relief Measures for South Galway.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 20 – CLLR. M. FAHY

276

The following reply was given:-

“This proposal will be resubmitted to the National Roads Authority as requested. However, it should be noted that a previous request to the National Roads Authority for consent to an extension of the speed limit at this location was refused.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 21 – CLLR. M. FAHY

277

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The following reply was given:-

“There is no provision in the Council’s 2010 Budget to facilitate the preparation and implementation of a Traffic Management Plan for Kinvara. In the event that such funding is made available at a future date, all aspects of parking will be analysed including the requirement, if any, for the development of a car park.

In the interim, existing legislation is sufficient to address illegal parking, including incidences where entrances to private property are blocked due to illegal parking on the Quay.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 22 – CLLR. M. MULLINS

278

The following reply was given:-

“This Notice of Motion requires a Resolution of the Council.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 23 – CLLR. M. MULLINS

279

The following reply was given:-

“This Notice of Motion requires a Resolution of the Council.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 24 – CLLR. M. MULLINS

280

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council participates in the task force set up to tackle this problem. In 2009 Galway County Council contributed €37,000 to the weed management programme implemented by Fisheries Board staff and has budgeted for a similar contribution for 2010.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 25 – CLLR. P. CONNAUGHTON

281

The following reply was given:-

“This proposal will be resubmitted to the National Roads Authority as requested. However, it should be noted that a previous request to the National Roads Authority for consent to an extension of the speed limit at this location was refused.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 26 – CLLR. P. CONNAUGHTON

282

The following reply was given:-

“It is intended that a light will be placed over the recycling centre in Monivea in the near future.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 27 – CLLR. T. BRODERICK 283

The following reply was given:-

“This proposal, including the request for a clear explanation of the decision arising, will be submitted to the National Roads Authority. However, it should be noted that a previous request to the National Roads Authority for consent to an extension of the speed limit at this location was refused.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 28 – CLLR. T. BRODERICK 284

The following reply was given:-

“Between 2009 and 2010, a total allocation of €2 million has been made available for works on the residual network affected by M6 construction traffic.”

The total allocation for 2010 of €171 million for Major Projects in the County is targeted at works on the National Network, and there is no scope for reallocating these funds to other works.”

Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Approved + Signed



22nd March 2010

DATE

CHOMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD AT ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL ON MONDAY THE
25th JANUARY 2010.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. T. McHugh

ILATHAIR FREISIN:-

Baill: Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, L. Carroll, P. Connaughton, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, J. Cuddy, Comh S O'Cuaig, Comh T. Ó Curraoin, Cllrs. M. Fahy, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, C. Keaveney, S. Kyne, M. Maher, E Mannion, T. Mannion, J. McClearn, J. McDonagh, M Mullins, M. Noone, P. Roche, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, Cllrs. S. Walsh, T. Walsh, T. Welby, B. Willers.

Oifigigh: Ms. M. Moloney, County Manager; Messrs. J. Cullen, F. Gilmore, K Kelly, Directors of Service; G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance; M Dolly, Senior Engineer, B. McDermott, County Secretary; A Comer, M. Owens, Senior Executive Officers; J Keane, Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY 232

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:-

Mrs. Collins, Corofin, Tuam, Co. Galway.
Mr. Tony Larkin, Kilnahown, Aughrim, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
Mrs. Rose Glynn, Mackney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
Mrs. Mary Crehan, Lowville, Ahascragh, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
Carmel Cusack, Hanley's Cross, Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway
Paddy Joe Ó Cadhain, An Lochán Beag, Indreabhán, Co. na Gaillimhe.
Tom Concannon, Sailechúna, An Spidéal, Co. na Gaillimhe
Beartla Ó Cadhain, Caorán na gCearc, Baile na hAbhainn, Co. na Gaillimhe
Mrs. Phyllis Fahy, Annagh, Gort, Co. Galway.
The Hon. Mrs. Eleanor Agnew, Cregmore, Ardrahan, Co. Galway
Mrs. Madeleine Connolly, Nutfield Cross, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
Ms. Mary Hanifin T.D., Minister for Social & Family Affairs, Dáil Éireann, Dublin 2

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS

233

The Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 14th December 2009 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr Keaveney, and seconded by Cllr. McClean.

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 21st December 2009 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr Keaveney, and seconded by Cllr. Mannion.

The Minutes of the Budget Meeting held on 4th January 2010 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr Carroll, and seconded by Cllr. Connaughton.

It was agreed to allow Cllr. D. Connolly to raise an issue at this stage of the meeting:-

Cllr. D Connolly called for immediate action on the Killascobe bridge in Mountbellew to restore it to a workable condition for all traffic users and not just pedestrian use.

Mr. Gilmore said that work would commence on the restructuring of the Killascobe Bridge this week.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

234

The Report of the Housing SPC meeting held on the 18th February 2009 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. E Mannion and seconded by Cllr Kyne.

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

235

On the proposal of Cllr. E Mannion and seconded by Cllr. Kyne 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 County Road L-5118-10 in the townland of Fahy and extending westwards for a distance of 200 metres to its finish point in the townland of Fahy.

Electoral Area: Conamara

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

236

On the proposal of Cllr. E Mannion and seconded by Cllr. Kyne 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-5105-22 in the townland of Renvyle and extending northwards for a distance of 160 metres to its finish point in the townland of Renvyle.

Electoral Area: Conamara

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AND SECTION 211 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 206 (1) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 AND SECTION 88 OF THE HOUSING ACT 1996 ON THE DISPOSAL OF AN APARTMENT AT HIGH STREET, DUNMORE, CO. GALWAY

237

Report dated the 14th January, 2010 was already circulated to the Members.

On the proposal of Cllr. Canney, seconded by Cllr. Keaveney, the disposal of an apartment at High Street, Dunmore was approved.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AND SECTION 211 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 206 (1) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 AND SECTION 88 OF THE HOUSING ACT 1996 ON THE DISPOSAL OF 0.120 HECTARES AND 0.125 HECTARES AT ENNIS RD, GORT, CO. GALWAY

238

Report dated the 14th January, 2010 was already circulated to the Members.

On the proposal of Cllr. Willers, seconded by Cllr. Finnerty, the disposal of 0.120 hectares and 0.125 hectares at Ennis Rd, Gort, Co Galway was approved.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 – MAIGH CUILINN PLAYGROUND

239

Report dated the 19th January, 2010 was already circulated to each member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Kyne, seconded by Cllr. S Walsh, the proposals under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 for Maigh Cuilinn Playground, in the townland of Coill Bhruachláin were approved.

ROAD REPAIRS UPDATE

240

The Mayor invited Mr. Gilmore to update the Members on the condition of the roads following the recent severe weather conditions. Mr. Gilmore said that the Council was carrying out a full survey of all the damaged roads however some are still under water. He said that a significant sum of money will be required to repair the damage done by the flooding and frost. A meeting is planned with staff from the Department

of Transport and NRA in order to seek additional funding. He referred to Circular RLR 3/2010 dated the 21st January 2010 received from the Department of Transport which has been circulated to the members setting out the position in relation to the Interim Spending for Regional & Local Roads under the following headings;

- Expenditure from own resources
- Prioritisation of Repair Works arising from the recent Severe Weather
- Spending of 2010 Restoration Improvement grant, Discretionary Maintenance grant Discretionary Improvement Grant, Block Grant and Special Block grant monies
- 2010 Restoration Improvement Programmes

It is proposed to revise the Roads Programme and this item will be brought before the Electoral Area Committees over the next few weeks.

Cllr. Canney pointed out that this was a vexatious issue, as roads already on the programme for repairs may not now be repaired. There is a need to lobby the Minister for Transport for additional funding.

It was proposed by Cllr. Canney and seconded by Cllr. M Connolly and agreed "that Galway County Council initiate an alliance of all Local Authorities to lobby the Minister for Transport for additional funding to properly address the condition of our roads.

It was also proposed that this motion be forwarded to all Local Authorities for support".

In relation to the use of the Council website, the Council will look at publishing a list of the roadworks as they are carried out.

In relation to claims for damage to motor vehicles, each case is evaluated on its merits.

The Council is meeting with the Galway International Rally organisers tomorrow and will raise issues of concern expressed by the Members.

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC (SPECIAL SPEED LIMITS) COUNTY GALWAY BYE LAWS 2010 241

Report dated the 19th January, 2010 was already circulated to each member.

On the proposal of Cllr. Mullins, seconded by Cllr. Canney, the Road Traffic (Special Speed Limits) County Galway Bye Laws 2010 were adopted by the Members and signed and sealed by the Mayor.

In response to queries raised by members Mr. Dolly said that the extension of the speed limits on the Kilcolgan side of Ballindereen village had been raised on numerous occasions and submitted to the NRA but had not been given approval. He agreed that these could be resubmitted to the NRA.

The implementation of a wider review of speed limits will have cost implications.

DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2010-2014

242

Mr. Kelly referred to the Draft Corporate Plan 2010-2014 which had been circulated. The Corporate Plan is a statutory requirement under the Local Government Act 2001 and he pointed out that while the draft plan was a briefer version that the previous plan it still complies with the requirements of the legislation. The plan sets out the priority strategies for each unit.

It was proposed by Cllr. Mullins, seconded by Cllr. Mannion and agreed that the Draft Corporate Plan 2010-2014 be approved.

TUAM SWIMMING POOL

243

While it was agreed to defer this item, a brief update was requested.

Mr. Kelly said he was confident that a number of issues raised with Kingfisher the new operators of the Pool had been taken on board and acted upon in an appropriate manner. A number of organizations had expressed satisfaction with the changes. The first Swimming Gala had been held at the venue over the weekend and the operators were looking forward to further events.

The members in general expressed satisfaction with the running of the pool, however, Cllr. M Connolly said that people who were 'pay as you go' customers were not happy with the hours available.

MANAGERS BUSINESS

244

There was no Managers business.

MAYORS BUSINESS

245

In support of the Resolutions of the Ballinasloe Town Council which had been circulated to the Members it was proposed by Cllr Mullins, seconded by Cllr T. Mannion and agreed:-

“That this Council write to the Minister of the Environment and seek assurances that a strategic flood risk management programme will now be implemented to lessen the risk of future flooding and to give advance warning of flood risk”

“That the Government introduce a scheme to protect householders who cannot obtain household insurance due to flooding through regular insurance bodies”

It was proposed by Cllr Hoade, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh and agreed that the Council extend an invitation to the three MEP's for Connacht Ulster to visit the Council, and address the Members in relation to flooding and other EU issues.

In response to a query raised, Ms. McDermott confirmed that a favourable response had been received from the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Environment, Heritage & Local Government regarding meeting a delegation of Members from Galway County Council regarding excessive designations and their effects on County Galway. They will revert back to the Council with dates and times. She agreed to follow up on this matter with the Committee.

Mr. Kelly said in relation to Loughrea Swimming Pool that the Council had met with the developer last Friday. Some work has been done on the tender documents and funding for the project is secure. He advised that legal arrangements were in place to provide that funding is only drawn down at the end of the construction period and that a detailed time scale would be agreed with the Department in the next couple of weeks.

Referring to the flooding issue the Manager advised as follows:

- A working group has been set up with the OPW which has held three meetings to date.
- At least fifty locations which have been impacted were identified with over 200 houses affected.
- There is an ongoing programme of inspections taking place
- A number of minor relief works applications are being prepared for submission to the OPW
- The OPW is due to commence a Flood Risk Management Study of the River Shannon this year
- The OPW is also commissioning a study on the Clare River which is expected to commence shortly with a completion date of 3 months
- There are 12 drainage districts in the County and in the current year Galway County Council has a total of €70,000 to spend on same.
- Galway County Council is currently compiling a comprehensive map of the County outlining areas of responsibility of Galway County Council and of the OPW

Mr. Kelly advised that notice has been served on the Council by the main unions regarding the commencement of industrial action with effect from Monday 25th January 2010, and in some instances with effect from 1st February 2010. The industrial action proposed is non co-operation with changes including non co-operation with Council meetings.

CONFERENCES

246

On the proposal of Cllr McDonagh and seconded by Cllr Mullins the proposed attendances at conferences was agreed.

Antrim Tourism Conference – Tourism in the 21st Century – A Challenge for All – 29th – 30th January – Dunadry Hotel, Dunadry, Co. Antrim

Cllr. M Maher

TJK Conferences – Planning Seminar for Councillors – 29th – 30th January – Patrick Punch Hotel, Limerick

Cllr. P Roche, Cllr. J McDonagh, Cllr. S Walsh, Cllr. M Hoade, Cllr. T McHugh, Cllr. T Walsh, Cllr. P Hynes

Mid-West Regional Authority – 16th Annual Conference – Environmental Designations – Barriers or Opportunities – 4th – 5th February – Greenhills Hotel, Ennis Rd., Limerick

Cllr. M Hoade

Superior Training – Flood Management & Local Government – 5th – 6th February – Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare

Cllr. P Roche

A.M.A.I. Spring Seminar – Perspectives on National Recovery – 12th – 13th February – Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo

Cllr. M Hoade, Cllr. T Ó Curráoin, Cllr. M Maher, Cllr. J Cuddy, Cllr. M Fahy, Cllr. J McDonagh, Cllr. P Hynes, Cllr. P Feeney, Cllr. T Mannion, Cllr. M Mullins. Cllr. P Roche

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 13 – CLLR. C. KEAVENEY

247

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council wrote to all schools in the County on 24th September last advising them of the change to full volumetric charging for schools from January 1st 2010. The Council included with this correspondence specially produced leaflets and useful information for schools regarding water conservation. In addition, the Council offered the assistance of the Water Services Section and the Environmental Awareness Officer in terms of advice and further assistance in this matter. It is the Council’s understanding that all primary and post primary schools were informed directly of the Summer Works Scheme initiative by the Department of Education and Science in the Circular Letter 0057/2009, and that the closing date for applications under this initiative was 27th November 2009.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 14 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

248

The following reply was given:-

“The location highlighted does not satisfy existing criteria for the erection of the proposed sign. Signs of this nature are erected on roads of a primary residential character with continuous housing frontage.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 15 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

249

The following reply was given:-

“There is no recorded accident history at the highlighted location and there is currently no funding available to facilitate the provision of protective railings/ barrier. The provision of appropriate signage on the approaches to the area will be considered by the Area Office.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 16 – CLLR. M. MAHER

250

The following reply was given:-

“A formal request will be made to the National Roads Authority with regard to the maintenance and upkeep of the local road network in the immediate vicinity of the M6 Junction at Carrowkeel.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 17 – CLLR. M. MAHER

251

The following reply was given:-

“These works will be considered in the context of preparing the 2010 Roads Programme.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 18 – CLLR. M. MAHER

252

The following reply was given:-

“The transfer of lands at this location to the Council has not been finalised to date, it is intended that the necessary works required to complete the project will be undertaken on completion of the land transfer.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 19 - COMH S. Ó TUAIRISG

253

The following reply was given:-

“Tá an t-ábhar seo curtha faoi bhráid Gníomhaire Dlí na Comhairle do Chomhairle Dlí. Cuirfear scéala chugat maidir le beartais na Comhairle a luaithe agus is feidir”.

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 20 - COMH S. Ó TUAIRISG

254

The following reply was given:-

“**Reilig Mhaírois Carna**. Tá plé déanta ag an gComhairle leis an úinéir talún áitiúil maidir le talamh breise a cheannacht cóngarach don reilig i Maíros, Carna. Bheadh

ceist maidir le bealach isteach ar an suíomh agus an praghas atá iarrtha ag an úinéir talún.

Reilig an Líonáin. Ag cruinniú le Cumann Forbartha an Líonáin ar an 2ú Feabhra 2010, aontaíodh a dhul ar ais chuig an gCumann le moltaí do shíneadh na reilige.

Reilig Mhaírois, Baile na hAbhann. Tá an Comhairle ag fanacht le tuairisc oiriúnacht suímh ón FSS.

Reilig Bhéal an Átha Fada (Ballinfad). Scriobh an Comhairle chuig úinéirí coimíneacht le taobh an tsuímh. Beidh litir eile dhá eisiúint go luath.

Reilig Chuigéil, Leitir Mealláin. Cuireadh iarratas chuig an gComharchumann le suíomh oiriúnach a aimsiú ó tharla nár tagadh ar aon aontú maidir le úsáid an tsuímh le taobh na reilige".

CRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINIÚ ANSIN

Submitted, Approved + Signed

Tom McLaughlin

22nd February 2010

DATE

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Angela Carmican, Cregbury, Clonsilla, Co. Galway
- Man O Bradaigh, Casi Seel, Clonsilla, Co. Galway
- Tony Larkin & Larkin Family, Kilmacor, Clonsilla, Co. Galway

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE AN GAILLIMHE

**MINUTES OF STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING FOR GALWAY COUNTY
COUNCIL HELD AT ARAS AND CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY,
ON MONDAY 04TH JANUARY 2010**

IL LATHAR:

CATHAOIRLEACH:

Mayor Tom McHugh

BAILL:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, L. Carroll,
P. Connaughton, D. Connolly, M. Connolly,
Cllrs. J. Cuddy, Comh S O'Cuaig, Comh T.
Ó Curraoin, Cllrs. M. Fahy, P. Feeney, G.
Finnerty, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, C. Keaveney,
S. Kyne, M. Maher, E. Mannion, T. Mannion,
J. McClearn, J. McDonagh, M. Mullins, M.
Noone, P. Roche, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg,
Cllrs. S. Walsh, T. Walsh, T. Welby, B.
Willers.

OIFIGIUGH:

Ms Martina Maloney, County Manager,
Messrs Frank Gilmore, J. Cullen, K. Kelly,
Directors of Services; Mr. G. Mullarkey,
Head of Finance; Ms Breda Mc Dermott,
County Secretary, Mark O'Donnell,
Administrative Officer, Mr M. McGovern,
Management Accountant, Messrs M
Lavelle, Evan Molloy, Senior Engineers; Mr
Michael Owens, Senior Executive Officer,
Mrs Rose O'Boyle, Mr. John Keane Staff
Officers, Ms Patricia Delaney, Ms Mary
Duane, Clerical Officers.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

225

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:-

Angela Cormican, Cregboy, Claregalway, Co. Galway

Matt O Bradaigh, Gael Scoil, Oranmore, Co. Galway

Tony Larkin & Larkin Family, Kiltormer, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway

Josephine Lydon, Clydagh, Moycullen, Co. Galway
Patricia Finn, Finns Cross, Ballyglunin, Tuam, Co. Galway.

The Mayor invited the Co Manager to present the budget report to the Elected Members.

BUDGET 2010

226

The County Manager referred to the draft budget for the year 2010 which had been circulated previously to each member of the Council.

She stated that a summary report from the Directors of Service in respect of activities of their respective functional areas is also enclosed.

She stated that all statutory requirements had been complied with and that consultation had taken place with the Corporate Policy Group. The Corporate Policy Group considered the preparation of the Draft Budget at its meetings held on December 18th and 4th January 2010.

The Council is required to:

- a) adopt the Draft Budget, with or without amendment and
- b) determine, in accordance with the Budget so adopted, the annual rate on the valuation to be levied. The Council is required to complete the statutory process within a period of 21 days. This allows, for the adjournment, if necessary of the statutory meeting which is scheduled for 4th January 2010, provided the process is completed by 24th January 2010.

Context of budgetary preparation

During 2009, the Council has experienced a substantial change in the economic context in which it is operating. The year 2009 has seen major adjustments for the Council in terms of responding to the reduction in resources which were available while at the same time attempting to maintain quality essential services and respond to more onerous statutory compliance requirements, particularly in the water services area.

Galway County Council is aware of the difficulties being experienced by residents of the County, businesses and communities arising during this period of economic turmoil and is committed to ensuring the cost effective delivery of services, with the available resources.

The demands on the Council have changed as a result of the economic downturn with some areas of activity experiencing reduced demand e.g. planning and capital works while other areas are experiencing an increase for example, housing, higher education grants and library services. In addition, the Council is expanding services in a number of areas. For example, more than 2,550 households have been connected to the public water supply in the last eighteen months as the Council provided water to group water schemes from the public water supply. New capital works are also underway e.g. Tuam, Remedial Action Programme etc.

Galway County Council must respond flexibly to the changed resources available and demand for services. Galway County Council provides essential services and spends

significant resources throughout the County. The 2010 Budget represents a valuable injection of funds to County Galway.

BUDGET

The draft budget for 2010 envisages expenditure of €149million. This represents a reduction of 4.2% on the budget adopted for 2009 of €156m. Members will be aware that the Government held a second budget for 2009 in April 2009 which impacted severely on Galway Council specifically reducing road grant funding, and Local Government Fund, resulting in a need for further expenditure adjustments during 2009. These reductions amounted to €9.2 Million in road grants and a €1.3M reduction in the Local Government Fund.

TABLE 1: BUDGETARY TREND 2008 - 2010

2008 Adopted Budget	€160 M
2009 Adopted Budget	€156 M
Adjustments following April Budget	€10.5M
Adjusted 2009 Resources available	€145.5M
2010 Draft Budget	€149 M

It should be noted that the

budget includes a figure for road grants based on the 2009 allocation as the 2010 allocation has not yet been received.

Key influences in the preparation of the Draft Budget.

(1) Local Government Fund

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has advised Galway County Council that the provisional allocation for the year 2010 is €36,092,172. The figure of €36,092,172 represents a decrease of 5.3% on our initial 2009 allocation, representing a reduction in resources available to this Council of €2M

(2) The trend in Local Government Fund allocation is as follows: -

		% Reduction
2008 Allocation	€40.6m	
2009 Initial Allocation	€38.114m	6%
2009 Revised Allocation	€36.888m	3%
2010 Allocation	€36.092m	2%
Cumulative Reduction (2008 to 2010)		11%

It should be noted that the allocations for 2009 and 2010 must be adjusted for the amendment to pay rates introduced in the recent budget and also the pension levies introduced earlier this year.

(3) Reduction in Operating Costs

Budget 2010 announced a reduction in pay rates across the public service. This will result in payroll savings accruing in the Local Government sector in 2010. Local Authorities

are to retain 65% of the payroll saving to be realised in 2010, with the remaining 35% reverting to the Exchequer. These reductions are being applied across all personnel on Galway County Councils payroll (excluding pensioners) for 2010. The value of the pay reduction reflected in the budget is approximately € 2 M.

During 2009 Galway County Council has increased its focus on cost reduction. An organisational efficiency review was undertaken under the auspices of the Workplace Partnership Committee, a joint initiative of Management and Unions. Numerous recommendations have been brought forward. A significant amount of savings have been obtained in areas such as energy efficiency and cost reduction, office rental costs, phone costs, procurement of chemicals and road making materials and machinery, office consumables etc. This work will continue in 2010 and Mr. Paul Ridge, Director of Service will be re-assigned to lead the analysis and implementation of the recommendations of the efficiency review from January.

The year 2009 has seen a substantial reduction in the staff resource available to the Council, arising from non-renewal of temporary contracts, implementation of the incentivised scheme of early retirement, and incentivised career break scheme, retirement of staff and resignations, non-replacement of staff who leave whether permanently or for temporary absences such as maternity leave.

During 2009 the following reductions in staff numbers have occurred.

Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement

A total of 17 applications have been approved. 13 staff members have already retired from the organisation, with the remainder to retire in 2010.

Incentivised Career break Scheme.

Galway County Council has granted 4 applications received under this scheme.

Retirement of other eligible staff

There were 46 retirements in 2009

Non-renewal of temporary contracts

The continued non-renewal of temporary contracts has given rise to further reductions in staffing numbers as current contracts expire, amounting to 82

The combined impact of these measures indicate that there has been an overall reduction in staffing number of 145 in 2009. Replacement of any of these posts will be limited to a small number of essential posts e.g. some positions in the Fire Service, where redeployment is not an option, where the post is still required and where specific sanction is received from the Department of the Environment and funding is available. Reductions in staffing levels since mid 2008 amount to 185, of which 103 were indoor staff and 82 outdoor. This reduction in staffing levels will require the re-organisation and restructuring of council services. This re-organisation will reflect changed levels of activity in the various Council services, expectations regarding capital expenditure, increased demands in many areas arising from directives / legislation governing Health & Safety, Environmental Protection and Risk Management and changes required in the operation of certain services e.g. housing leasing. As resources reduce, it will be essential

to prioritise essential services in the assignment of staff and have realistic expectations regarding the levels of service that can be sustained.

Local Government Efficiency Review Group

The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr. John Gormley T.D. announced on 10 December 2009 the establishment of a Local Government Efficiency Review Group to review the cost base, expenditure of and numbers employed in local authorities.

The Terms of Reference for the Group are:

To review the cost base, expenditure of and numbers employed in local authorities with a view to reporting on:

- specific recommendation to reduce costs;
- the effectiveness of particular programmes;
- optimal efficiency in the way programmes are delivered; and,
- any other proposals to enhance value for money in the delivery of services at local level.

The Group will take account of Government policy on local government organisation, reform and finances, the public service context set by the Task Force on the Public Service and associated Government Statement, necessary legal compliance by local authorities particularly in relation to environmental requirements, public health, and health and safety; and the need to achieve rebalance in the public finances.

The Minister confirmed that there will be a comprehensive consultation process involving the key stakeholders, including government Departments/Agencies, local authorities, business and local authority representative groups and the general public.

There will be wide representation on the Group to oversee the work and it will consist of representatives from the business community, Government Departments/Agencies and local authorities and people who have wide experience in central and local government. The Group will be chaired by Mr. Pat McLoughlin, Business Consultant and former Deputy Chief Executive of the Health Services Executive.

The Group is expected to complete its work by mid-2010.

(4) New Requirements and Standards

When I was appointed as County Manager in 2007, members expressed the view that a particular focus of attention should be the water services area. This area received priority in the last two budgets and this approach will continue. The Council must ensure that water and waste water services comply with the standards being set at EU and National level. Capital investment is required in the Remedial Action List for water and to meet expectations in relation to waste water provision. Water conservation programmes must also continue to be prioritised as they ensure efficiency improvements.

However, the Council must also prioritise the operation and maintenance of plants to fulfill our legal obligations and protect public health and meet the costs of running new and upgraded facilities.

The Draft Budget includes provision of €27.6m for the Water Services Division. This represents an increase of 13.6% on the provision for 2009. This cost continues to increase, in spite of significant cost savings achieved in 2009 in the area of energy and chemicals.

During 2009, resources were applied to the implementation of the Water Services Investment Programme, improvement of the operation and maintenance function and the advancing of the programme of remedial measures to address the immediate deficiencies and address compliance issues.

The increase in costs can be accounted for by a number of elements.

- (i) Requirement for improved operation, maintenance and management.
- (ii) Take-over of Group Water Schemes
- (iii) More complex treatment processes
- (iv) Sludge Disposal costs
- (v) New and upgraded plants coming on stream
- (vi) DBO plants.
- (vii) Loan charges

Cost increases in excess of €1m apply in this case for new plants.

National Water Pricing Policy

Galway County Council, in 2009, has borrowed almost €20m to cover the cost of capital investment which is not met by the DoE in the context of the National Water Pricing Policy. The cost of servicing water services borrowing in 2010 is estimated at €2.5m, an increase of €1.3m on 2009.

In accordance with the National Water Pricing Policy, the costs incurred in the provision of water services are intended to be met through charging the non-domestic consumer the economic cost of production for the proportion attributable to this sector, with the balance in respect of the domestic sector being recouped through the Local Government Fund. The implementation of this approach indicates that Galway County Councils' current charge for water and wastewater is significantly lower than the actual costs incurred.

In addition, while the water services section has worked to stabilise operating costs in 2009, the Local Government Fund has reduced by 2.2%. There is therefore a significant shortfall in funding for the increasing cost of water services, which is unsustainable.

The Draft Budget includes an income provision of €750,000 as an estimated contribution from the Department of the Environment to meet the increasing costs associated with the cost of supplying water services to the domestic sector.

The issue of under recovery from the non-domestic sector must also be addressed, in line with the National Water Pricing Policy.

Trends in cost of operation and maintenance of water services

	2004	2005	2006	2007	Estimated 2008

O&M	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Water	4835	5454	5400	7642	8157
Waste Water	1556	1869	2280	2992	3322
Total	6391	7323	7680	10634	11479

Note:
With
the

implementation of the new costings system, including the apportionment of divisional overheads and central management charges, it is necessary to restate the water and waste water budgeted figures for comparison purposes with the equivalent figures as set out hereunder.

	2008 (as restated)	Budget 2009	Budget 2010
O&M	€'000	€'000	€'000
Water	11,445	13,968	14,000
Waste Water	4,225	4,656	6,425
Total	15,670	18,624	20,425

Trends in Charging

Charge per M ³	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Water	0.66	0.73	0.73	0.80	0.89	1.00	1.10
Waste Water	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.50	0.61	1.07	1.18
Consolidated	0.73	0.80	0.80	1.30	1.50	2.07	2.28

The full implementation of the National Water Pricing Policy would require a charging level as follows:

- Water €1.71
- Waste Water €2.90

In the context of the current economic climate, it is proposed to move towards full cost recovery in compliance with national requirements, on a phased basis. Having regard to the difficult economic climate, it is proposed that the water charge increases for 2010 be limited to 10% which is far less than that required to achieve full cost recovery as indicated above.

In the context of the implementation of the Water Pricing Policy and the under-recovery in Galway County, the commercial water users are being subsidised and this restricts the availability of resources for other services. In addition, it will impact on the Council's capacity to co-fund new Capital investment which is needed to ensure the legal compliance standards are met.

Other service improvement costs will also arise when the new library in Tuam is opened in early 2010. Cost increases are also arising due to retirements, resulting in an increase of more than €1m euro in the necessary provision for 2010.

Commercial Rates

In view of the difficult trading conditions for many businesses at present, it is not proposed to increase the rate multiplier for 2010. Members are reminded that the

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commercial rate in County Galway is significantly less than comparator Counties e.g. Mayo, Donegal, Kerry. The provision for refunds and irrecoverable rates in 2010 has also been increased.

Cost Reduction

In order to deliver a balanced Draft Budget for the consideration of Council, it has been necessary to reprioritise work and identify efficiency improvements. The following tables set out the expenditure and income breakdown proposed for 2010.

EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME GROUP	Adopted Budget 2009	Estimated Outturn 2009	Draft Budget 2010
	€	€	€
Housing and Building	12,014,184	11,756,449	11,621,417
Road Transportation & Safety	52,583,736	41,777,745	39,089,311
Water Services	24,293,133	25,279,074	27,600,799
Development Management	11,249,058	9,252,717	8,439,110
Environmental Services	18,994,207	18,829,384	18,221,687
Recreation & Amenity	8,096,178	8,066,816	8,239,509
Agriculture, Education Health & Welfare	20,593,350	22,672,188	24,377,509
Miscellaneous Services	7,766,816	8,048,987	11,408,271
Total	155,590,662	145,683,360	148,997,613

In the Draft Budget, the estimated Revenue Income anticipated is as follows: -

Estimated Revenue Income	2009		2010	
	€	%	€	%
Local Government Fund	38,114,833	25	32,787,941	22
Pension Related Deduction	0	0	2,600,000	2
NPPR	0	0	1,800,000	1
State Grants & Subsidies	64,981,798	42	57,079,187	38
Non-Domestic Water Charges	5,062,828	3	4,137,500	3
Local Determined Income	30,131,014	19	29,287,075	20
Other Income	17,300,189	11	21,305,910	14
	155,590,662	100	148,997,613	100

Expenditure Adjustments

The following table sets out the principal variances between the Budget for 2009 and 2010.

Service	Service Description	2010	2009	Change
		€	€	€

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A07	RAS Programme	1,963,984	1,300,105	663,879
B				
Division	Road Transport & Safety	39,089,311	52,583,736	(13,494,425)
C02	Waste Water Treatment	6,425,959	4,656,472	1,769,487
C03	Collection of Water & Waste Water Charges	1,689,367	934,981	754,386
C06	Support to Water Capital Programme	1,532,767	1,201,431	331,336
D01	Forward Planning	761,860	1,167,993	(406,133)
D02	Development Management	3,516,563	4,153,208	(636,645)
D09	Economic Development and Promotion	709,327	1,588,930	(879,603)
E09	Maintenance of Burial Grounds	695,456	869,834	(174,378)
E11	Operation of Fire Service	11,134,499	11,251,008	(116,509)
G05	Educational support Services	22,281,279	18,207,591	4,073,588
H01	Machinery Yard	3,000,000	0	3,000,000
	Subtotal of above	92,800,272	97,915,289	(5,115,017)
	Total Expenditure	148,997,613	155,590,662	(6,593,049)

The increase in the RAS programme reflects the expansion of this service and is funded by the Department, the reduction in the roads division reflects the reduced grants notified in 2009 and payroll reductions, the increase in water costs reflects the operation of new plants and increased loan charges, the reduction in Service D09 again reflects a reduction in grant funding. Service G09 contains the payment of HEG grants and VEC pensions and are fully funded, whilst service H01 is a contra item i.e. the Council has matching income of €3M with both expenditure and income now reflected under the new costing of services format of the budget.

As you will note from the table, the budgetary strategy continues the prioritisation of water services to meet rising operation and maintenance costs. This is essential to ensure improvements in water quality, environmental protection and compliance with the law.

Many of the costs incurred by the Council are non-discretionary costs in that they must be spent on particular services, for example, Higher Education Grants, loan charges, statutory demands, pensions etc. The scope for reduction in costs and expenditure is therefore limited to discretionary items.

There has been a reduction in activity in the development management area which is reflected in proposed cost reductions and a reduction in provision for forward planning.

Galway County Council has a strong tradition of supporting the various voluntary and community activities throughout the County across the range of services e.g. Golden Mile and other heritage activities, festivals and arts activities, economic and tourism activities. Galway County Council will continue to support Community activity through the work of the staff of the Community, Enterprise and Economic Development section and Heritage section and by the retention of grants at the level agreed in the adopted budget for 2009.

Work will continue in areas such as the RAPID programme, Sports Partnership, tourism promotion, bio-diversity initiatives etc.

A significant reduction of €0.75 m in the allocation to county roads from the Councils' own resources is also necessary and will impact on the level of activity in 2010. As in other years, a full picture will emerge following the notification of grants from the Department of Transport and the NRA to allow compilation of the Roads Works programme for 2010.

In recent years significant resources have been assigned to the Library Service, with an expansion in service availability and hours of operation. It is a valued service in communities throughout the City and County. A large proportion of the cost of the library service is in payroll and establishment areas. In order to achieve savings in 2009 it was necessary to substantially reduce the library book fund. However, such a reduction could not be sustained over a number of years. Therefore, the 2010 budget includes provision to partially restore the fund to €450,000.

Non Rates Income

Non – Principal Private Residences (NPPR)

In July 2009, a €200 charge was introduced on non-principal private residences. The effective liability date for the charges was 31st July 2009, following the enactment of the legislation. The Local Government Management Association has collected the charge on a shared service basis for local authorities. A project board comprised of local authority officials has overseen the implementation of the charges. The legislation provides for self-certification and penalties for late payment. The vast majority of payments have been made on-line, reducing overhead costs. The estimated revenue for Galway County Council for 2009 was €1.8m and this level of income has been substantially achieved. This new source of Local Government funding is very welcome in these difficult times. The Draft budget includes a similar target for 2010. The Council has commenced the process of identifying any properties to which the levy applies and which have not yet been paid and this will be pursued further in 2010. Anyone who believes they may have a liability to discharge it without delay as the level of penalties that accrue are substantial.

Income sources from planning fees and fire safety certificates have seen significant reductions in 2009 and it anticipated that this reduced level of income will continue in 2010.

Capital Investment in Infrastructure

The capital programme for the three year period 2010 – 2012 is attached to this report. This report has been informed by the availability of resources and consequently is less ambitious than previous programmes. The sources of funding for capital are linked to Government grants and in the recent budget the Minister has indicated that:

Housing

- €1.1 billion for housing measures. The innovative move towards leasing of housing available in the market reduces the need for construction. Overall housing budget will deliver some 9,000 new housing units for households in need of housing in 2010
- €80 million is being provided for housing adaptations grants for older people and people with disability.
- Funding for energy efficiency retrofitting programme in the public housing stock doubles to €40.

Water Services

- €508 million (no cut) to continue high level investment in water services infrastructure. New three year capital investment programme to be announced by the Minister shortly to prioritise key requirements county wide.
- Investment in the upgrading of rural water schemes to continue.
- Water metering for households to be implemented to promote more efficient use of water. This will provide a fair basis for a charging system based on consumption with a free allowance.

The Council awaits more detailed information from the DoE in relation to these issues. The funding for the development of the National Roads will be dependent on allocations from the NRA and the Department of Transport. Other funding sources which the Council utilises to fund capital investment are contributions from other bodies, Development Contributions and borrowing. Members will be aware that income from development contributions has been severely curtailed. In addition, our capacity to borrow and meet the resulting payments will prove problematic into the future unless the level of resources available is altered.

Therefore our capacity to deliver the capital programme will be impacted.

Conclusion

The preparation of the draft Annual Budget for 2010 has been difficult, in the context of increasing costs and responsibilities and services standards, with a reduced resource available. I believe that the proposed Draft Budget will allow Galway County Council to deliver the optimum provision of core services in 2010, within available resources. The proposed gross expenditure of €149m together with the capital programme spend estimated at €300 m, represents a very considerable investment of public monies in the development of the county and delivery of services throughout the County.

If resources were available, there are many other valuable areas of activity the Council would wish to engage in. However, we must now adapt to the challenge of delivering with less resources. We will continue to advance the capital infrastructure programmes, particularly in roads and water services, which will contribute to improve the competitiveness of County Galway. As you will see from the reports of the Directors of Service, much progress was made in 2009 and will continue in 2010.

She thanked the elected members and staff of the Council for their co-operation and support during 2009. She wished to record her appreciation to the Mayor, Cllr. Tom McHugh and former Mayor Cllr. Peter Feeney for their commitment to the special

responsibilities of the office of Mayor and their courtesy and co-operation in doing the business of the Council and also wished to acknowledge the assistance of the Corporate Policy Group in the discussion on the draft budget.

She wished to thank the Council's Directors of Service and their staff for their rigorous examination of budget items for 2010 and for identifying areas for efficiency improvement and cost saving. In particular, she acknowledged the work of Mr. Ger Mullarkey, Michael McGovern and the staff in the Finance Unit. She stated the preparation of the Draft Budget this year has been particularly onerous and has been approached in a most meticulous manner and thanked all involved in delivering the draft budget.

She stated the year 2010 will undoubtedly be a challenging one for Galway County Council but is confident that with support of the Members, Management Team, and colleagues, will provide valuable services in 2010 to meet the needs of the citizens and adapt flexibly to the changes required.

She then recommended the draft budget for adoption.

Mr. Mullarkey referred the Members to the detailed tables on the draft budget and went through the key differences between the 2009 and the draft 2010 budget.

There were concerns expressed, questions asked and clarifications sought by the Members on the following:

The freeze on rates and the efficiency review were welcomed but concern was expressed at the proposal to increase commercial water charges by 10%.

It was suggested that initiatives in the area of water harvesting and conservation be explored.

It was pointed out that the Council rely on businesses to pay for rates and water charges however, we need to look at ways to stimulate business for them.

Tributes were paid to the outdoor staff who worked so hard over the past few weeks due to adverse weather conditions and the issue of provision of funding for such emergencies was raised.

Clarification was sought on the decline in budgeted income for water charges.

The proposed investment in water services was welcomed, however, concern was expressed at the proposed reduction in local roads funding as well as the proposed reduction in the contribution for burial ground maintenance.

The decline in staff numbers and the impact this will have on delivery of services was raised.

The need to review development charges was raised and its impact on small operators.

An update on the collection of the Non Principal Private Residence (NPPR) charge was sought.

The increase in the housing waiting list was raised and a request was made to discuss the new leasing scheme proposed by the Department

A review of the waste management facility in Ballinasloe was requested as it was felt that this excellent facility was being underutilized.

Clarification on the number of Dog Wardens employed was sought.
Progress on upgrading the Tonabruckey water reservoir (Galway City West WSS) was requested.

The Council needs to be able to ensure the quality of water provided before charging for it as consumers do not mind paying for good quality water.

The lack of funding from the CLAR programme was queried.

Clarification on the Service Support Costs was raised.

The proposed increase in the book fund which had been adversely impacted in the 2009 budget was welcomed.

Progress on remedial works in the Clifden and Roundstone areas where watersupply had been adversely affected in recent months was raised.

Clarification on the cost of financing in the water services division was sought.

Clarification on the standing charge for water meters was raised

Responses to the issues raised were as follows:

In response to issues raised re water income / cost of collection of water charges Mr Mullarkey advised that the 2009 budget included a contribution from Galway City of €1.2M which would not be repeated in 2010 and that the 2010 budget had prudently provided a bad debt provision of €0.7M which had not been provided for in 2009. In relation to the collection of water charges it was noted that after the change in 2006 from fixed charges to metered charges a definite campaign was undertaken by certain customers not to pay the charges, resulting in a significant build up of arrears, the situation was further compounded by the delays in issuing bills due to the Cryptosporidium incident and as a result the Council were always in a catch up situation. Significant progress has been made in 2009 with collection amounts up by €0.5M and we are continuing to work with the agent to seek further improvement in this area.

In response to the NPPR queries it was clarified that the basis of the levy was one of self declaration, i.e. the onus was on the property owner to register with and pay the local authority the €200 levy. However it was noted that the Council were building up a database based on information supplied by the PRTB and other sources (and would welcome any additional information from the members to assist in completing this database). It was highlighted again the significant penalties that can be incurred due to non payment.

In response to the reduction in roads funding it was clarified that the 2010 budget was based on our actual allocations for 2009 which were €10M below the adopted estimates for 2009 and that it would be early February before actual allocations for 2010 would be available. The balance of the reduction in funding in the roads division was largely due to the reduction in payroll costs announced in the December national budget.

The service support costs included in each sub service was the allocation of central management charges to each service. Central management charges such as IT Services,

HR, Finance, office accommodation etc are pooled and then allocated to each sub service under the costing format.

In relation to the cost of financing in the water services division it was clarified that almost €20M had been borrowed in 2009 to fund the Councils contribution towards the provision of infrastructure and remedial works and that the provision of €2.5M reflected the cost of repaying both the principal and interest on these borrowings.

In relation to CLAR funding it was clarified that the Budget for 2010, with the exception of small piers and harbours, did not provide for any funding under this heading as none had materialized in 2009. It was explained that should funding become available that Council would seek to divert funding from local roads to provide any matching contributions required.

In response as to whether the budget had made any provision for emergencies similar to those experienced in late 2009 it was clarified that no specific provision had been included in the budget for 2010, but that in 2009 the Department had made a fund available to assist local authorities with the additional costs incurred and that Galway County Council had drawn down €3M from this fund in 2009. It was anticipated that if such an emergency occurred in 2010 similar funding arrangements would be put in place by the Department.

In response to queries raised re specific water schemes Mr Cullen advised that approval was awaited from the DOE for the contract documents for the Galway City West water supply scheme. He agreed that it was important that that scheme commence so as to secure the long term provision of water supply to the Bearna and Moycullen areas. He advised that the current temporary supply of Moycullen from Oughterard and Barna from An Spidéal were unsustainable in the long term. He noted that the Mid Galway scheme was under severe pressure over the Christmas period but that the Council were continuing to work with the Group scheme trustees to address problems in the area.

In response to queries on the standing charge for water meters, Mr Cullen explained that the Council had to borrow €8M to fund the installation of meters in the lead up to the metering of non domestic customers and that the standing charge was collected to fund the repayment of this loan. He further clarified that the pricing structure for the standing charges had been amended following representations from the Members in order to allow for a lower charge for those customers who had multiple connections.

In response to the queries on Dog Wardens Mr Cullen explained that there had been 3 dog warden posts, He confirmed that he was in discussion with the HR Department in relation to the filling of the two posts vacant currently while being mindful of the current embargo on recruitment.

It was proposed by Cllr Mullins and seconded by Cllr McDonagh and agreed

PROPOSAL TO AMEND DRAFT BUDGET

227

It was proposed by Cllr M Mullins, seconded by Cllr J Mc Donagh, to amend the draft budget for 2010 as follows:

1. to reduce the proposed increase in water charges from 10% to 5% which would result in a reduction in income of €192,500

The reduction in income of €192,500 to be funded as follows:

- C0301: Reduce the provision for bad debts by €50,000
- D0905: Reduce the provision for economic development by €30,000
- E1101: Reduce the provision for legal costs by €30,000
- E0901: Reduce the capital fund for burial grounds by €32,500
- H0904: Reduce the provision for members conferences by €30,000
- F0204: Reduce the provision for the book fund by €20,000

As agreement was not reached in this regard a vote was taken.

Voting on the proposal was as follows:

AR SON: Cllr Broderick, Cllr Carroll, Cllr. Connaughton, Cllr. Cuddy, Cllr. Feeney, Cllr. Finnerty, Cllr. Hoade, Cllr. Keaveney, Cllr. Kyne, Cllr. Maher, Cllr. E. Mannion, Cllr. T. Mannion, Cllr. McClearn, Cllr. Mc Donagh, Cllr. Mc Hugh, Cllr. Mullins, Cllr. Roche, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, Cllr. T. Walsh, Cllr. Welby, Cllr. Willers (21)

IN AGHAIDH: Cllr Canney, Cllr. D. Connolly, Cllr. M. Connolly, Comh. S Ó Cuaig, Comh. T. Ó Curraoin, Cllr. Fahy, Cllr. Hynes (7)

The motion was declared carried

ADOPTION OF BUDGET 2010

228

It was proposed by Cllr. Mullins and seconded by Cllr. McDonagh and agreed

“That Galway County Council hereby adopt the draft budget, as amended, for the financial year ended 31/12/2010”

DETERMINATION OF THE ANNUAL RATE OF VALUATION OF 2010

229

It was proposed by Cllr Mullins and seconded by Cllr McDonagh and agreed

“That Galway County Council hereby determine in accordance with the Budget for the Financial Year ending 31/12/2010, the rates as set out in Table A and C, as amended, to be the Rates on Valuation to be levied for the several purposes as set out in those tables for the Financial Year ending 31/12/2010”

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE AND INCOME OUTTURN FOR 2009 230

It was proposed by Cllr Mullins and seconded by Cllr Keaveney and agreed

“That Galway County Council approves the estimated expenditure and outturn figures for 2009 as set out in the Budget documentation”.

The County Manager thanked the Members for supporting the Draft Budget.

The Mayor thanked the Co Manager and staff for the preparation of the Budget 2010. However, he said he was disappointed that there was nothing in the budget for unemployment in the county.

He proposed that “Galway Co Co make a submission to the Department of the Environment Heritage & Local Government for funding in the amount of €4m to put in place a Home Improvement Grant Aid Scheme. The purpose of the scheme is to create employment and to upgrade existing housing stock with special emphasis on energy efficiency. The scheme to be applicable to all privately owned houses, grant aid to be a maximum of 40% of total cost of works. Administration of the scheme to be by Galway County Council. This scheme to be a pilot scheme specific to County Galway.”

This was seconded by Cllr. T. Walsh and agreed.

The County Manager indicated her support for the proposal.

MAYOR'S BUSINESS 231

The members raised concerns regarding difficulties being experienced around the county due to lack of water supply and water quality as a result of the severe weather conditions, particularly in the following areas –

The Mid Galway Regional and Group Water Schemes.
Carna, Rosmuc, Rossaveal, Tiernea. Roundstone and Ballinasloe.

Mr. Cullen in reply indicated that the County Council had provided water tankers to affected areas, and water has now been restored to some areas. In relation to the Mid Galway Schemes he indicated that there were two schemes involved here the Mid Galway Regional Water Supply Scheme and the Mid Galway Groups Water Supply. The main area still experiencing difficulty seems to be the Group Scheme as the water being supplied from the Regional Schemes is not getting to part of the Group Scheme. Arrangements have been made to meet with the Trustees of the Group Scheme tomorrow to discuss the situation. It is not possible at the current time to take over the Group

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Water Scheme due to its current condition. However, the Council will work with them in the hope that the scheme can be improved and can be taken in charge.

In response to a query raised by An Comh. O Cuaig regarding Costello Regional Water Supply Scheme, Mr. Cullen confirmed that Galway County Council will have a technical and legal team at the Oral Hearing on the 26th January.

Mr. Cullen thanked Council Staff who had worked on a 24 hour basis since Christmas Eve in order to deal with water supply issues.

Mr. Gilmore gave an update on the roads situation and he advised that while there is no shortage of grit, the supply of salt is of concern. However, the Council has a gritting programme in place on all strategic routes. The NRA have arranged for importation of salt on a national basis.

The Members pointed out that the condition of the roads was down to weather conditions and that there was a responsibility on road users to be careful on the roads.

CRIOCHANAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN

Submitted, Approved + Signed

Tom McDonagh

25th January 2010

DATE

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Ms. Sadie Mc... Church Street, Co. Galway
- Ms. Margaret... Douglas, Galway
- Mrs Della Mac... Michael Ferry, Mannionard, Ardaraun, Co. Galway
- Ms. Ann... Tullinadaly, Tinn, Co. Galway
- Mrs. Christy Nevin, Killaghnore, K. Journal, Ballinacloe, Co. Galway
- Mrs. Peg Salmon, Cleaghmore, Ballinacloe, Co. Galway

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS

The Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 21st November 2009, were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, and seconded by Cllr. Molloy.