

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT ARAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY ON MONDAY, 28th FEBRUARY, 2011

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. J. McClearn.

ILATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, L. Carroll, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, J. Cuddy, Comh S Ó Cuaig, Comh T. Ó Curraoin, Cllrs. M. Fahy, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, M. Maher, E. Mannion, T. Mannion, J. McDonagh, T. McHugh, 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. K Kelly, J. Cullen, F. Gilmore, Directors of Services, G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance, M. Dolly, M. Lavelle, E. Molloy, Senior Engineers, B. McDermott, County Secretary, A. Comer, A. Farrell, Senior Executive Officers, C. McConnell, Senior Planner, E. O' Doherty, Executive Planner, G. Kavanagh, Assistant Planner, P. Ó Neachtain, Oifigeach Gaeilge, M. McGrath, Senior Staff Officer.

O.P.W.

John Murphy
Richard Dooley

Thosaigh an cruinniú leis an bpaidir.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

608

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:-

Michael Molloy, Lydican, Carnmore, Oranmore, Co. Galway
Tom & Mary J. McQuinn, Portacarron, Oughterard, Co. Galway
Oliver Barrett, Caherona, Loughrea, Co. Galway
Mary Keane, Carramore, Clostoken, Loughrea, Co. Galway
Stephanie Kenny, Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway

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Patsy & Margaret Costello, Anbally, Cummer, Tuam

VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS

609

A vote of congratulations was extended to all the three former Councillors, Paul Connaughton, Colm Keaveney & Sean Kyne who were successful at the General Election and commiserations were extended to the unsuccessful candidates.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETING 610

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on the 24th January, 2011 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. Mullins, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

611

The Report of the Environment & Water Services SPC Meeting held on 20th October 2010 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. M. Mannion.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 9th November 2010 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Cllr. Finnerty.

Referring to the Loughrea Area Meeting and in response to an enquiry from Cllr. Fahy on the status of the new dual carriageway from Gort to Tuam, the County Manager advised that this issue was a matter for the NRA. However, she confirmed that the NRA are still in negotiations with interested bidders.

The Report of the Roads & Transportation SPC Meeting held on 25th November 2010 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Ó Curraoin seconded by Cllr. D. Roche.

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

612

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, and seconded by Cllr. Maher, 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 R347 in the townland of Newford, Athenry, Co. Galway and extending north for a distance of 560 metres in the townlands of Newford and Ballygarraun, Athenry, Co. Galway and finishing at approximately 145 metres east of the M6 overbridge on the R348 in the townland of Ballygarraun, Athenry, Co. Galway.

Electoral Area: Loughrea

TO CONSIDER THE MANAGER'S REPORT ON SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON THE AMENDMENTS AND MATERIAL ALTERATIONS TO THE TUAM DRAFT LOCAL AREA PLAN PREPARED AS PER SECTION 20 (3) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AS AMENDED BY SECTION 9 (G) (II) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT) ACT 2002

613

The Mayor invited Mr. Kelly to present to the Members the Manager's Report on the submissions received on the Amendments and Material Alterations to the Tuam Draft Local Area Plan.

Mr. Kelly stated that the Members had previously considered and agreed most issues but had raised a query in relation to the recommendation in the Manager's report in respect of Submission No 5 from the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG). The recommendation was 'to amend the zoning into Phase 1 and Phase 2 as per the attached map and revise relevant tables accordingly and also revise sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.6 and other areas for consequential wording amendments.

Mr. Kelly explained that in the intervening period since the January Council Meeting, a further meeting of the Tuam Area Committee took place. He outlined to the Members the consequential amendments to the text and tables in order to fully reflect the recommendation in the Manager's report presented to the Members at the January 2011 Council meeting.

He added that details of the existing live planning permissions on the subject lands had also been listed and mapped as requested by the Members at the last Council Meeting.

He explained that the basis for the document presented at the meeting was to clarify the approach to the issues raised by the Members at the last Council meeting in relation to the Submission No. 5 from the DoEHLG. He added that if required, residential development can be considered, in a phased manner on some R2 lands where it is apparent that R1 lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period. The requirement for this will be dependent on the level of growth being experienced in Phase 1 lands and where required, consideration will generally be given to Phase 2 lands that are contiguous to existing residentially developed lands, lie within 800m of the town centre; are within 400m of neighbourhood centres; are within 1500m of the town centre and; thereafter in remaining areas subject to normal servicing and planning considerations. He explained that Residential R2 lands outside the Tuam Bypass or the route of the Inner Relief Road were not considered to be suitable for development within the lifetime of the plan as previously outlined. Mr. Kelly recommended that the Members adopt the Tuam Local Area plan as agreed at the January Council meeting together with the textual amendments and amendments to the tables presented to the Members at the meeting.

On the proposed of Cllr. Canney and seconded by Cllr Hoade it was agreed to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report.

On the proposal of Cllr. Canney and seconded by Cllr Hoade it was agreed to adopt the Tuam Local Area Plan 2011-2017 in accordance with the Manager's report as amended by the Members.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 – CIVIC AMENITY AREA AND ASSOCIATED SITE WORKS AT COSTELLO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, DERRYNEA, COSTELLO, CO. GALWAY – LA17/10 614

Report dated the 4th February, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

It was proposed by an Comh. Ó Tuairisg, seconded by an Comh. Ó Curraoin and agreed, to approve the Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – Civic amenity area and associated site works at Casla Industrial estate, Doire an Fhéich, Casla, Co. Galway – LA17/10.

In response to Comh. Ó Tuairisg's query, Mr. Cullen indicated that it is hoped that work will commence this year and that the facility will be operational next year.

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING RESERVOIR AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW RESERVOIR AND ASSOCIATED SITE DEVELOPMENT WORKS AT MAUMEEN TD, LETTERMULLEN, CO. GALWAY IN RESPECT OF COMHAR CHUIGEAL (LEITIR MELLAIN) TEORANTA 615

Report dated the 14th February, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

It was proposed by an Comh. Ó Tuairisg, seconded by an Comh. Ó Curraoin and agreed, to approve the report under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – Demolition of existing reservoir and construction of a new reservoir and associated site development works at Maumeen Td. Lettermullen, Co. Galway in respect of Comhar Chuigeal (Leitir Mellain) Teoranta

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW DWELLING HOUSE AT CARTRON, BALLYGAR, CO. GALWAY 616

Report dated the 17th February, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

It was proposed by Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Canney and agreed, to approve the report under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of a new dwelling house at Cartron, Ballygar, Co. Galway

TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 – EXTENSION TO RINVILLE BURIAL GROUND, RINVILLE, ORANMORE, CO. GALWAY 617

Report already circulated to each Member.

It was proposed by Cllr. Carroll, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy and agreed, to approve the report under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – Extension to Rinville Burial Ground, Rinville, Oranmore, Co. Galway

AGREEMENT WITH MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL PURSUANT TO SECTION 85 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 – NATIONAL ROADS BRIDGE PROGRAMME 618

Report dated the 24th February, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. Mannion, seconded by Cllr. Noone and agreed, to approve the Agreement with Mayo County Council pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 – National Roads Bridge Programme

AGREEMENT WITH SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL PURSUANT TO SECTION 85 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 – NATIONAL ROADS BRIDGE PROGRAMME 619

Report dated the 24th February, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

It was proposed by Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Feeney and agreed, to approve the Agreement with Sligo County Council pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 – National Roads Bridge Programme

It was agreed to take Item No. 15 at this point

AUDIT REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2009 620

The Mayor invited Mr. Mullarkey to present the Audit Report on the Accounts and Annual Financial Statement for Galway County Council for the year ending 31st December 2009

Report dated the 14th February, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

Mr. Mullarkey confirmed that there was no amendment to the accounts as presented to the July 2010 meeting of the Council and which had since been audited.

It was proposed by Cllr. Mullins, seconded by Cllr. Carroll to adopt the Audit Report on the Accounts and Annual Financial Statement for Galway County Council for the year ending 31st December 2009.

PRESENTATION BY OPW

621

Mr. John Murphy, OPW, gave a very informative and detailed presentation of the works the OPW were carrying out as a response to incidents of the 2009 flooding in County Galway. He advised of the detail of the works that were to be carried out on the Clare, Clarin, Suck and Shannon Rivers and also the status of various schemes that were being progressed in conjunction with Galway County Council. Mr. Murphy stated that €3.5M had been spent on works in 2010 and that the close cooperation with Galway County Council would continue in 2011. He also advised of the appropriate procedure for the members and the public to bring any new proposals to the attention of the Council and OPW for minor works scheme via the local Council Area Engineer.

The Mayor thanked Messrs. Murphy and Dooley for their presentations and invited questions from the members.

A questions and answers session followed. The Members complimented the OPW and Galway County Council for the work that had been planned and completed and also Minister of State, Martin Manseragh for providing funding for these essential works. Concerns were raised over some specific projects and areas of work and also the continuance of funding that had been promised by the previous government. Concerns were also raised about the length of time some procedures took and other future problems in the Corrib. Clarifications were given that any mention of relocations in various reports were the responsibility of the Department of Social Protection. It was also clarified that there were three general criteria for proposals for the minor works scheme being 1) Cost/Benefit, 2) Environmental issues, 3) Various stakeholders & agencies involved.

The Mayor read the following proposal from Cllr. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. McClearn, Cllr. T. Mannion and Cllr. Canney;

“I propose that Galway County Council calls on Taoiseach elect Enda Kenny TD to establish one body namely OPW to take managerial control of all Shannon Waterways and advance works on the Shannon System as a matter of priority”.

A short discussion took place around the issue of various Castles and Houses around the County that were not accessible to the Public. It was stated that there was significant tourism potential in opening up these facilities but that there was a difficulty in accessing them and that they were not available to the general public. It was agreed that the matter would be considered and placed as an agenda item for the appropriate committee.

FLOODING UPDATE

622

Report dated the 25th February, 2011 was circulated to each Member.

It was proposed by the Mayor and agreed by the members present that the issues relating to this agenda item had been dealt with under the previous agenda item.

TO APPROVE DRAFT ROADS PROGRAMME 2011

623

Report was circulated to each Member.

The Mayor invited Mr. Gilmore to present Draft Roads Programme 2011.

Mr. Gilmore outlined the funding that was available for the annual roads programme in his report stating that although there was a 10% reduction in allocations for regional and local roads, overall the grants were welcomed particularly in the context of the current economic difficulties. It was noted that the funding for Major and Interurban Routes had reduced due to the completion of various projects. He stated that considerable damage has been done to the road network and that the condition of the network had deteriorated significantly due to the very severe winter weather conditions experienced. Approaches had been made to the NRA for flexibility and discretion in the way roads grants were spent by Galway County Council. He stated that some concessions had been received in how the monies could be spent and that this would help with restoration work. He also stated that it was preferable to spend a proportion of the allocations on strengthening work prior to resurfacing work. He also outlined that a significant amount of surface dressing and maintenance work was being carried out since the start of the year.

In conclusion he stated that the Roads Programme had been presented to each Electoral Area Committee and now to the full Council.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. Mannion, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed to approve the Draft Roads Programme 2011.

A questions and answers session followed. Several members complimented the work of the outdoor workers and raised concerns over the manpower available to the Council to repair the current damage done to roads throughout the county. It was stated that it was taking a very long time to repair some roads and there were various queries as to how to increase outdoor staffing levels, the position of legal claims and how to educate the general public as to how roads deteriorate. Mr. Gilmore clarified that he was to meet with the Dept. of Transport to outline the difficulties there were in County Galway. He also stated that lack of funding was the major issue rather than a lack of manpower. He stated that better materials were being used for road repairs and that significant results were evident in this regard. He also clarified the procedure regarding legal claims and stated that the council were not liable for any damage resulting from a road that was in disrepair due to wear and tear or severe weather conditions.

Cllr. Feeney raised concerns over the separation of outdoor staff in the areas of Water & Roads throughout the County and that roads would deteriorate further due to this action. The County Manager clarified the current situation and explained that due to the legal responsibility the Council has as regards the provision of water there was an essential need to manage water services infrastructure throughout the County and manage the delivery of quality water services. She stated that some major water projects had to be progressed under the DoEHLG Remedial Action List, together

with funding in Water Conservation and Mains Rehabilitation. Continued and ongoing investment in this area is essential. However, she confirmed that the provision for roads were being catered for as part of the new structure and having regard to resource availability.

ROAD REPAIRS

624

Report was already circulated to each Member.

It was agreed by the meeting that this item had been dealt with under the previous item and ensuing discussion.

TO NOTE INDICATIVE PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR SPC AND COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD FOR 2011

625

Report was already circulated to each Member.

The Indicative Programme of Works for the SPC's and County Development Board for 2011 were noted by the Members.

MANAGERS BUSINESS

626

There were no items to be presented under Managers Business

MAYORS BUSINESS

627

Cllr. Liam Carroll congratulated the Manager and her staff on the achievement of the ISO 80000 quality mark.

A number of Members raised concerns they had with the Register of Electors and some discrepancies which had arisen during the course of the General Election campaign and on-polling day. There was a consensus that the way in which the register is compiled and edited needs to be reviewed and discussed in the appropriate forum. There were suggestions also that there should be a link with an individual's PPS numbers, that the location of polling stations be reviewed and realigned and that Island communities should cast their ballots on the same day as the rest of the County.

CONFERENCES

It was proposed by Cllr. Mullins, seconded by Cllr. Hoade and agreed that the list of conferences placed before the meeting would be approved for attendance by the members as required.

TGR Seminars – Time Management Success; Double your productivity & Double your time off – 21st – 23rd January – Maritime Hotel, Bantry, Co. Cork

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Cllr. T. Mannion

Kadenza Consultancies – Volcanic Ash, Major Flooding, Freezing Spells – Crises Impacts on Ireland – 21st – 23rd January – Silver Tassie Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Cllrs. P. Feeney, P. Hynes, S. Kyne, M. Fahy

National Economic & Social Council – Re-finding Success in Europe: The Challenge for Irish Institutions and Policy – 26th January – Royal College of Physicians, Kildare St., Dublin 2

Cllr. P. Hynes, Comh. S. Ó Tuairisg

TJK Conferences – Economic Seminar for Councillors – 28th – 29th January – Thomond Park, Limerick

Cllr P. Hynes, T. Walsh, Cllr. J. Mc Donagh, Cllr. P. Feeney

Esperanza Enterprises – Local Authority Water Supply – 28th – 30th January – Glenroyal Hotel, Maynooth, Co. Kildare

Cllr. M. Fahy

Kadenza Consultancies – Anti-Social Behaviour and Health & Safety – 4th – 5th February – Clonea Strand Hotel, Clonea, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford

Cllr. P. Hynes

Esperanza Enterprises – Renewable Heat Incentive – 4th – 6th February – Glenroyal Hotel, Maynooth, Co. Kildare

Cllr. M. Fahy

A.M.A.I. Spring Seminar 2011 – The Case for Municipal Government – 11th – 12th February – Westlodge Hotel, Bantry, Co. Cork

Cllr. M. Fahy, P. Hynes, M. Maher, T. Mannion

Health & Safety Authority – Taking Care of Business – Health & Safety for Small Business Owners – 16th February – Convention Centre, Dublin

Comh. S Ó Tuairisg

Colmcille Heritage Trust – 22nd Colmcille Winter School – The Future of the Irish Educational System – 25th – 27th February – Colmcille Heritage Centre, Gartan, Church Hill, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Cllr M. Fahy

**Carlow Tourism – 9th National Tourism Conference: A River Runs Through It
– 3rd – 5th March – Seven Oaks Hotel, Athy Road, Carlow**

Clr J. Mc Donagh, M. Fahy, P. Hynes, T. Mannion, M. Maher, T. Walsh, E.
Mannion, P. Feeney, T. McHugh

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 19 – CLLR. G. FINNERTY 628

The following reply was given:-

“The Council will erect some signage at particular locations after consulting with the Community Wardens.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 20 – CLLR. G. FINNERTY 629

The following reply was given:-

“It is hoped that the difficulties pertaining to this site will be resolved shortly.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 21 – CLLR. G. FINNERTY 630

The following reply was given:-

“The signage on the M18 motorway and at junctions is in compliance with the NRA standards with distances on signs measured to the Town Centre. The existing signage on the roundabout indicates that the centre of Gort is 1km away.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 22 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH 631

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council has recently signed contracts for six Rural Houses which have or will commence in 2011. The Housing Department is currently assessing applications on hand which will be subject to funding.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 23 – CLLR. M. FAHY 632

The following reply was given:-

“The process leading to the provision of a bus shelter in Ardrahan was not initiated by Galway County Council. It is a matter for the applicant to determine whether they now wish to proceed with the provision of the bus shelter on foot of the planning permission granted by the Council.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 24 – CLLR. M. FAHY

633

The following reply was given:-

“The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is presently reviewing a design review report they requested be prepared by Galway County Council.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 25 – CLLR. M. FAHY

634

The following reply was given:-

“The Craughwell Sewerage Scheme is not on the current Water Services Investment Programme 2010 – 2012. Further works to progress this scheme will be undertaken when the scheme is included in a future Water Services Investment Programme.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 26 – CLLR. P. ROCHE

635

The following reply was given:-

“Advance warning signs will be erected at the bridge approaches at this location.”

Chríochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Approved + Signed



28th March 2011

Date

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

A resolution of sympathy was also extended to the following:-

Family of the late Faron Hamon, Moycullen, former C.R.O., Western Health Board.

Martin Daniels, Correns, Loughrea, Co. Galway.

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT ARAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY ON MONDAY, 24th JANUARY, 2011

CATHAOIRLEACH:

Cllr. J. McClearn.

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, P. Connaughton, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, J. Cuddy, Comh S O'Cuaign, 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. Mc Donagh, T. Mc Hugh, 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. K. Kelly, J. Cullen, F. Gilmore, Directors of Services, G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance, M. Dolly, Senior Engineers, Ms. B. McDermott, County Secretary, Mr. A. Comer, A. Farrell, M. Owens, Senior Executive Officers, Ms. C. McConnell, Senior Planner, Ms. G. Kavanagh, E. O'Doherty, Planners, P. O'Neachtain, Oifigeach Gaeilge, Ms. Maura McGrath, Senior Staff Officer, R. O'Boyle, Staff Officer

I.D.A., Ireland.

Mr. Jim Murren, West Regional Manager.

Enterprise Ireland

Mr. Seamus Bree, Director West Region.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

585

A resolution of sympathy was also extended to the following:-

Family of the late Eamon Hannon, Moycullen, former C.E.O., Western Health Board.

Martin Daniels, Cosmona, Loughrea, Co. Galway.

Mrs. Dolan and Family, Lakefield, Gort, Co. Galway.
Seán Breathnach, Carraig Corr na Móna, Co. na Gaillimhe
Vincent & Mary O'Rourke, Corbane, New Inn, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
Quinn Family, Kiltackey, Boston, Tubber, Co. Clare
Ms. Teresa Kilmartin, Athlone Road, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
Louis Mac An Iomaire, Coill Sáile, Cill Chiaráin, Conamara, Co. na Gaillimhe.
Caitlín Bh Uí Fhatharta, Baile na hAbhann PO., Conamara, Co. na Gaillimhe.
Mrs. Mary Waters, Millpark, Cor Ná Móna, Co. na Gaillimhe.
Denis Maher, Isserkelly, Kilchreest, Loughrea, Co. Galway.

VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS

586

A vote of congratulations was extended to the Caltra/Cuans Ladies Football Team who won the All Ireland Junior Ladies Club Football Final at the weekend.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETING 587

Cllr. Broderick referred to the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the 17th December, 2010 and pointed out that the Minutes did not reflect an amendment requested by him "that he was not present at the Council Meeting of the 22nd November, 2010 when he was inadvertently listed as having abstained from a vote".

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on the 17th December, 2010 with above amendment were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. Mullins, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Referring to the Minutes of the Budget Meeting held on the 20th December, 2010 Ms. McDermott notified the Members of typographical errors in the Minutes on Page 18 which should be adjusted to read as follows:

FO2: Reduce the provision for the Operation of Library and Archival Service by €47,000.

HO3: Reduce the provision for the amount of Irrecoverable Rates by €50,000

The Minutes of the Budget Meeting held on the 20th December, 2010 with above adjustments were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy.

It was proposed by An Comh O Cuaig that the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government be asked to allow the Costello Regional Water Supply Scheme to proceed. This was seconded by An Comh O'Tuairisg and agreed

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

588

The Report of the Planning, Economic Development & Community SPC Meeting held on the 6th September, 2010 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Broderick, seconded by Cllr. Willers.

The Report of the Roads and Transportation SPC Meeting held on the 25th November, 2010 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Connaughton, seconded by Cllr. Feeney.

The Report of the Ballinasloe Area Committee held on the 7th September, 2010 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Mullins seconded by Cllr. D. Connolly.

The Report of the Loughrea Area Meeting held on the 7th September, 2010 was considered. It was adopted by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. Finnerty seconded by Cllr. Maher

Referring to the Loughrea Area Meeting, Cllr. Fahy enquired as to progress with regard to Place Names particularly in relation to the Irish name for Gort. Mr. Cullen pointed out that it was his understanding that the locals and elected Members in Gort were to prepare their case, in order to be prepared when the Department invites submissions in this regard. However, the Department has not yet sought submissions.

Arising from the minutes and in reply to a query raised by Cllr. Maher in relation to the safety at the proposed Swimming Pool site at Loughrea, Mr. Kelly stated that the Council had recently been in contact with the proposed developer informing him that in the absence of any progress, it will be necessary to carry out remedial works on the site.

DECLARATION OF ROADS TO BE PUBLIC ROADS – SECTION 11 OF ROADS ACT 1993 **589**

On the proposal of An Comh O’Cuaig, and seconded by An Comh O Tuairisg, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with.

Road extending existing Local Road L5218 in the townland of An Cheathrú Rua Theas and extending west as appropriate for a distance of 80 metres in the townland of An Cheathrú Rua Theas and finishing at the house of Micháel O’Domhnaill in the townland of An Cheathrú Rua Theas.

Electoral Area: Conamara

DECLARATION OF ROADS TO BE PUBLIC ROADS – SECTION 11 OF ROADS ACT 1993 **590**

On the proposal of An Comh O’Tuairisg, and seconded by An Comh O Cuaig, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with

Road extending existing Local Road L52089 in the townland of Aille and extending south as appropriate for a distance of 90 metres in the townland of Aille and finishing at the house of Gormfhlaith Ní Thuairisg in the townland of Aille.

Electoral Area: Conamara

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT POLICY – DRAFT PROCEDURE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLANS & MEASURES

591

Report dated 10th December, 2010.had already been circulated to each Member.

Mr. Gilmore presented the Report and recommended it for adoption by the Members.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed to adopt the Traffic Management Policy – Draft Procedure for the Introduction of Traffic Management Plans and Measures.

At this stage of the meeting it was agreed to allow Mr. Cullen to make a short presentation regarding the response of the Water Services Section during the recent severe weather.

Mr. Cullen presented the Report and referred to the 3 events of extreme cold experienced in the 13 month period Dec., 2009 to January 2011 which was unprecedented in terms of night time temperatures and depth of cold and duration. He said the demand on services increased dramatically as the freeze intensified – particularly on water services. The extreme cold was so severe that it impacted on water treatment and plant equipment. When the thaw began the problem of increased water demand intensified due to burst pipes and leakage. He explained the response strategy of the council which was centered around leak detection and repairs, restriction of supplies where necessary and communication to the public and elected representatives.

Following the above, the Members thanked the Manager, Indoor Staff, Outdoor Staff, and particularly Overseers and Caretakers for the way in which they worked over the Christmas period and the major effort they had put in to restore services in such difficult and unprecedented circumstances. They said that people did appreciate the effort and understood the situation.

In reply to issues raised by the members, Mr. Cullen said that the Water Conservation Programme was over 2/3rd complete and this had proved extremely beneficial to the council in helping to target areas of high water usage and leakage. He said proposals were with the Department for rehabilitation works. With regard to Tonabruckey he said this was a critical issue for the Council and that the Council is seeking Department of the Environment approval to proceed to construct the new reservoir at Tonabruckey.

It was agreed to take Items No. 10 and 11 at this point

PRESENTATION BY ENTERPRISE IRELAND

592

Mr. Seamus Bree, Enterprise Ireland, Director West Region, gave a very informative presentation on the services provided by Enterprise Ireland. He advised of the support it gives to Irish companies in Ireland and in overseas markets. He pointed out that Enterprise Ireland is the Irish Government's lead agency in the development of Irish companies trading internationally and has an international network of 34 offices with 150 staff located in international markets. He advised on how Enterprise Ireland works in partnership with its clients and listed the many companies in Galway involved.

PRESENTATION BY IDA IRELAND

593

Mr. Jim Murren, I.D.A. West Regional Manager gave his presentation regarding

- The role of the I.D.A.
- A changing Ireland
- Evolution and Future of Foreign Direct Investment.
- What are we competing for?
- Irelands offering
- Investment highlights 2010

He advised of the creation of 100 new jobs in Tuam.

The Mayor thanked Messrs. Bree and Murren for their presentations and invited questions from the members.

A questions and answers session followed. The Members while complimenting both presenters expressed their disappointment at the failure to attract industry to Ballinasloe, Athenry and Oranmore, however, they welcomed the prospect of 100 new jobs for Tuam.

TO CONSIDER THE MANAGER'S REPORT ON SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON THE AMENDMENTS AND MATERIAL ALTERATIONS TO THE TUAM DRAFT LOCAL AREA PLAN PREPARED AS PER SECTION 20 (3) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AS AMENDED BY SECTION 9 (G) (II) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT) ACT 2002

594

The Mayor invited Mr Kelly to present the Manager's Report on the submissions received on the Amendments and Material Alterations to the Tuam Draft Local Area Plan 2011-2017.

Mr Kelly outlined the relevant section of the Local Government Act 2001 re 'Disclosure of Interest' and stated that those who may have a personal or pecuniary interest in a particular issue should declare same and leave the meeting for that issue. He also stated that when performing their duties the Elected Members shall be restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the

area, the statutory obligations of any Local Authority in the area and any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or Minister.

Mr Kelly stated that the Manager's report had been circulated to all the Elected Members and corresponding maps.

Mr Kelly gave an outline of the Manager's Report on the submissions received starting with Submission Number 1 and working through each submission individually. In many cases the Members agreed with the recommendations in the Manager's Report.

Submission No 1 –Oliver Higgins

Mr Kelly commenced with submission No 1 from Oliver Higgins by outlining a summary of the main issues raised, and the Manager's response and recommendation.

Mr Kelly stated that advice was sought from the Environmental Consultants in relation to this amendment and it was confirmed that in terms of the AA/SEA assessment, the re-zoning of this land parcel from Agricultural back to Residential would constitute a negative impact due to the close proximity of this area to the River Clare designated under the Lough Corrib cSAC and was therefore not recommended.

Mr Kelly also added that the new procedure for the Extension of the Appropriate Period of a permission, where development has not commenced takes account of changes to the Development Plan, Departmental Guidelines and the requirements for EIA/AA. Therefore where some or all of these are at issue, an Extension of the Appropriate Period of the permission may not be available to the applicant. The Planning & Development (Amendment) Act 2010 restates the earlier provisions in relation to an applicant applying for an Extension of Duration where development has commenced and substantial works have been completed and this option would still be available where the conditions were met.

The Members agreed to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report.

Submission No 2-Denis O'Connell & Brendan Quirke

Mr Kelly outlined the issue raised and the Manager's response and recommendation. He recommended removing all land from the ACA in accordance with that outlined in Submission Number 62 to the Draft Plan and to amend Map 5A accordingly.

The Members agreed to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report.

Submission No 3 National Roads Authority

Mr Kelly outlined a summary of the main issues raised by the NRA and the Manager's response and recommendation.

In relation to MA9, Mr Kelly stated that only one of the four pieces of land identified by the NRA as still remaining within the 400m reservation corridor of the N17 Tuam/ Claremorris Road Scheme was confirmed by the NRDO as being a problem as it would be impacted on by the Ballygaddy Road junction and suggested that the zoning should be removed and the zoning map be amended accordingly

The Members agreed to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report in relation to MA9 and also MA7.

In relation to MA12, Mr Kelly outlined the issues raised by the NRA. He stated that the subject lands were somewhat isolated from other zoned lands in the Draft LAP and were not logical, sequential or required for the consolidated growth of the town. In addition the subject lands adjoin the proposed route of the N17 Tuam Bypass and adjoin the existing N17 at a location outside where a 50kph urban speed limit applies. He added that the identification of such lands within a zoning objective was considered by the NRA to be at variance with the provisions of the Spatial Planning and National Roads (Draft) Guidelines and policies RT1 & RT6 of the Draft LAP. The NRA recommended that the proposed zoning objective should not be adopted. He added that the NRA stated that it aims to protect the strategic national investment in the national road network in the area and will if necessary appeal any decision to grant planning permission, which it considers, undermines this investment. Cllr M. Connolly stated that the owner of these lands wishes to relocate his business from its town centre location to the location of the subject lands and that he could not support the recommendation in the Manager's report.

Cllr Mc Clearn stated that the Members were restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Cllr McHugh stated that a considerable amount of time had been given to the consideration of this plan and that a decision had already made by the Elected Members on this piece of land, he added that the people of Tuam must also be considered

Mr Kelly also added that the DoEHLG requested that Galway County Council review additional zoning objectives which have no evidence base and which raise concerns in relation to the national investment in the national road network in the area and also to the future safety of users of the network.

Mr Kelly pointed out that any planning application may not ultimately be successful having regard to the issues and that the developer may incur costs in trying to achieve same.

It was proposed by Cllr M. Connolly and seconded by Cllr Canney not to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report and to retain the commercial zoning on the lands the subject of this submission (MA12)

A vote was taken on Cllr M. Connolly's proposal and the result of the vote was as follows:

AR SON Cllr. Canney, Cllr. M.Connolly, Cllr. Feeney, Cllr. Hoade, Cllr. McClearn, Cllr McHugh, Cllr. Noone, Cllr. T. Walsh, (8)

IN AGHAIDH: (0)

GAN VOTÁIL: Cllr. Cuddy, Cllr. Kyne, Cllr. Maher, Cllr. Mannion, Cllr. Welby (5)

The Mayor declared Cllr. M. Connolly's proposal carried.

Submission No 4 OPW

Mr Kelly outlined a summary of the issues raised by the OPW and the Manager's response and recommendation.

He also stated that the OPW requested that the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment maps provided by them should not be printed within the final LAP as they were provided as a basis to indicatively identify areas potentially at risk from flooding.

He added that the sources of information regarding flooding and flood risk areas in the Plan are the Historical Flood Plains OS 1842 Survey and the Benefitting lands maps. It is recommended to amend Map 3A and 3B and to amend wording of relevant policies and tables accordingly.

He added that an individual flood risk assessment would be required on individual sites at planning application stage and that the detailed Flood Risk Assessment will be completed in due course.

The Members agreed to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report.

Submission No 5 DoEHLG

Mr Kelly outlined a summary of the issues raised by the DoEHLG and the Manager's response and recommendation.

He stated that the Core Strategy provisions of the 2010 Act had commenced and as a result the County Development Plan is required to incorporate a Core Strategy which is compliant with the requirements of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG's) adopted on the 19th October 2010. In this regard the Tuam LAP must be consistent with this Core Strategy and with the requirements as set out in the RPG's as adopted. The approach adopted by the Planning Authority to achieve this was through phasing residential development outside the Tuam ByPass and the route of the Inner Relief Road/Streets, and the removal of residential development from areas considered to be at risk from flooding

Mr Kelly pointed out that while this was believed to be a realistic approach by the Planning Authority it was not considered enough by the DoEHLG so as to align the Local Area Plan for Tuam with the population targets of the RPGs for Tuam as adopted and which will form the basis of the Core Strategy.

He explained that the Core Strategy will be prepared and adopted as a variation to the Galway County Development Plan distributing a population of 15,760 across the County and thereafter all Local Area plans will be modified accordingly.

Mr Kelly outlined that given that Tuam is a Hub Town, it was considered prudent to allocate a higher population growth figure to Tuam than that contained in the RPG's and therefore a population growth figure of 2,000 which requires a residential zoning of 52Ha was proposed as opposed to the minimum 1,000 population and 26Ha as set out in the RPG's. This would leave a population of 13,760 to be distributed across the other settlements and rural areas in the County. He pointed out that the proposed location of the zonings, are identified on the map presented to the Elected Members at the meeting as the areas for development having regard to the CSO boundary proximity to the town centre, the availability of services, and flood risk areas

He added that the DoEHLG's preferred option was to dezone any residentially zoned land over and above the 26Ha/52Ha whichever is decided. However having regard to the fact that the review of the plan is in its final stages an alternative approach would be to zone all excess residential zoning as Phase 2 lands which would generally not be developed within the lifetime of the plan

Mr Kelly added that while he could not guarantee if this approach would be sufficient for the DoEHLG, it would bring the plan significantly closer to meeting the current legislative requirements.

Mr Kelly recommended that the zoning be amended into Phase 1 and Phase 2 as per the map presented to the meeting and revise the relevant tables accordingly and also

revise sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.6 and other areas for consequential wording amendments.

Cllr Canney enquired as to the status of existing planning permissions on Residential (Phase2) zoned lands which have not yet been built and where an extension of the effective period is applied for.

In reply to Cllr Canney's query, Mr Kelly stated that there had been legislative and other regulatory changes since the planning permissions were granted and that the procedure for the Extension of the Appropriate Period of permission, where development has not commenced takes account of changes to the Development Plan, Departmental Guidelines and the requirements for EIA/AA. Therefore where some or all of these are at issue, an Extension of the Appropriate Period of the permission may not be available to the applicant. The Planning & Development Act 2010 restates the provisions in relation to an applicant applying for an Extension of Duration where development has commenced and substantial works have been completed.

Cllr Canney also added that as a result of this approach by the DoEHLG, land availability would be reduced and would become more expensive as a result.

Cllr McHugh stated that it was totally wrong and unacceptable to allow existing planning permissions to become useless as a result of the phasing of residentially zoned land within the plan.

Mr Kelly clarified that this amendment was as a result of the submission from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the West Regional Authority.

Cllr Canney enquired if it was possible to quantify the planning permissions outside of the Residential zoned lands (Phase1).

It was agreed to examine the proposed Residential Zoned lands (R2) and establish what live planning permissions exist on the lands for consideration at the February Council Meeting.

It was agreed to defer the decision on this issue to the February Council meeting

Mr Kelly continued to outline the Environment Protection issues in the remainder of this submission including amendments to Objective BH13, BH14, BH15, NH1, NH19, WS1, and Policy NH6, and insert new objectives NH20 and RT32
The Members agreed to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report.

Submission No 6 Presentation Sisters

Mr Kelly outlined the issue raised by the Presentation Sisters and the Manager's response and recommendation.

Mr Kelly explained that a request was made for a modification of Amendment No 10, to either extend the proposed town centre/commercial zoning to include the lands reserved for the provision of the Inner Relief Road and rezone from the proposed 'Open Space' to C1 or alternatively that the existing Community Facilities zoning be reinstated on this portion of the site. He added that it is recommended not to amend the Draft plan.

The Members agreed to accept the recommendation in the Manager's Report.

Submission No 7 West Regional Authority

Mr Kelly outlined a summary of the issues raised by the West Regional Authority and the Manager's response and recommendation.

He added that the issues raised in relation to Population were the subject of a recommendation under Submission 5 from the DoEHLG, the decision on which was been deferred to the next Full Council Meeting.

He also stated that the issues raised in relation to Environmental Assessments and protection of Lough Corrib including the River Clare has been mainly considered under Submission 5 from the DoEHLG which included the response and recommendation

It was agreed to accept the remaining recommendations in the Manager's Report in relation to Submission No 7

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

595

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Mannion it was agreed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the Meeting to proceed after 6p.m.

TO APPROVE DRAFT POLICY ON THE PROCEDURE FOR THE EXTINGUISHMENT OF A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

596

Report dated the 17th January, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

Mr. Owens presented the Report and advised the Members that it had already been discussed at the Roads SPC.

It was proposed by Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Mannion and agreed, to approve the Draft Policy on the Procedure for the Extinguishment of a Public Right of Way.

TO APPROVE DRAFT POLICY ON THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE MAINTENANCE OF DESIGNATED ROUNDABOUTS

597

Report dated 17th January, 2011 was already circulated to each Member.

Mr. Gilmore presented the report and advised the Members that this Policy was drawn up at their request. In response to queries raised, he confirmed that the design will be overseen by the Council subject to the agreement of the Road Design Staff with regard to safety.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed, to approve the Draft Policy on the Sponsorship of the Maintenance of Designated Roundabouts.

FLOODING UPDATE

598

The Manager presented her report dated 21st January 2011 which had been circulated. She confirmed that officials from the OPW will be in attendance at the February Council Meeting, at the request of the Members.

MANAGERS BUSINESS

599

The Manager confirmed that the National Roads Allocation of €70 Million had been received and will be brought before the Area Committees.

She also advised that proposals have been invited by the Department of Education for a National Administration body to oversee the Higher Education Grants System

MAYORS BUSINESS

600

Cllr. Cuddy raised the issue of outdoor staff resources for road repairs and proposed that the outdoor staff numbers be increased. This was seconded by Cllr. T. Walsh, however, the Mayor pointed out that as a Quorum was not present no further business could be considered and the Meeting ended.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 15 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

601

The following reply was given:-

“It takes 6-8 weeks after the Housing Engineers Final inspection for payment to issue.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 16 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

602

The following reply was given:-

“At present the maintenance works required as a result of the recent severe weather are being prioritised, thereafter the works on the new junction at Cartmore on the Turloughmore/ Athenry Road will be completed as soon as possible.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 17 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

603

The following reply was given:-

“All available resources are currently being dedicated to repairing severe weather damage. Thereafter progress will be made on completing outstanding Notice of Motion Works from 2010.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 18 – CLLR. M. FAHY

604

The following reply was given:-

“The funds allocated for the maintenance of the Gort River will have to be spent for that purpose only but it is hoped that these works will help address the difficulties outlined.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 19 – CLLR. M. FAHY

605

The following reply was given:-

“Tourist signage is in place on the M18 in accordance with the NRA Policy on the provision of Tourist and Leisure Signage on National Roads. This includes signage, at the termination of the motorway, for Coole Park and the Burren, whilst there is signage on the N18 for Thoor Ballylee.

Accordingly, in view of the above and in particular taking into consideration that there is already a large number of signs at the termination of the motorway, it is now intended or advisable to provide additional signage at this location.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 20 – CLLR. M. FAHY

606

The following reply was given:-

“The length of crash barrier required to protect drops of greater than 2 metres on this section of road is at least 1km. The provision of such a barrier would cost a minimum of €150,000. As this level of funding is not currently available, it is intended to provide appropriate signage to advise motorists of the existence of the drop from the roadside and such signage shall be erected in the coming weeks.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO 21– COMH. S. Ó TUAIRISG

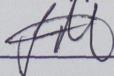
607

The following reply was given:-

“Tá moladh seolta chuig an Roinn Comhshaoil chun airgead a fháil don obair seo agus faoi láthair tá an Chomhairle ag feitheamh ar cinneadh an Roinn.”

Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Approved + Signed



23th February 2011

DATE

Minutes of Budget Meeting held on 20th December 2010

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE AN GAILLIMHE

**MINUTES OF STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING FOR GALWAY COUNTY
COUNCIL HELD AT ARAS AND CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY,
ON MONDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2010**

ILATHAR:

CATHAOIRLEACH:

Cllr. J McClearn

BAILL:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, L. Carroll,
P. Connaughton, D. Connolly, M. Connolly,
Cllrs. J. Cuddy, 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, T. McHugh, J.
McDonagh, M. Mullins, M. Noone, P.
Roche, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, Cllrs. S. Walsh,
T. Walsh, T. Welby, B. Willers.

OIFIGIGH:

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,
Meetings Administrator, Mr. Alan Farrell,
Senior Executive Officer, Mr M. McGovern,
Management Accountant, Mr. Evan Molloy,
Senior Engineer; Mr Michael Owens, Senior
Executive Officer, Mr. Albert Comer, Senior
Executive Officer, Mr. S Groarke, Mr. B.
Barrett, Administrative Officers.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

578

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:-

Tommy Connelly, The Grange, Moylough, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
Tomas & Bobby Coppinger, Chapel Road, Moylough, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
Phil Fahy, Bride Street, Loughrea, Co. Galway.

Minutes of Budget Meeting held on 20th December 2010

The Mayor invited the Co Manager to present the draft Budget 2011 Report to the Elected Members.

BUDGET 2010

579

The Manager referred to the draft Budget for the year 2011 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 was 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 27th September, 22nd November and 9th December 2010 and the 20th December 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 20th December 2010, provided the process is completed by 9th January 2011.

Context of budgetary preparation

The Manager noted that during 2010, the Council had experienced considerable change and contraction in the wake of the changing economic context in which it was operating. The year 2010 had 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. Elected members and staff had shown resilience and flexibility in responding to the changed circumstances.

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.

Demands on the Council are continuing to change. The year 2010 saw an increase in housing applicants of 522 (26%). The number of applications for Higher Education grants grew by 18%.

The Focus in the provision of Social Housing has changed from direct provision to greater use of the Rental Accommodation Scheme and exploration of the leasing option.

Following on from the severe weather experienced in the winter of 2009/2010 the Council, working with the Office of Public Works has placed an emphasis on tackling a

Minutes of Budget Meeting held on 20th December 2010

number of flooding issues throughout the county. To date 55 minor works schemes have been progressed and planning is being advanced for the Major Schemes on the Dunkellin and Clare Rivers. The 1998 Flood Report for South Galway is being re-examined to identify any potential remedial actions which can be taken to reduce the risk of flooding. Allocations for works in County Galway have amounted to €14m . Annual expenditure levels in previous years have been less than €¼m. Considerable work remains to be done and the Council is committed to progressing the relevant projects for which funding is procured through the necessary planning process to completion.

Income from various sources continue to decline including planning fees, fire certificates etc.

The recently issued Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads which will apply from the 1st December 2010 further constrains the flexibility of the Council. It will increase the range of costs to be funded directly by the Council and reduce the discretion available to the Council in the allocation of available grant funding.

In addition there are new requirements and responsibilities arising on the Council which must be met in 2011. Following analysis, the EPA in 2008 identified 28 public water supply schemes in county Galway were in need of remedial works to ensure that they met the required standard for water production and supply. Over the last number of years the Council has devoted significant resources to identifying the appropriate solutions for the plants in the county and advancing the necessary works through planning and implementation. The total cost of this programme is estimated at €12.4m which is part funded by the DOE and it is anticipated that the remainder of the work will be completed in 2011. The completion of this remedial action programme will address significant vulnerabilities and risk factors associated with the production of drinking water on public supplies in the county. The Manager complimented the work carried out by the staff of the Water Services Unit and the financial support from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government which, together with the Council's own resources, enabled this work to be completed. This most welcome development will have a positive impact on the quality of water produced but will also increase the cost of running the various schemes. In addition, new schemes are coming on stream this year and will add to the cost base.

Recent legislative change has also increased the workload in a number of areas, for example, the new Planning Act requires Local Authorities to amend their County Development Plans to include a 'core strategy' in compliance with the Regional Planning Guidelines. The Act requires significant work in local area plans, development management and enforcement associated with the operation of quarries. In addition, the Act makes provision for changes in approach in relation to the implementation of the Habitats legislation.

With the move away from the direct provision of social housing an intensified focus will be required on the area of Rental Accommodation and leasing in 2011.

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Galway County Council must respond flexibly to the changed demand for services. This will be achieved by maximising value for money in the delivery of services, priorities and compliance obligations in the context of reduced resources. The Council provides essential services and spends significant resources throughout the County. The 2011 Budget represents a valuable injection of funds to the County.

Budget 2011

The draft budget for 2011 envisages expenditure of €144million which equates to a reduction of 3% on the budget adopted for 2010. This represents a significant further reduction in the resources available to the Council following on from the reductions since 2008.

TABLE 1: BUDGETARY TREND 2008 - 2011

2008 Adopted Budget	€160 M
2009 Adjusted Budget	€146 M
2010 Adopted Budget (note: €3m of this sum is due to an adjustment in accounting treatment)	€149 M
2011 Draft Budget	€144 M

It should be noted that the budget includes a figure for road grants based on the 2010 allocation as the 2011 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 formally advised Galway County Council that the allocation for the year 2011 will be €32.84m.

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

	<i>Allocation</i>	<i>% Reduction</i>
2008	€40.60m	
2009	€36.88m	9%
2010	€36.09m	2%
2011	€32.84m	9%
<i>Cumulative Reduction (2008 to 2011)</i>		19%

(3) Cost Reduction Achievements.

The changed economic circumstances since 2008 and the reduction in funding available to the Council from both National level and local sources has brought about significant cost reductions in the operation of the Council activities.

Significant savings have been achieved to date in

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- A) Payroll costs
- B) Procurement
- C) Energy efficiency
- A) Payroll Cost reductions

Since the introduction of the moratorium on recruitment in the Public Sector the staffing levels in Galway County Council have been reduced significantly.

An analysis of staff changes from September 2008 to November 2010 indicates that the council has seen a reduction of almost 20% in fulltime staff numbers. A total of 212 staff members have left and have not been replaced. This reduction is partially offset by sixteen staff who have returned from career breaks or secondments or new appointments, leaving a net loss of 196 staff members, with an approximate 50/50 split between indoor and outdoor staff. In addition to this, approximately 18 staff members are absent on maternity leave, with no replacement. Revenue budgetary provision for current staff payroll has seen a similar reduction of almost 20%. However it should be noted that superannuation costs borne by the council in full has increased significantly following a large number of retirements.

This reduction in staffing numbers has had an impact on the council's capacity to deliver services, although the potential impact has been reduced by the willingness and flexibility shown by the remaining staff to meet service priorities.

The draft budget for 2011 is predicated on the loss of a minimum 12 staff. However, it may be necessary to recruit replacements for some of these positions as statutory or emergency services require. This trend is likely to continue in the coming years based on the following profile:

Year	Staff reaching 65
2011	12
2012	17
2013	27
2014	14
2015	21
Total (2011-2015)	91

As resources reduce, it will be essential that the Council prioritises essential services in the assignment of staff and have realistic expectations regarding the levels of service that can be sustained.

Public Sector Agreement (Croke Park)

The Croke Park Deal has provided a structure to manage change across the public sector in the years ahead. While much has been achieved to date in the Local Government sector and in Galway County Council in particular, further opportunities remain. A number of actions which will impact on Galway County Council are being progressed at National level. The Council has prepared its own local action plan and interaction with the relevant Trade Unions has commenced, with a view to achieving further efficiencies and cost

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savings. This is essential if the impact on service level of reduced resource availability is to be minimised.

B)Procurement

During 2010 Galway County Council has continued its focus on cost reduction. A significant amount of savings have been obtained in areas such as office rental costs, procurement of chemicals, office consumables, road making materials and machinery etc. This work will continue in 2011, with the relocation of the finance section staff from Liosban to HQ and the introduction of more cost effective managed print services.

C) Energy

Galway County Council has committed to improving energy efficiency and cost effectiveness throughout the organisation and has made strides in 2010 which it proposes to build on in 2011.

Electricity Tender

Galway County Council participated in a group tender along with 6 other local authorities for the supply of electricity of an estimated value €10 million. This has resulted a reduction in the order of 25% in the unit price of electricity in the top 11 accounts when compared to the May 2009 PES tariff. Savings of €600,000 were realized in 2010 period when compared to the unit price paid over the same period in 2009.

A tender for the supply of electricity to un-metered accounts (i.e. public lighting) was completed in August 2010 yielding savings of €45,000 per annum.

Electricity cost reduction

Monitoring of energy bills during 2010 saved €22,500 from tariff switches/MIC changes. However the introduction of a PSO (Public Service Obligation) levy on electricity bills since 1st October will have an impact of approx. €130,000 per annum.

Energy Efficiency Projects

A range of energy efficiency projects were implemented during 2010 focusing on reducing the energy consumption of water and wastewater treatment facilities and local authority buildings. A successful SEAI grant application lead to funding of €65,000 for energy efficient lighting solutions which will be completed by 30th November 2010. Overall savings from energy efficiency projects in 2010 were in the order of €50,000. Specific projects involved include:

- Portumna Raw Water Pumping Replacements
- Portumna Wastewater Aeration Refurbishment
- Pumping controls
- Tuam wastewater
- Logging of fuel and mileage completed in machinery yard
- Server virtualisation completed for all of the main servers along with the Auto-Shutdown for P.C.s.

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Energy Action Plan 2011

Further actions are planned for 2011 in the transport and leisure centre areas, exploring the potential of small scale wind turbines for pumping stations and further work in the Water Services area including pump replacements and improving controls.

Sustainable Energy Zone

In addition, Galway County Council is awaiting a call from SEAI for a Sustainable Energy Communities programme. It is planned to enter the hub town of Tuam into this competition to support the sustainable future for the town.

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 recommendations 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 report of the group which was published in July 2010 contains 106 recommendations. It has identified the potential to generate 'savings' of €511m euro from the sector, including €346m in expenditure reductions and €165m in revenue generation. The Minister has indicated his intention to appoint an implementation body to advance matters.

The report envisages savings accruing through further reductions in staff numbers, the use of joint administrative areas, shared services and procurement. It envisages staff reductions ranging from 5-30% across various grades and functional areas.

A number of items can be progressed at local level and in fact the Council is already very advanced on the issue of generating savings from procurement and energy as outlined above and increased investment in the area of water conservation/leak eradication. The draft budget contains a provision for network maintenance teams. They will be responsible for reducing unaccounted for water and will build on the success of the capital expenditure on the water conservation project.

Many of the items identified in the report require intervention at national level for example, the recommendation for the direct deduction of social housing rent from social welfare payments, the proposal for more road tolls, economic cost recovery in planning,

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continuous registration of vehicles, water charges and a local property tax etc. and we await developments in this regard.

Local Government has been subject to previous reviews including the Indecon Report in 2006 which identified the funding gap which was emerging for Local Authorities and proposed a number of solutions including the introduction of economic charges for services. It will not be possible for Local Authorities to maintain required service levels in the absence of adequate financial and staff resources.

Water Services and associated charges

The Council must prioritise the operation and maintenance of plants to fulfil its legal obligations and protect public health and meet the costs of running new and upgraded facilities.

The Draft Budget includes provision of €25.1m for the Water Services Division. This represents 22% of the overall budget provision for 2011. This cost continues to increase as a proportion of overall revenue account expenditure, in spite of significant cost savings achieved in 2009/2010 in the area of energy and chemicals.

The service also expands on an annual basis. It is estimated that the expansion in numbers of new water customers taken on in 2010 is in the region of 1,500, with two thirds of these coming through group schemes connected to the Galway County Council network.

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

- (i) More complex operation, maintenance and management arrangements.
- (ii) Take-over of Group Water Schemes
- (iii) New and upgraded plants coming on stream, (Council and DBO)
- (iv) Loan charges

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 €2.6M, an increase of €100% on 2009. The requirement to borrow further funds to meet the Councils portion of the capital cost of projects will continue in 2011 as income from Development Contributions continues to deteriorate. In order to meet the repayments on this borrowing and produce a balanced budget it has been necessary to change the policy and extend the period for repayment of the loans significantly to thirty-five years.

The Council must continue to invest in Water Services infrastructure in accordance with the allocations in the Water Services Investment Programme if it is to meet the required environmental standards and service requirements.

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

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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 2010, the Local Government Fund allocation continues to reduce. Therefore, in the absence of domestic water charges there remains a significant shortfall in funding for the 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. While some minor adjustments to the scheme have been introduced recently, it is evident that the current approach to funding water services capital investment is unsustainable and must be amended to take account of the resource availability within the Local Government sector.

Trends in Charging

<i>Charge per M³</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>Water Pricing Policy Cost 2011</i>
<i>Water</i>	<i>0.89</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>1.05</i>	<i>1.15</i>	<i>1.49</i>
<i>Waste Water</i>	<i>0.61</i>	<i>1.07</i>	<i>1.12</i>	<i>1.23</i>	<i>1.58</i>
<i>Consolidated</i>	<i>1.50</i>	<i>2.07</i>	<i>2.17</i>	<i>2.38</i>	<i>3.07</i>

In the context of the current economic climate, the Manager proposed to continue to move towards full cost recovery in compliance with national requirements, on a phased basis. She recommended that water charge increases for 2011 be limited to 10% which is far less than that required to achieve full cost recovery as indicated above.

A litre of water will cost €0.00115.

In the context of the implementation of the Water Pricing Policy and the under-recovery in Galway County, the commercial water users are actually receiving a subsidy of close to 30% on their water service costs. This restricts the availability of resources for other services. In addition, if it continues, 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.

Commercial Rates

In view of the difficult trading conditions for many businesses at present, the Manager did not propose to increase the rate multiplier for 2011. Since 2008, Galway County Council has limited rates increases to just 1%.

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Total income from commercial rates in the county for 2011 is estimated at €23.64M and is a vital component in allowing the Council to fulfil its statutory role and provide the required services throughout the county.

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 2011.

EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME GROUP	Budget 2010	2010 Estimated Outturn	2011 Draft Budget
		€	€
Housing and Building	11,621,417	11,180,663	11,673,972
Road Transportation & Safety	39,089,311	41,756,821	36,133,832
Water Services	27,550,799	25,602,485	25,122,403
Development Management	8,409,110	8,029,347	8,109,198
Environmental Services	18,159,187	17,509,469	18,521,961
Recreation & Amenity	8,219,509	7,976,973	8,296,765
Agriculture, Education Health & Welfare	24,377,509	27,878,166	25,568,360
Miscellaneous Services	11,378,271	10,771,417	11,097,981
Total	148,805,613	150,137,070	144,524,472

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

Estimated Revenue Income	2010		2011	
	€	%	€	%
Local Government Fund	32,787,941	22	30,335,000	21
Pension Related Deduction	2,600,000	2	2,500,000	2
NPPR	1,800,000	1	1,800,000	1
State Grants & Subsidies	57,079,187	38	56,021,502	39
Non-Domestic Water Charges	3,983,000	3	4,487,000	3
Local Determined Income	29,287,075	20	30,767,450	21
Other Income	21,268,410	14	18,613,520	13
	148,805,613	100	144,524,472	100

Expenditure Adjustments

Attached hereunder is a table setting out the principal variances between the Budget for 2010 and 2011.

Service	Service Description	2011	2010	Change
		€	€	€
A01	Maintenance of LA Housing Units	4,091,296	3,653,312	437,984
B	Road Transport & Safety	36,133,832	39,089,311	

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Division				(2,955,479)
C01	Water Supply	13,126,004	14,000,280	(874,276)
C02	Waste Water Treatment	5,463,730	6,425,959	(962,229)
C05	Group Water Schemes	3,002,363	3,216,100	(213,737)
D02	Development Management	2,744,799	3,516,563	(771,764)
D05	Tourism Development and Promotion	328,512	75,326	253,186
E06	Street Cleaning	1,373,157	698,313	674,844
G01	Land Drainage Costs	862,244	297,891	564,353
G05	Educational support Services	23,070,827	22,281,179	789,648
	Subtotal of above	90,196,764	93,254,234	(3,057,470)
	Total Expenditure	144,524,472	148,805,113	(4,280,641)

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.

The Manager expressed her concern about the limited budgetary provisions for a number of activities, which is having or is likely to have an adverse effect on the services which the council provides.

The level of vacancy of local authority housing has grown significantly recently. While there are some properties which are difficult to let, many others need to be brought back into use quickly, particularly given the large number of applicants on the Councils housing waiting list. Some additional resources are being made available to allow an improved performance in this area in 2011 under heading A01 above.

A reduction has been made in the provision for the Councils contribution to Housing Grants reflecting the earlier changes in the co-funding requirements for Housing Aid Grants.

The reduction in the roads division funding reflects the reduction in road grants in 2010 as well as a transfer of resources to E06 Street Cleaning.

The level of resources being provided to the roads programme is continuing to reduce. Resource availability in this area is further exacerbated by the implications of the Memorandum on Road Grants referred to earlier. Resources are being transferred from the roads budget to fund the on-going expenditure requirements of street cleaning. The significant reduction of €1.2 m in the allocation to county roads in the draft budget from the Councils' own resources will impact on the level of activity in 2011. 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 2011.

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The reductions in the water services division arise from savings achieved in the cost of chemicals and in energy, as well as a reduction in loan charges through a decision to restructure the loans over a longer period.

The reduction in D02 reflects the down turn in this service combined with a reduction in staff levels.

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 2010.

It is also intended to liaise with other agencies in an effort to harness additional resources for the county, for example working with Failte Ireland on projects such as the development of a 'Greenway' on the disused portion of the Clifden- Oughterard railway line, support for Tourism related events, working with SEAI to improve energy efficiency in Tuam, seeking EU funding for projects such as the promotion of the GREEN economy and supporting the work of the communities who are attempting to access funding under the Local and Rural Development Programme. These projects require an element of co-funding from the Council which is difficult to find in the current climate but have the potential to leverage additional spend in the county. Service D05 includes a new provision of €250K to meet the Councils costs in this area.

Service G01 reflects an increase in the provision towards essential works on land drainage districts and for continued co-funding for flood alleviation measures to be advanced in 2011.

The increase in service G05 reflects an increase in the cost of VEC pensions but this cost is 100% recoupable.

Non Rates Income

Non – Principal Private Residences (NPPR)

In July 2009, a €200 charge was introduced on non-principal private residences. The Local Government Management Association has collected the charge on a shared service basis for local authorities. The legislation provides for self-certification and penalties for late payment. 85% of payments have been made on-line, reducing overhead costs. The Draft budget anticipates an income from this source for 2011 of €1.8M.

Income sources from planning fees and fire safety certificates have seen significant reductions in 2010 and it anticipated that this reduced level of income will continue in 2011.

Capital Investment in Infrastructure

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The capital programme for the three year period 2011 – 2013 is attached to this report. This report has been informed by the availability of resources and consequently is less ambitious than previous programmes. Key features include the following trends:

Housing

- The move away from direct provision towards leasing of housing available in the market reduces the likely expenditure in this programme.
- Continuation of housing adaptations grants for older people and people with disability.
- Continued funding for energy efficiency retrofitting programme in the stock of social housing.

Water Services

- The three year capital investment programme announced by the Minister in 2010 sets the priority projects which we are anxious to progress valued at €131m
- Investment in the upgrading of rural water schemes to continue.
- Water conservation remains a key priority.

Roads

- The Council expects that the contract for the M17/M18 will be signed early in the new year, which would be a very welcome development.
- The Galway City Outer Bypass remains a key priority

Conclusion

The Manager stated that the preparation of the Draft Annual Budget for 2011 had been difficult, in the context of increasing responsibilities and services standards, coupled with a reduction in the available resources. She stated that the proposed Draft Budget would allow Galway County Council to deliver the optimum level of core services in 2011, within available resources. The proposed gross expenditure of €144.5m together with the capital programme spend estimated at €120m, represented a very considerable investment of public monies in the development of the County and the 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, the Council has adapted to the challenge of delivering with less resources.

The Council will continue to advance the capital infrastructure programmes, particularly in roads and water services, which will improve the competitiveness of County Galway and the attractiveness for further economic investment. As indicated from the reports of the Directors of Service, much progress was made in 2010 and will continue in 2011.

She thanked the elected members for their co-operation and support during 2010. She expressed her appreciation to the Mayor, Cllr Jimmy McClearn and the former Mayor

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Cllr. Tom McHugh 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. She acknowledged the assistance of the Corporate Policy Group in the discussion on the draft budget.

She thanked the staff of the Council for their dedication and flexibility during 2010. The year was challenging with reduced human and financial resources and difficult weather conditions which brought increased workloads. They have proven themselves to be committed public servants who are anxious to maintain service provision at the highest level possible.

She thanked the Council's Directors of Service and their staff for their rigorous examination of budget items for 2011 to identify areas for efficiency improvement and cost saving. In particular, she wished to acknowledge the work of Mr. Ger Mullarkey, Michael McGovern and the staff in the Finance Unit. The preparation of the Draft Budget this year has been onerous and has been approached in a most meticulous manner and she expressed her appreciation to all involved in delivering the draft budget.

She stated that the year 2011 would undoubtedly bring new challenges for Galway County Council but was confident that with support of the Members, Management team, and colleagues the Council would provide valuable services in 2011 to meet the needs of the citizens and adapt flexibly to the changes required.

She then recommended the Draft Budget to the elected members for adoption.

The Mayor Cllr Jimmy McClearn then proceeded to initiate the debate on the Draft Budget.

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

The freeze on the commercial rate level and the cost/efficiency savings on payroll, procurement and energy were welcomed but concern was expressed at the 9% decrease in the Local Government Fund allocation and the proposal to increase commercial water charges by 10%. It was noted that the increase in water charges had to be borne by the business and agricultural sectors which had to contend with very adverse economic conditions. Opinions were expressed that both the commercial rates and water charges should be reduced in order to help the business sector to survive the severe economic downturn. It was proposed that a discount scheme of 5-10% should apply for commercial rate payers who pay on time-as a discount/relief scheme is vital for small businesses who are currently in desperate financial straits.

Concerns were expressed at the current valuation system which is totally out of date and does not take into account a customers ability to pay. The need for a total revaluation of all rateable property to take account of the considerable reduction in property prices during the past few years was raised.

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Clarification was sought as to whether the 2011 Draft Budget amounted to a reduction of 3% or 4% in regard to the Budget adopted in 2010. Clarification was also sought in regard to the €7 m difference between the central management charge and the total of the service support costs and the methodology used in the calculation of the said service support costs.

Tributes were paid to the Council's outdoor staff who were currently salting and gritting the roads at nighttime during the current severe weather conditions.

Concern was expressed at the projected high level of borrowing required as the Council's contribution for the development of Water and Wastewater Services Capital infrastructure – which required €2.6 m to service in 2010 and also the need to extend the repayment period to 35 years. The reduction in costs achieved by the implementation of operational efficiency measures in Water Services in 2010 was welcomed.

Clarification was sought on the opening of a new recycling center at Casla and the plans for the proposed development of Inis Oirr pier in 2011. The number of unfinished housing estates in the County and the policy of the Council in regard to utilizing the development bonds to complete them was raised. Clarification was sought in regard to the amount of €152,328 provided in regard to unfinished housing estates in the Budget.

Concern was expressed at the distribution of fire stations in the County-as there is a requirement for a new fire station to be located in Conamara. Opinion was expressed that the Council was placing too much reliance on hiring consultants to progress works such as relief roads and major flood relief schemes-as this resulted in time delays in instigating projects and the Council should utilize more of its own resources and reduce the amount of fees paid to consultants. The proposed significant reduction of €1.2 m in the allocation to County Road maintenance from the Council's own resources was raised.

The major increase of 26% in the level of housing applications in 2010 was raised as well as the anticipated reduction in the Social Housing grants in 2011 and the 20% increase in the Housing maintenance budget. Opinion was expressed that the €1.8m in estimated income from the NPPR second home tax in 2011 should be ring fenced to fund vulnerable housing projects.

Concern was expressed at the decline in staff numbers especially the reduction in the outdoor frontline staff which could have a major impact on the delivery of services, as the Council was faced with increased demands for its services. Opinion was expressed that there was not enough manpower to undertake the flooding relief works. There were concerns raised about the Council's ability to meet service delivery demands in the future given the decrease in staff and financial resources.

Clarification was sought on the status of the Smarter Travel scheme. The proposed economic and tourism development initiatives listed in the budget were welcomed as a means of providing stimulation to local areas. Opinion was expressed that the Business

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Response unit should have 1 official available in each Electoral area to liaise with the Business sector. Clarification was sought on the development of a library in Ballinasloe.

Clarification was sought on the amounts provided on page 93 in regard to Planning enforcement and agency and recoupable services. The proposed works on the Kinvara Wastewater scheme and the N67 Kinvara-Ballinderreen road were welcomed.

Clarification was sought in regard to the Council's promotion of water harvesting initiatives. The payment of grants by the Council to local communities at similar levels to 2010 was welcomed. Clarification was sought on the training and development budget and the amount provided for health & safety.

Responses to the issues raised were as follows:

In response to the proposals to reduce the level of the commercial rates and water charges and to implement a discount/relief system the Manager advised that this was not practical at present as most of the costs incurred by the Council are non-discretionary such as payroll, loan charges etc and the scope for the reduction in expenditure is therefore limited to discretionary items. She agreed with the opinions expressed on the need for the reform of Local Government financing as the current sources of financing local authorities were extremely limited. She advised that the Council was required by the National Water Pricing Policy (NWPP) to recover the economic cost of water production by means of charging the non-domestic consumer the proportion attributable to that sector with the balance in regard to the domestic sector to be recouped as part of the Local Government Fund. The level of water charges has to be related to cost recovery. In reality-the Council's current charge for water/wastewater is significantly lower than the actual costs incurred. She also noted that the proposed rise in the level of water charges would have been more-were it not for the operational efficiencies undertaken by the Council in 2010.

In response to the issues raised concerning the current valuation system and the need to reassess all rateable property-the Manager advised that whereas the Council sets the multiplier the revaluation of all rateable property in the state was a matter for the Valuation Office. The programme of revaluation had commenced with the completion of 3 local authority areas in the Dublin region-but it is anticipated that it will take considerable time before the rest of the country is completed.

The Manager confirmed that the Draft Budget for 2011 amounted to a 3% reduction on the Budget adopted in 2010. Mr Mullarkey explained that the Central Management Charges are allocated to the Service Support costs for each service on the basis of the appropriate cost driver e.g. corporate buildings overheads are allocated on the basis of square footage, Pensions and Human Resources costs are allocated on the basis of staff numbers, etc. He also explained that within some services for example regional and local roads that some staff and operational costs are pooled under service support costs rather than being charged to a particular sub service and hence the amounts charged to service support costs is not limited to the allocation of the central management charges.

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The Manager noted the concerns raised at the level of borrowing required for the Council's contribution to the development of the water services Capital infrastructure but pointed out that under the National Water Pricing Policy the Council is required to cover the cost of a certain portion of this infrastructure. She noted that with income from development contributions declining the council has no option but to borrow the money required, she also noted that the requirement to borrow further funds will continue in 2011. She also noted that the decision to extend the repayment period to 35 years was a prudent one as for accounting purposes the Department recognize that the assets concerned have a lifespan of between 50 and 70 years.

The Manager confirmed that it was the Council's intention to progress a recycling center for Casla in 2011 but the proposed development of Inis Oirr pier was subject to funding been made available from Roinn na Gaeltachta. In response to the query raised in regard to the unfinished housing estates-Mr. Kelly confirmed that the amount of €152,328 provided in the Budget was to fund staff resources in this area. He noted that it was the Council's intention to devote resources to this area in 2011 with a focused approach in dealing with such issues as development bonds, liquidators etc. He also noted that The Council is now required by the new Planning Act to devote resources to other areas such as compliance with Regional planning guidelines, significant more work on local area plans and the inspection of quarries in regard to compliance.

In response to the concern for the requirement of a new fire station in Conamara the Manager advised that a review group had been established to assess Fire and Emergency cover arrangements in Galway City and West Galway and that a report is expected from the group in 2011.

In response to the query raised on the employment of consultants the Manager noted that due to the technical complexity of some projects e.g. the need for EIS studies, appropriate assessment, etc. that where the Council do not have the appropriate resources available in house then consultants are hired. She also noted that the appointment of any consultants was subject to the appropriate procurement requirements. With regard to the progression of flood relief schemes, road projects, etc. she advised that the Council has to adhere to statutory planning requirements including the time provisions associated with those requirements.

In regard to the concern express at the proposed reduction in €1.2 m in the County Road maintenance budget-the Manager explained that the requirements of the Memorandum on Grants for Regional and Local Roads which applies from the 1st December 2010 means that the Council can no longer charge expenditure items such as street cleaning to road grants. It will reduce the discretion of the Council to charge certain expenditure items to road grants and increase the range of costs to be funded directly by it. This will be further clarified when the 2011 road grants are announced and the Roads Programme is drafted.

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She noted that the increase in the housing maintenance budget was being provided to tackle the issue of long term vacancies, in order to increase the supply available. It was also clarified that recoupment under the newer housing aid grants was up to 80% as opposed to 67% for the DPG / ERG grants. She also noted that with the current budgetary constraints that it would not be possible to ring fence the projected NPPR income for specific housing projects.

The Manager acknowledged the concerns expressed at the decline in staff numbers and its impact on the ability of the Council to meet future service delivery demands. However she noted that under the Government's National Recovery Plan that there was a requirement on the local authority sector to reduce staff numbers from approx 35,000 in 2008 to 30,000 by 2014. She stated that the Council would have to adapt to the changing circumstances and that under the framework of the Croke Park Agreement would be aiming to achieve further efficiencies and cost savings whilst striving to sustain priority service levels with the reduced resources available.

In response to the query on the Smarter Travel Scheme it was clarified that a response was awaited from the Department. In regard to liaison with the business sector in each electoral area it was confirmed that this function was undertaken by Mr. Brian Barrett but if additional resources were required –the matter would be reviewed. In response to the query on the library for Ballinasloe Mr. K Kelly stated that the Stage 2 approval was anticipated in 2011 to enable the Council to proceed to the Part 8 planning process.

Clarification was provided in regard to the amounts provided for planning enforcement and agency and recoupable services. The initiatives undertaken by the Council in regard to water harvesting were explained. The Council provides training for businesses on water conservation measures and the water conservation team was active in reducing levels of leakage. The amounts provided for training & development including health & safety were confirmed to the meeting.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND DRAFT BUDGET

580

It was proposed by Cllr M Mullins, seconded by Cllr J Mc Donagh, to amend the draft budget for 2011 as follows:

1. to reduce the proposed increase in water charges from 10% to 5% which would result in a reduction in income of €197,0000

The reduction in income of €197,000 to be funded as follows:

- E11: Reduce the provision for the Operation of the Fire Service by €100,000
- F02: Reduce the provision for the Operation of Library and Archival Service by €97,000
- HO3: Increase the provision for the amount of Irrecoverable Rates by €50,000

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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. Kyne, Cllr. Maher, Cllr. E. Mannion, Cllr. McClearn, Cllr. Mc Donagh, Cllr. Mc Hugh, Cllr. Mullins, Cllr. Roche, Cllr. T. Walsh, Cllr. Welby, Cllr. Willers (16)

IN AGHAIDH: Cllr Canney, Cllr. D. Connolly, Cllr. M. Connolly, Comh. T. Ó Curraoin, Cllr G. Finnerty, Cllr M. Hoade, Cllr. Hynes, Cllr T. Mannion, Cllr M. Noone, Comh S. O Tuairisg (10)

Abstain: Cllr Fahy (1)

The motion was declared carried

ADOPTION OF BUDGET 2011

581

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 31/12/2011”

DETERMINATION OF THE ANNUAL RATE OF VALUATION FOR 2011 582

It was proposed by Cllr Mullins and seconded by Cllr McDonagh “That Galway County Council hereby determine in accordance with the Budget for the Financial Year ending 31/12/2011, 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 31/12/2011” – however, as agreement was not reached 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. Kyne, Cllr. Maher, Cllr. E. Mannion, Cllr. McClearn, Cllr. Mc Donagh, Cllr. Mc Hugh, Cllr. Mullins, Cllr. Roche, Cllr. T. Walsh, Cllr. Welby, Cllr. Willers (16)

IN AGHAIDH: Cllr Canney, Cllr. D. Connolly, Cllr. M. Connolly, Comh. T. Ó Curraoin, Cllr G. Finnerty, Cllr M. Hoade, Cllr. Hynes, Cllr T. Mannion, Cllr M. Noone, Comh S. O Tuairisg (10)

Abstain: Cllr Fahy (1)

The motion was declared carried.

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ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE AND INCOME OUTTURN FOR 2010 583

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

“That Galway County Council approves the estimated expenditure and outturn figures for 2010 as set out in the Budget documentation”.

REPORT ON THE THREE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 584

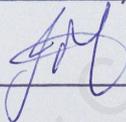
It was proposed by Cllr Mullins and seconded by Cllr McDonagh and agreed that the Council would note the Report on the 3 Year Capital Programme.

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

The Mayor thanked the Co Manager and the staff for the preparation of the 2011 Budget which was an onerous task in regard to the adverse economic conditions that currently prevail.

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú ansin

submitted, Approved & Signed



24th January 2011

DATE

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Marina Dely, Bullaun, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Ms. Cathleen Quinn, Clovraun, Newstrange, Galway, Co. Galway
- Gerry Tierney & Family, Clovraun, Newstrange, Galway, Co. Galway
- Tom Roche & Family, Gurzen, Murrabawn, Galway, Co. Galway
- Tom Kelly & Eileen Kelly, The Grange, Newstrange, Galway, Co. Galway

The Members extended their sympathy to Tom Roche, his wife Doreen and their three sons on the recent sad loss of their son, John.