

In respect of the R336, Mr. Kelly advised that while it is mentioned in a general way in the Draft Plan there is no specific route identified as the route selection process is outside of the Development Plan process.

He advised that the protection of the coastal zone is included in a number of objectives; T12, NHB8, NHB10 and that the Islands are included in objectives IS1 and IS2. He explained that Ros an Mhíl shall be promoted as a location of a 'maritime/marine cluster' under Objective AFF15. He said that the Plan recognises the strategic importance of Ros an Mhíl and Galway Harbour and it will facilitate and support their development as outlined in Objective TI22 and Objective TI23 which generally supports Ports, Harbours, Piers and Slipways.

With regard to the Rural Housing policies, he clarified that these were updated in line with the Rural Housing Guidelines. He said that by including nieces and nephews as family members, this would open up the rural housing policy to a large number of people in any scenario and this would reduce the certainty of the Plan. He explained that even by a Planning Authority granting a planning application, this decision could subsequently be refused on appeal to An Bord Pleanála, therefore leaving decisions not appealed to Board with a grant of permission. He clarified that if nieces and nephews are from the area, they can demonstrate links to the area in their own right. He said that the policy included in the Draft Plan facilitates 99.9% of cases.

In reply to access on restricted roads, Mr. Kelly advised that it is stated in the Plan where there are no other lands available, the use of a combined access with the existing family home must be considered and if a new access is required, only one access shall be permitted. He said that while this offers protection to restricted roads, it does also allow for some flexibility and consideration, where this is necessary.

With regard to the Objective RHO1 2 (b), he clarified that in accordance with the Rural Housing Guidelines, this objective is to facilitate the person with the Disability.

He said that the 15 year Language Enurement Clause has not caused any difficulty in practice and no change is proposed.

In respect of RHO7 – Renovation of existing derelict dwellings/semi ruinous dwelling, he said that applications would continue to be dealt with in a logical and practical manner but proposals need to be realistic.

With regard to the level of houses in line with the road, he said that the Planning Authority had no requirement to build houses on lower ground but it is an issue that can be considered during the display period along with soakways in parking bays and consideration will be given to inserting a Policy to reflect all.

He said that the Plan supported Ardaun and advised that the Core Strategy identified a small population allocation for that area. He said that the Programme for Ardaun will be undertaken by the City Council in the immediate future with some input from the County Council but that development in the County area is not envisaged within the life-time of the Plan.

With regard to the distances from houses to telecommunication masts or under-grounding of services, Mr. Kelly said that he would be reluctant to add an objective that might limit progress and prevent projects going ahead in due course.

Mr. Kelly referred to Objectives FL2 – Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) and FL3 – Protection of Waterbodies and Watercourses, which covers the maintenance and enhancement of the existing water drainage systems in the County and protection of waterbodies and watercourses within the County.

In respect of Rural Enterprise, he said that guidance was taken from consideration of applications over the past number of years and it is difficult to achieve the right balance to assist and promote rural enterprise whilst not affecting the residential amenity of the rural area. He said that while the receipt of rural enterprise planning applications was minimal, he felt that the Draft Plan provided sufficient scope and flexibility to deal with any reasonable project that came forward. He advised that he is also the Director of Community, Enterprise and Economic Development in addition to Planning and Sustainable Development and he agreed that consideration would need to be given to a number of different areas, including the Leader Programme to ensure alignment.

With regard to Rights-of-Way, he said these were dealt with in a general way in the Plan but if a Right-of-Way could be identified and agreed it would, but an extensive exercise could not be undertaken with limited resources.

He said that the Draft Plan was a facilitating Plan which would allow and support projects. In respect of Ballinasloe, he said that consultations are ongoing with the Chamber of Commerce and the Credit Union to examine the future of Ballinasloe's Town Centre and if this co-project was successful, it could extend to other areas.

With regard to Environmental constraints, he said that while a large volume of environmental legislation was referenced within the Plan, it is a legal requirement which the Planning Authority has no control over. He said that this Draft Plan moved away from aspirational objectives to specific objectives and included projects if they were already within a process, or else support was included as a general objective and if these projects were to move forward then the Plan would support them.

With regard to DM Standard 41 – Field Patterns, Stone Walls, Trees and Hedgerows, Mr. Kelly said there was a specific responsibility in legislation to include a specific objective in relation to this. In reply to Cllr. M. Connolly, he said that account would be taken of road-side planting to be kept to a minimum but a balance would be required to address the impact of house screening and shelter.

With regard to Enurement, Mr. Kelly said that this was a separate issue and is dealt with outside of the Development Plan process. He said that the Planning Authority had continued to address the issue and the Draft Plan protects the essence of Enurement clauses and he is satisfied that discretion has been used in the past to ensure a number of people could move on with their property and their lives, while not undermining the controls in place.

He said that there were a number of objectives /standards in different areas within the Draft Plan in respect of the elderly including requiring a variety of house types in developments.

With regard to engagement with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), he said that this was already the case and he welcomed this objective. He said that the Plan does not go into the level of detail with regard to the provision of toilets on beaches and bus corridors, but he was satisfied that the Plan would support and not restrict development proposals in this regard. He said that EPA testing was not a Development Plan matter but he was aware that the approach taken by the other local authorities mentioned had led to a legal case for one local authority.

In respect of Group Water Schemes and Group Sewerage Schemes, he clarified that there was a general provision in the Plan to support these Schemes.

With regard to the new Building Control Regulations, he said that literature was produced by the DoEHLG in recent weeks. He said that the Department have provided no specific listing of Architects, Building Surveyors, Chartered Engineers but one needed to be a registered member of their relevant body in order to provide the relevant certification. He said that if required an overview of the Building Control (Amendment) Regulations could be given to the Members at a future meeting.

Mr. Kelly advised that the timeframe in respect of the Draft Plan process was as follows: the Draft Plan to be prepared for public display within 2 weeks and the Draft Plan will be on public display for 10 weeks, following which the Manager's Report on the Draft Submissions must be circulated within 12 weeks to the Members for their consideration and further discussion. He said that the Draft Plan would be made available in the Council's library network. In reply to Cllr. Welby, he said that the Planning Section had obtained the names and addresses of the owners of the Protected Structures in the proposed additions following a legal search but he could not confirm that the information obtained was 100% accurate. In respect of the bridges listed in the proposed additions to the Record of Protected Structures, Mr. Kelly said that works could still be carried out on them but it could mean additional requirements. He said there was a methodology involved and that the process was open to review at any time if it was felt that it was too restrictive.

On the proposal of Cllr. Feeney, seconded by Comh. O'Laoui, it was agreed to accept the minor amendments to correct grammatical, typographical and other corrections and also the Errata and amendments, (as circulated to the Members).

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. Welby 'that there is provision for an airstrip in close proximity to Galway City for the proper and sustainable development of the County'.

It was proposed by Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Comh. O'Laoui, and agreed to amend the Motion as follows 'that there is provision for an airstrip for the proper and sustainable development of the County'. Cllr. Cuddy and Cllr. Welby agreed to withdraw their original motion and the amended motion was agreed.

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh, "that the definition of family member should include, father, mother, sons, daughter, brother, sister, nieces, nephew".

Mr. Kelly advised the Meeting of his concern with this proposal and the consequence of increased pressure on rural areas and the uncertainty if appealed to An Bord Pleanala. Cllr. Feeney also expressed his concern and asked if the motion could include niece or nephew in the case where the uncle/aunt, i.e. the landowner, had no children. Cllr. D. Connolly asked if it could be referred to the Planning SPC for further consideration. Cllr. Cuddy said that persons who have no family are not being catered for and nieces or nephews need to be considered in this instance.

Following discussion it was agreed on the proposal of Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh to allow the motion to be withdrawn.

A proposal by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh was then agreed as follows: "Amend Objective RHO1 1B to include: Consideration shall be given to special circumstances where a landowner has no immediate family and wishes to accommodate a niece or nephew on family lands".

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. T. Welby "that where an applicant for planning of a one off house can only access their lands from a restricted road that planning will be considered where sight lines are sufficient"

In reply to Cllr. Cuddy, Mr. Kelly advised that the Draft Plan already covered this Motion as it is stated where there are no other lands available, the use of a combined access with the existing family home must be considered and if a new access is required, only one access shall be permitted. He said that while this offers protection to restricted roads, it also allows some flexibility.

It was agreed on the proposal of Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. Welby to allow the motion to be withdrawn. A proposal by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. Welby was then agreed as follows: "Amend DM Standard 18 – remove "sons and daughters" and replace with family members".

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh, "Enurement Clause - I propose that where a property is the subject of an enurement clause and the property is to be sold as a result of a marriage breakdown court decision the enurement in such case should be lifted"

In reply, Mr. Kelly advised that the issue of Enurement is a provision which relates to the grant of planning permission which is an Executive function. He said that this provision in the County Development Plan would only give rise to a difference of opinion and dispute of what can be achieved. He said it was best dealt with it on a case by case basis as is currently done. Cllr. Cuddy explained that the situation arises following a court case decision and the family home has to be sold and with the enurement clause, the house can only be sold to a local person and the sale price is affected. In reply, Mr. Kelly said that the Planning Authority has considered similar cases, some with a successful conclusion, and while being facilitative, it can also maintain control. He said that the County Development Plan is not the process to deal with this but best to deal with them on a case by case basis. It agreed on the proposal of Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh to allow the motion to be withdrawn.

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy, and agreed, "I wish to propose that a sewerage scheme for this growing village of Lackagh be included as an objective of the County Development Plan for the 2015-2021 period".

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Canney, seconded by Cllr. Hoade and agreed, "that the proposed Waste Water Treatment Scheme for Corofin Village be included in the Table 6.4 as a project that will be carried out within the timeframe of this County Development Plan".

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Cuddy, seconded by Cllr. Cunniffe and agreed, "I propose that there be an objective in the County Development Plan to progress a sewerage treatment plan for Clarenbridge".

In reply, Mr. Kelly said that while the inclusion of these three Schemes will not impact negatively on the Plan, he advised that their inclusion in the Plan will not make any difference to their progression.

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Canney, "Galway County Council recognise the need for measures to address the regular and repeated flooding issues that arise along the River Shannon and related tributaries such as the River Suck, and GCC recognises that a maintenance programme for Aobhann Na Shonna, fo aibhneacha a théann isteach ann agus srutháin is essential. Also that a single agency be appointed for these management purposes."

Mr. Kelly advised that the last sentence was not relevant to the County Development Plan.

It was agreed on the proposal of Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Canney to allow the motion to be withdrawn. It was then proposed by Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Canney and agreed, "Galway County Council recognise the need for measures to address the regular and repeated flooding issues that arise along the River Shannon and related tributaries such as the River Suck, and GCC (Galway County Council) recognises that a maintenance programme for Aobhann Na Shonna, fo aibhneacha a théann isteach ann agus srutháin is essential."

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Cunniffe, seconded by Comh. O'Cuaig, 'that Western Rail Corridor section in County Galway, as a significant stretch of land, free from motorised traffic, not be ruled out in the County Development Plan as having potential for outdoor activities including the provision of recreational and cycle greenway"

Cllr. McClearn asked if a general objective for a Greenway could be included without specifying a location.

In response, Mr. Kelly said that this matter was discussed at the Council Meeting to discuss the Manager's Report on the Pre-Draft Submissions of the County Development Plan. He said that the approach taken in the Draft Plan is to preserve that route until a railway is ruled out. He said that the clear intent of the Plan is to protect that objective and said from a planning point of view.

Following an indication that the motion as detailed would be meet with agreement, it was agreed on the proposal of Cllr. Cunniffe, seconded by Comh. O'Cuiag to allow the motion to be withdrawn.

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Ryan, and agreed that "Ballinasloe plays as the County Town plays a significant part in the delivery of Local Government Services and that this Development Plan commits to continue and enhance the delivery of LG services in our County Town, Béal Átha na Slua".

Mr. Kelly said that this Motion was not a Development Plan proposal as the County Development Plan does not deal with specific services in any location. Cllr. D. Connolly asked that recognition be given to Ballinasloe as our County town and that there is a site available within the town for the delivery of local government services.

The following Motion was proposed by Comh. O'Cuaig, seconded by Cllr. D. Connolly, and agreed, "that Galway County Council will commemorate the 1916 Easter Rising with due reference to all areas of the County".

The Manager advised that this Proposal was agreed in principle but it was outside of the County Development Plan remit and would be dealt with under the Galway Commemorative Strategy for the Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Comh. O'Cuaig, it was agreed "that Galway County Council recognise the significance of the Connemara Pony, the Galway Sheep breed and the Irish Draught as living breeds well recognised and identified with County Galway. Galway County Council comments and supports the efforts of Breeders, Societies and those promoting our nature breeds and encourages all efforts that positively enhance these native breeds."

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. E. Mannion, seconded by Comh. O'Laoui, and agreed "that GCC (Galway County Council) engage with the National Parks and Wildlife to ensure Integrated Management Plans are prepared for all Natura sites to ensure that Plans are fully integrated with all land use and water management plans in the County, with the intention that such plans are

practical, achievable, and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations and with special regard for local communities”.

On the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh and seconded by Cllr. Cuddy, it was agreed to put the Draft Galway County Development Plan 2015 – 2021, as amended, on public display, as per Section 12(1) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The Manager thanked the Director of Service and the staff of the Planning Section on the mammoth task of producing the Draft Plan. She said that the Draft Plan was very clear and thanked also all the Elected members for their involvement and input.

Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin

Bail:

Submitted, Signed + Approved

Alan Carroll

24th MARCH 2014
DATE

Óifig:

Ms. M. Moloney, County Manager; Messrs. K. Kelly, & J. Cullen, Directors of Services; Messrs. M. Raftery & L. Garin, A/Directors of Services; M. Owens, County Secretary & Meetings Administrator; G. Mulroney, Head of Finance; Ms. C. McCowne, Senior Planner; Mr. S. Kennedy, Senior Planner; Ms. J. Brann, SE.O.; Ms. Mary Forde, Senior Social Worker; Ms. M. Donoghue, Senior Staff Officer; P. O'Neachtain, Oifigigh Gaelge & R. O'Boyle, Staff Officer.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

The Mayor proposed that the Meeting be adjourned for 5 minutes as a mark of respect to the late Mrs. May Cullen, mother of Mr. Jim Cullen who passed away recently. The Mayor and the Members expressed their condolences to Mr. Cullen and the Cullen family at this sad time.

The Manager, on behalf of the Management and Staff of Galway County Council offered her condolences to the Cullen family on the death of their beloved mother.

Minutes of January Monthly Meeting held on 27th January, 2014

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY ON MONDAY 27th JANUARY, 2014 @ 2.00 pm

CATHAOIRLEACH:

Cllr. L. Carroll, Mayor of the County of Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, Comh. S. Ó Cuaig, T. Ó Curraoin, Cllrs. J. Cuddy, S. Cunniffe, M. Fahy, G. Finnerty, M. Finnerty, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, Comh. S. Ó Laoi, Cllrs. M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, J. McDonagh, T. McHugh, P. Roche, K. Ryan, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, Cllrs. S. Walsh, T. Walsh, T. Welby & B. Willers.

Oifigh:

Ms. M. Moloney, County Manager; Messrs., K. Kelly, & J. Cullen, Directors of Services; Messrs., M. Raftery & L. Gavin, A/Directors of Services M. Owens, County Secretary & Meetings Administrator, G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance, Ms. C. McConnell, Senior Planner, Ms. S. Kennedy, Senior Planner, Ms. J. Brann, S.E.O., Ms. Mary Forde, Senior Social Worker, Ms. M. Donoghue, Senior Staff Officer, P. Ó Neachtain, Oifigh Gaeilge & R. O'Boyle, Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY

1651(a)

The Mayor proposed that the Meeting be adjourned for 5 minutes as a mark of respect to the late Mrs. May Cullen, mother of Mr. Jim Cullen who passed away recently. The Mayor and the Members expressed their condolences to Mr. Cullen and the Cullen family at this sad time.

The Manager, on behalf of the Management and Staff of Galway County Council offered her condolences to the Cullen family on the death of their beloved mother.

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Mr. Cullen thanked the Members and Officials for their kind words of sympathy and for their support at this sad time.

A resolution of sympathy was also extended to the following:

- Mrs. Teresa Kennedy, 27 Holly Grove, Renmore, Co. Galway.
- Mrs. Phyllis Welby, 2 Magenta Crescent, Santry, Dublin 9.
- Mrs. Christina Mannion, Glenaveal, Abbeyknockmoy, Co. Galway.
- Mr & Mrs John Mannion & Family, Farmhill, Newtown, Abbeyknockmoy, Co. Galway.
- Mr. Vincent Flynn, Mountbellew, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
- Ms. Eileen Delaney, Abbey Road, Abbeyknockmoy, Tuam, Co. Galway.
- Thomas & Ann Keaney, Murvey, Roundstone, Co. Galway.
- Mr. John Folan, Lough Conartha, Cill Chiaran, Co. na Gaillimhe.
- Mr. Joe Flaherty, Ross Island, An Ceathrú Rua, Co. na Gaillimhe
- Mr. Martin Joe Mc Donagh, Doirín Darach, Tir an Fhia, Leitir Moir, Co. na Gaillimhe.
- Mr. Tommy Conroy, Poulywerrin, Lettermore, Co. Galway.
- Ms. Aideen Regan, Clonboo, Corrandulla, Co. Galway.
- Mr. Páraic Hickey, Dooghty Well, Corr na Móna, Co. na Gaillimhe.
- Mr. Joe Walsh, Cromghlinn, Corr na Móna, Co. na Gaillimhe.
- Mr. Paddy Donohue, Kilbeacanty, Gort, Co. Galway.
- Mr. Oliver Connolly, Rindifin, Gort, Co. Galway.

The Meeting was adjourned and was reconvened after 5 minutes as a mark of respect to the late Mrs. May Cullen.

On the resumption of the Meeting, the Mayor welcomed Mr. Michael Raftery, as A/Director of Services, Corporate, Housing & Emergency Services to the Meeting and wished in well in his new role.

The Mayor informed the Members that it was proposed to defer Item No. 2(g). He further proposed the deferral of Item No. 12 to be considered at a Special Meeting of the Council to be held on Friday, 14th February 2014 at 11.00 am in County Hall.

The Mayor also informed the Members that an apology had been received from the I.D.A., stating that they were unable to attend to give their Presentation as outlined at Item No. 19 and that same would be rescheduled for a later date.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

1652(a)

The Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 12th December 2013 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy.

Arising from the Minutes, and in reply to requests from Comh O'Tuairisg and Comh. O'Curraoin for an Update on Seanapheisteen Bridge, Mr. Gavin He said that work on the preparation of an application for works to the bridge was in progress and would be forwarded to An Bord Pleanala, he said this should be done by the end of February. The Council would then have to await for the Bord's decision. He confirmed that the temporary works would allow for an increase in the existing limit on the bridge to approx 2.5 tonne but that it would not accommodate Ambulances/Fire Tenders etc. Mr. Gavin in reply to Comh. O'Cuaig confirmed that a copy of the engineer's report on the bridge had been released.

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Mr. Raftery in reply to An Comh. O'Laoui, confirmed that €30,000 was made available in Budget 2014 to facilitate the Council in advancing the assessment of a suitable site or a suitable existing building to accommodate a retained fire station in An Cheathru Rua/Casla area and that this process was being advanced.

In reply to Cllr. Cunniffe in relation to the Shop Street/Tullinadaly Rd Junction, Tuam, Mr. Gavin confirmed that design work was currently being undertaken for same and that it was intended to facilitate works at the junction with the benefit of ERDF funding. He confirmed that the design should be completed by the end of February or early March and works could proceed thereafter.

Cllr. D. Connolly said he wished to put on record his total disapproval of the decision by the HSE to proceed with the transfer of beds from St. Brigid's Ballinsloe to UHG. The Mayor in reply to Cllr. D Connolly, confirmed that the resolution of Council in relation to the National Rural Water Monitoring Committee and Department of Environment, Community & Local Government giving consideration and funding to specified areas without the benefit of a water scheme had been acknowledged. Cllr. D. Connolly requested that a full reply be sought on the matter.

The Minutes of Budget Meeting held on 16th December 2013 were approved by the Council and signed by the Mayor on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. McHugh.

Arising from the Minutes, Cllr. D. Connolly enquired as to the provision of School Flashing Lights in two particular areas Killure and Fohenagh and asked if a review would be carried out and areas prioritized. An Comh O'Curraoin referred to the Flashing Lights in Moycullen and said they were not working and enquired as to who is responsible for them.

Replying Mr. Gavin said that the contract for the repair for School Flashing Lights was almost 80% complete. He said he would review the position in relation to Killure and Fohenagh and revert to Cllr. D. Connolly directly on the matter. In reply to query regarding the operation of the safety system at Newtown School, Mr. Gavin confirmed that due to the weak phone signal in the area, alternative means of operating the lights were currently under consideration.

Cllr. McDonagh referred to Motion No. 23 which was on the Agenda for this Meeting in relation to seeking funding from the Department of the Environment for traffic route lighting from Turloughmore Community Centre to Lackagh Village. It was proposed by Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. McHugh and agreed to request that the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government provide the necessary funding.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION 1653(a)

The Report of the Planning, Economic Development & Community SPC Meeting held on 30th September 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh seconded by An Comh. O'Tuairisg.

The Report of the Roads & Transportation SPC Meeting held on 28th November 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McClearn, seconded by An Comh. O'Curraoin.

Arising from the Minute, An Comh. O'Laoui said he welcomed the review of the Raised Bogs by Minister J. Deenahan and the outcome of same.

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Arising from same and following discussion, it was proposed by An Comh O'Laoi, seconded by An Comh. O'Tuairisg and agreed that a Review be carried out by the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, on the Moycullen Bogs NHA, similar to the review carried out on Raised Bogs in East Galway to de-designate an insignificant portion of the NHA area to accommodate the new R336 (Barna to Screeb Road). Cllr. Cunniffe referred to the works taking place at the Shambles Car Park, Tuam and said they were supposed to finish in February. He said that some businesses had to close for a number of days due to the works and asked for an exact timescale of when the works will be finished, and also if there was any compensation available for the impact on trade, suggesting that consideration be given to providing financial support for the painting of buildings impacted by the project on completion of the construction phase of the works.

Mr. Gavin replying said that in relation to works at the Shambles, Tuam, work is going well. The timescale only changed when work stopped over the Christmas. He said that the Council was in ongoing contact with the businesses in the area and will continue to liaise with them in relation to the works.

The Report of the Oranmore Area Committee Meeting held on the 9th September, 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy. Arising from the Minutes Cllr Cuddy asked what the situation is in regard to the works at Knockdoe. He said that he had written to the NRA but had received no response.

He also asked what the situation was in relation to the upgrade of the water pipe serving Oranmore, outlining that a reply he had received in relation to a NOM on the matter indicated that it was necessary to submit the proposal to Irish Water, he outlined that this would result in further delays and that the establishment of Irish Water was a backward step.

He also expressed disappointment that the Speed Limit Bye-Laws were not listed on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the previously stated timeframe, expressing frustration with the delays being encountered while approval was awaited from the National Roads Authority, referring in particular to the need to revise the speed limit on the Airport Road.

Replying to the query in relation to the works at Knockdoe, Mr. Gavin said that the Council had met with the NRA, and they had asked that the Council to look at the design issues. He said that the Council are doing this now and will go back to the NRA with their findings. With regards to the Speed Limits he said the NRA had come back with a number of queries to which the Council had responded and was hopeful that the matter could be listed for consideration at the February Meeting.

Replying to the query in relation to the upgrade of the water pipe going through Oranmore, Mr. Cullen advised the Members that the tender recommendation for this work must be approved by Irish Water before entering into a Contract. He said that he did not foresee any delays in this regard.

The Report of the Oranmore Area Committee Meeting held on the 30th September, 2013 (Planning Extract) was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy.

The Report of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on 18th November 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. T. Walsh, seconded by Cllr. McClearn.

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Arising from the report, a length discussion ensued in relation to Irish Water, with a wide range of views and varying opinions expressed by the Members in relation to the need for the establishment of Irish Water, the best model to deliver the necessary reform of the system, the degree of oversight and duplication, the costs associated with the establishment of the new utility including consultancy costs, the future of the utility in terms of privatisation, the ability and or need to generate a revenue stream to support investment and the pricing model to be implemented, together with the role of the Minister and Commission for Energy Regulation in the model.

Arising from the discussion, Cllr. T. Walsh proposed a motion for consideration under Mayor's Business.

The Report of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on 6th December, 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. McClearn, seconded by Cllr. Maher. In reply to a query from Cllr. Maher in relation to the implementation of a reduction in NOM funding to fund the repair and upgrade of school flashing lights, the County Manager confirmed that same was approved on foot of a motion passed at the Budget Meeting in December.

It was proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed to defer the Report of the Loughrea Area Committee Meeting held on 18th September 2013 to the February Ordinary Meeting.

The Report of the Conamara Area Committee Meeting held on 16th September 2013 was approved by the Council on the proposal of An Comh. O'Tuairisg, seconded by An Comh. O'Curraoin.

Arising from the Minutes An Comh O'Cuaig referred to the visit to Boston by the Mayor for the Inauguration of the Mayor of Boston, Mr. Martin J. Walsh. The Mayor referred to his visit to the inauguration of Mr. Martin J. Walsh as Mayor of Boston and advised that he had extended an invitation to the Mayor to address the Chamber when, and if, he comes to Ireland and that as requested by the local community he had also invited him to lay the Foundation Stone for the Centre in Carna.

Replying to a query from Comh. O'Cuaig on Teach Phiarsaigh, the Manager said that the Working Group is continuing to meet and in the context of funding in the amount of €2million allocated from the Government it was proposed to proceed with the issuing of a CPO to acquire the lands, mainly commonage, necessary to facilitate the development of the centre, including ancillary services and parking and that the necessary public notices would be published in the coming weeks.

Mr. Gavin in reply to Comh. O'Cuaig, confirmed that work was ongoing on the provision of the footpath at Ros an Mhil and that he would revert directly on a timeframe for the completion of same.

In reply to Cllr. D. Connolly, Mr. Gavin confirmed that it was intended to proceed with regulation of parking in Cleggan Village through appropriate signage and lining in advance of the development of the car park.

Mr. Gavin in reply to Cllr. E. Mannion confirmed that work was ongoing at Recess Junction and that he would revert directly with a timeframe for the completion of same.

An Comh O'Laoui said he wished to congratulate Bishop M. O'Toole, who is going to be ordained Bishop of Plymouth whose parents came from Conamara.

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

1654(a)

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

Abbey Glen Estate, Athenry

Houses No. 29 to 24 (Inclusive)

1. Road commencing at its junction with the R347 in the townland of Knockaunglass & extending in an easterly direction for a distance of approximately 123 meters in the townland of Knockaunglass and ending outside house No.24 in the townland of Knockaunglass.

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

Houses No. 23 to 1 (Inclusive)

2. Road commencing at its junction with the above-mentioned road in the town land of Knockaunglass & extending in semi circular shape for a total distance of approximately 208 meters from house No.23 to 10 & 9 to 1 in the townland of Knockaunglass.

Electoral Area: Loughrea

DECLARATION OF ROADS TO BE PUBLIC ROADS – SECTION 11 OF ROADS ACT 1655(a)

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

Barrack Square Estate, Dunmore

1. Road pavement and footpath, commencing at public road R328 beside Garda Barracks and extending South East for a distance of 229m, to the end of the cul-de-sac (serves units 1-22). Road no L-6517-1.

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

2. Road pavement and footpath, commencing at junction with 1. above and extending North and West for a distance of 72m, to the end of the cul-de-sac (serves units 27-40). Road no L-6517-2.

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

3. Road pavement and footpath, commencing at junction with 2 above and extending East for a distance of 38m to the end of the cul-de-sac (serves units 36-31). Road no L-6517-3.

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Electoral Area: Tuam

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

1656(a)

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

Cúirt Cregg, Clifden

1. Main link road pavement and footpath, commencing at public road N59 and extending north for approximately 126m and ending at house No. 28 Cúirt Cregg (all in the townland of Tullyvoheen).

On the proposal of Cllr. E. Mannion, seconded by An Comh. O'Laoi, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:-

2. Road pavement and footpath, commencing at junction with house No. 28 and extending eastwards ending at house No. 24 a distance of approximately 26m.

On the proposal of Cllr. E. Mannion, seconded by Comh. O'Laoi, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:-

3. Road pavement and footpath commencing at junction with house No. 28 and extending westwards ending at house No. 32 a distance of approximately 32m.

Electoral Area: Conamara

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

1657(a)

On the proposal of Cllr. E. Mannion, seconded by An Comh. O'Laoi, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:-

Road commencing at junction with Local Road L1102 in the townland of Claddaghduff and extending west for a distance of 560 meters and in the townland of Claddaghduff and finishing at high water mark in the townland of Claddaghduff.

Electoral Area: Conamara

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

1658(a)

On the proposal of An Comh. O'Tuairisg, seconded by Cllr. Welby, the Council approved the declaration of the following road to be a public road, the statutory procedure having been complied with:-

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Road commencing at junction with Local Road L53241-0 in the townland of Cur and extending south for a distance of 1000 meters and finishing at grid reference 93,230; 251,880 in the townland of Teernakill South.

Electoral Area: Conamara

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

1659

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

Road commencing at junction with Local Road L-53692-0 in the townland of Droim an Mhuchain and extending west for a distance of 125 meters and in the townland of Droim an Mhuchain and finishing at Mr. Aidan Clancy's house in the townland of Droim an Mhuchain.

Electoral Area: Conamara

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

1660

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

Road commencing at junction with Local Road LT-13106-3 in the townland of Eighterard and extending north east for a distance of 133 meters in the townland of Eighterard and finishing at Mrs. McQuinn's house in the townland of Eighterard.

Electoral Area: Conamara

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

1661

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

Road commencing at junction with Regional Road R336 in the townland of Teernakill South and extending south for a distance of 1735 meters and in the townland of Teernakill South and finishing at grid reference 97,840 ; 251,180 in the townland of Teernakill South.

Electoral Area: Conamara

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TO CONSIDER REPORT UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 ON THE DISPOSAL OF 0.07 HECTARES AT MAIN STREET, OUGHTERARD, CO. GALWAY

1662

Statutory Notice dated 17th January, 2014 and Report dated the 16th January, 2014 were previously circulated in accordance with the relevant statutory timeframe.

Cllr. Welby declared a potential interest in the item to be considered and having declared same withdrew from the Council Chamber the full duration of the consideration of the item.

On the proposal of Cllr. E. Mannion, seconded by An Comh O'Laoi it was agreed to lease 0.07 Hectares at Main Street, Oughterard to Oughterard Courthouse Conservation and Heritage Company Limited in accordance with the terms as detailed in the Statutory Notice dated the 17th January 2014.

TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015 – 2021 AS PER SECTION 11(5)(A) AND (B) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS MENDED)

1663

It proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed defer consideration of this item to a Special Meeting to be held on the 14th February, 2014, commencing at 11.00 am in County Hall.

Cllr. McHugh referred to the closure of approximately 300 parking spaces in the centre of Tuam and expressed concern in relation to the potential impact of same on the businesses in the town, including the retail and services sector based around the town centre. He outlined that while he fully appreciated that the closure arose from a legal action and that the matter remained before the Courts, he appealed to all involved to enter into dialogue and consultation through an appropriate forum to resolve the issue.

Cllr. Cunniffe stated that the judgement of the court was available and detailed the basis for the closure of the parking. He stated that while the closure may lead to some inconvenience, he was of the opinion that adequate parking remained available in Tuam in alternative locations to serve the business needs of the town and referred to the impact the opening of the car park had on other parking facilities and businesses in the town. He indicated that it was disappointing that it was necessary to commence legal action to address the matter but that the closure was required by a judgement of the High Court.

Cllr. M. Connolly highlighted the importance of sending out a clear message that Tuam remained open for business.

Cllr. Hoade stated that the matter was still before the Courts and it was necessary to be mindful of same in raising the matter in the Chamber.

The Mayor advised that as the matter remained before the Courts he was not allowing further comment on same.

TO CONSIDER DRAFT TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME 2014 – 2018

1664

Mr. Raftery detailed the background to the preparation of the Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 -2018 and the consideration of same by the Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and invited Ms. Mary Forde, Senior Social Worker to present an overview of the Draft Programme.

Ms. Forde presented the Draft Programme and addressed a number of queries and provided additional clarification on a number of issues that arose in the subsequent consideration of same by the Members.

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Ms. Forde in reply to Cllr. M. Finnerty and other Members confirmed that it was no longer intended to proceed with the construction of two additional units of accommodation in Ahascragh, as following consultation, there was no longer a requirement for same.

Cllr. McClearn stated that there needed to be a recognition of the fact that national policy in this area had failed and that there was a need for a genuine forum on the issue in order make progress in addressing same.

Cllr. G. Finnerty referred to the need to learn lessons from the development of the M18 South of Gort in building the M17/M17 Gort to Tuam in order to ensure that access was not readily available to facilitate caravans parking adjacent to the motorway.

Ms. Forde in reply to comments from a number of members representing the Conamara Electoral Area, confirmed that an adequate number of privately operated caravan park facilities existing in Conamara to accommodate the needs of travellers wishing to

Cllr. Hoade welcomed the interaction with Galway City Council on the programme, particularly in the context of the requirements of the Halting Site on the Headford Road and the decision of An Bord Pleanála to limit the duration of the permission granted for the additional capacity at the site and the need to advance the provision of alternative accommodation for those currently resident on the site.

Cllr. Maher welcomed the approval for the appointment of the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and requested clarity on the timeframe for the rollout of CCTV. Ms. Forde in reply indicated that the recruitment process for the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer was being advanced and that approval was awaited from the National Oversight Committee to allow the CCTV initiative proceed but that a positive outcome was expected in the coming weeks.

Ms. Forde in reply to Cllr. Broderick confirmed that the accommodation being provided through group schemes was by means of anticipated casual vacancies arising over the period of the programme.

It was proposed by Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. G. Finnerty and agreed, to adopt the Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON STORM WEATHER EVENTS – IMPACT, RESPONSE & INTERIM SUBMISSION FOR FUNDING 1665

Report dated the 27th January, 2014 was circulated to each Member

Mr. Gavin outlined the contents of the report. He said that there had been an unprecedented number of storms causing severe damage/flooding on the Coast and Inland. He informed the Members that submissions had been made to the Department for damage/repairs in the region of €500,000 which had been spent to date.

The Mayor said that he had visited a number of areas affected by the storms and said that he wanted to pay special tribute to the commitment and dedication of Galway County Council staff who worked under severe hardship to carry out clean ups, he also paid tribute to local communities specially in south Conamara and Maree and Rinvilla for their assistance and for the community effort in responding to the impact of the storms and flooding. All Members paid tribute to the works carried by staff of Galway County Council over this period. The Members referred to the severe damage done in all areas of the County to -

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- Homes
- Shoreline/coastline,
- Graveyards,
- Piers, Fishing equipment,
- Farms, walls,
- Roads.

They said they hoped that funding would be made available as soon as possible, and that the Council would be reimbursed the €500,000 already spent as no contingency existing in Budget 2014 to cater for same. They said that Rock Armour had been a good form of defence and had worked well where it was in place. Reference was made to the Causeway at Gowla, Lettermore with a full report/survey on the state of the causeway being requested.

The Manager also acknowledged the tremendous work done by Mr. Liam Gavin and his teams both Indoor and Outdoor and expression her appreciation to the contractors who carried out works on behalf of the Council. The Manager advised that the embargo on recruitment remained in operation but that it was possible to avail of the services of panels of Contractors, and they had been mobilised.

In reply to some of the queries raised, Mr. Gavin said that the extent of the works will depend on the funding made available and will be prioritised. He confirmed that Coastal Protection had been included in the Claim and said that a Coastal Protection Plan would be put in place. He pointed out that in relation to the Causeways, inspections indicated that remedial works will be necessary and such works will be the subject of an application for funding.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS 1666

It was proposed by Comh. O'Laoi, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed to suspend Standing Order to allow the meeting continue beyond 6.00 pm.

In reply to queries, he confirmed that damage to private within the knowledge of the Council, had been included in the estimates prepared and submitted to the Department but that any decision in relation to such works would be taken in the context of the level of funding made available and the conditions associated with such funding.

TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC) 1667

Report dated the 27th January, 2014 was already circulated to Members.

Mr. Kelly presented the Report as circulated noting that he was aware the the Members would prefer an opportunity for greater input but that the guidelines for the establishment of the Local Community Development Committee did not allow for same.

Mr. Kelly addressed a range of queries from the Members, in relation to the proposed membership of the Committee, including the opportunity for input by the Family Resources Centres, the need for the Elected Members to be drawn from the membership of the Corporate Policy Group, the future of the Local Action Groups and the future role of the Boards of such Groups.

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The Mayor advised that the proposal was considered by the Corporate Policy Group and the Group agreed to recommend the proposal, as presented by Mr. Kelly, to Council. Cllr. Hoade indicated that while the Council may prefer a different configuration and approach to the formation of the Committee, it did not have a free hand in the matter and on that basis, proposed the membership of the Committee as presented, this was seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed.

TO NOTE INDICATIVE PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES FOR 2014 1668

Report dated the 27th January, 2014 was circulated to each Member the contents of which were noted by the Council.

TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES. 1669

Cllr. S. Walsh was not present in the Chamber for the duration of the consideration of this item.

Report was already circulated to each Member

Esperanza Enterprises – Early Education & Childcare in your Community – 29th – 30th November 2013 – Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry – Fee: €150

Cllr.'s Seán Ó Tuairisg, Cllr.'s Peter Roche, Jarlath McDonagh

Esperanza Enterprises – Improving Road Safety – Traffic Management – 20th – 21st December 2013 – Westport Plaza Hotel, Westport, Co. Mayo – Fee: €150

Cllr. Michael Connolly

Celtic Conferences – Microsoft Word Training Workshop for Councillors – 15th – 17th January – Clonmel Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary – Fee: €100

Cllr. Michael Connolly

Ace Training – Rural Housing - Planning & Development Design Guidelines – 17th – 19th January – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth – Fee: €100

Cllr.'s Michael Maher, Pat Hynes

Celtic Conferences – Branding in Political Elections – a new quality of Political Communication – 17th – 19th January – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Cllr.'s Michael Fahy, Shaun Cunniffe

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Celtic Conferences – Doing more with less – Managing Time & Productivity – 24th – 26th January – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Cllr.'s Michael Fahy, Shaun Cunniffe

Ace Training – Domestic Water Charges – Preparation & Practicalities – 24th – 26th January – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth – Fee: €100

Cllr.'s Pat Hynes, Tomás Mannion

Monaghan County Council – LAMA Spring Seminar 2014 – 31st January – 1st February – Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan – Fee: €150

Cllr.'s Jarlath McDonagh, Peter Feeney, Tiarnan Walsh, Bridie Willers, Jimmy McClearn, Tom McHugh

BG Seminars – Rural Crime Prevention & Detection – 2nd – 4th August 2013 – Clonree Hotel,

Ace Training – Good Governance of Community, Voluntary & Charitable Organisations in Ireland – 31st January – 2nd February – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth – Fee: €100

Cllr. Pat Hynes

BG Seminars – European Convention on Human Rights – 16th – 18th August 2013 – Quality Hotel,

Celtic Conferences – Changes in Construction Tendering for Local Authorities – 31st January – 2nd February – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – Fee: €100

Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe

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

On the proposal of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Ryan, attendance at the Conferences as circulated, was authorized by the Council.

TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED 1670

Report was already circulated to each member.

Association of County & City Councils – Annual Conference 2013 – 7th – 8th March – Tower Hotel, Waterford

Cllr. Peter Feeney

TJK Conferences – Freedom of Information Seminar for Councillors – 22nd – 24th March – Woodfield House Hotel, Limerick

Cllr. Peter Feeney

Quality Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

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**Wexford County Council – LAMA Spring Seminar 2013 – 5th – 6th April – Ashdown Park Hotel,
Gorey, Co. Wexford**

Cllr. Peter Feeney

**Carlow Tourism – 11th National Conference – The Gathering – Diaspora Tourism Matters – 18th –
20th April – Lord Bagenal Hotel, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow**

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

**BG Seminarz – Community Development – Arts & Sport – 26th – 28th July – Quality Hotel,
Killarney, Co. Kerry**

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

**BG Seminarz – Rural Crime Prevention & Detection – 2nd – 4th August 2013 – Clanree Hotel,
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal**

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

**BG Seminarz – European Convention on Human Rights – 16th – 18th August 2013 – Quality Hotel,
Killarney, Co. Kerry**

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

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

Cllr. Eileen Mannion

**Esperanza Enterprises – Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013 – 20th –
21st September – Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry**

Cllr. Peter Feeney

**BG Seminarz – Community Mental Health & the Elected Member – 20th – 22nd September –
Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal**

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

**BG Seminarz – How the Elected Member can help Combat Crime – 27th – 29th September –
Quality Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry**

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

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Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

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

Cllr. Eileen Mannion

Cllr.'s Eileen Mannion, Tiachan Walsh

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

Cllr. Seamus Walsh

Cllr. Michael Fahy

Esperanza Enterprises – Local Governments & Planning & Development Act 2013 – 1st – 2nd November – Westport Plaza Hotel, Westport, Co. Mayo

Cllr. Peter Roche

Cllr. Peter Roche

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

Cllr.'s Peter Feeney, Seamus Walsh

MANAGER'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE

Irish Centre for European Law – Implementation & Enforcement of EU Environmental Legislation – 8th November 2013 – Royal Irish Academy, 19 Dawson St., Dublin 2

Comh. Seosamh Ó Laoi

Loughrea Memorial Group – Aspect's of Galway's Military History & Private John Oliver's Remembrance Weekend – 8th – 10th November – Loughrea, Co. Galway

Cllr. Tim Broderick

Celtic Conferences – Debt Solutions – The New Personal Insolvency Legislation – 22nd – 24th November – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork

Cllr. Tomás Mannion

Esperanza Enterprises – Early Education & Childcare in your Community – 29th – 30th November 2013 – Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry

Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg, Cllr.'s Peter Roche, Jarlath McDonagh

Teagasc – Future Weather / Future Farming – 5th December 2013 – Teagasc Food Research Centre, Ashtown, Dublin

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Comh. Seán Ó Tuairisg

Ace Training – Local Authority Employment Law, Practice & Procedure – 6th – 8th December 2013 – Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

Cllr.'s Eileen Mannion, Tiarnan Walsh

Celtic Conferences – Tourism Technology & Competitive Strategies for 2014 – 13th – 15th December 2013 – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork

Cllr. Michael Fahy

Celtic Conferences – Microsoft Excel Training for Councillors – 20th – 22nd December 2013 – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork

Cllr. Peter Roche

On the proposal of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Ryan, it was agreed to note the summary of proceedings at Conferences, as circulated.

MANAGER'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE

1671

The Manager informed the Members that the Reform of Local Government Bill had progressed through the Oireachtas and was now enacted. She stated that the Service Level Agreement with Irish Water had been signed and this allowed Galway County Council to fulfill its service obligation on behalf of Irish Water over the next 12 years.

Mr. Owens informed the Members that Polling for the European Parliament and Local Elections 2014 will take place on Friday 23rd May 2014 with the hours of poll being 7.00 a.m. - 10.00 p.m. He advised that the closing date for the Supplement to the Register is Tuesday 6th May 2014 and that the closing date for the Supplement to the Postal and Special Voters List is Saturday 26th April 2014.

Mr. Gavin informed the Members that the 2014 Regional & Local Roads Grant Allocation had been notified. He said that he would be advancing the preparation of the Draft Roads Programme and the Area Committees would be convened to allow for the consideration of same.

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

- Correspondence dated 14th January 2014 from Kerry County Council adopting the resolution that Kerry County Council in conjunction with other Local Authorities, would have a direct representative dealing with all EU funding.
- Correspondence dated 16th January 2014 from South Tipperary County Council passing the resolution to call on the Ministers for Finance, Education and Social Welfare to immediately review the flat fee of €833.00 introduced in the October Budget for apprentices attending Institutes of Technology.

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- Correspondence dated 23rd December 2013, received from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in connection with rural water supply.
- Correspondence dated 2nd January 2014, received from the Office of the Taoiseach acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in connection with Rural Regeneration.
- Correspondence dated 6th January 2014, received from the Department of Communication, Energy & Natural Resources, acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in relation to New Inland Fisheries Legislation.
- Correspondence dated 17th January 2014, received from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government, acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in relation to the National Rural Water Monitoring Committee.
- Correspondence dated 23rd January 2014, received from the Department of Health & Children, acknowledging Galway County Councils letter in relation to the closure of St Brigids, Ballinasloe.

MAYOR'S BUSINESS

1672

TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM IDA IRELAND

As previously stated the IDA were unable to attend and sent their apologies.

It was proposed by An Comh. O'Cuaig, seconded by Cllr. D. Connolly that Galway County Council requests the President and the Government to release Margaretta D'Arcy from Prison on Humanitarian Grounds.

The Mayor then asked if all of the Members agreed to the proposal, as there was no agreement, the Mayor called for a vote and the following was the result of the vote:

For: Cllrs., D. Connolly, O'Curraoin, Noone, [3]
Against: Cllr. Broderick, Carroll, Finnerty, Maher, Welby [5]
Abstained: Cllr. Hoade [1]

As a result of the vote, the Mayor declared the Motion Defeated.

It was proposed by An Comh O'Curraoin, seconded by An Comh. O'Cuaig and agreed that Galway County Council reinstate damaged Burial Grounds in County Galway during recent storms and that reinforcement measures also be put in place to prevent future damage, and that Galway County Council calls on Government to provide assistance to small holders along the shoreline who have significant damage done.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. Walsh, seconded by Cllr. McDonagh that this Council allocates a fixed time each Month for Members to condemn the Government on any decision they make. This I feel would be better than using Minutes of Meetings to speak on any subject they desire.

The Mayor then asked if all of the Members agreed to the proposal, as there was no agreement, the Mayor called for a vote and the following was the result of the vote:

For: Cllrs., Broderick, Maher. [2]
Against: Cllr. Carroll, D. Connolly, Cuddy, O'Curraoin, Finnerty,

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Hoade, Noone, Welby [8]

Abstained: An Comh. O'Laoi [1]

As a result of the vote, the Mayor declared the Motion Defeated.

It was proposed by Cllr. Ryan, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed that graveyards have a standard practice of walls or stone and the height of Headstones implemented as a standard practice throughout the County. The Role of the Caretaker or Committee be consulted when these matters arise.

It was proposed by Cllr. D. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Canney and agreed that Galway County Council calls on the Government Departments of Agriculture and Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government to address the issue of Dead Animal Collection and Rendering as because of recent developments prices that farmers now have to pay have sky rocketed at collection plants.

It was proposed by An Comh. O'Laoi, seconded by Cllr. Maher that Reception be held for the Galway Minor Ladies Football Team on winning the All Ireland Minor A Ladies Football Title.

Mr. Gavin in reply to Cllr. Cuddy confirmed that consultants had been appointed to advance the Galway City Outer Bypass in conjunction with the project team. He advised that the legal costs arising from the challenge to the previous process had yet to be determined but that the NRA had committed to meeting all costs to be incurred by the Council, if any.

Cllr. Welby asked that where a Planning Permission had been granted would the connection be done by Irish Water and if this would involve the payment of a Fee.

He asked what the legal status was in this situation.

In reply to Cllr. Welby, Mr. Cullen confirmed that the existing fees and charges relating to Water Services and connections contineud to apply but through a different administrative process but that same may change at a later date.

The Mayor referred to correspondence received from Cllr. John Cummins, Mayor of Waterford City relating to the 1,100th anniversary of the City of Waterford and an invitation to receive on behalf of the County of Galway a Tricolour that will have flown at 33 The Mall in Waterford, the building that Thomas F. Meagher, a hero of the Rising of 1948m flew the Irish flag for the first time. He advised that he had been invited to nominate a school from the county to also receive a flag at the 1948 tricolour festival on Sunday, 9th March 2014 to be permanently flown in the Council Chamber and chosen school. The Members agreed for the Mayor to select a school and for the tricolour to be flown in the Council Chamber.

It was proposed by Cllr. Hoade, seconded by Cllr. Cuddy and agreed for the March, April and May Ordinary Meetings of Council to commence at 11.00 am.

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

1673

The following reply was given:-

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 23 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

1676

"Colas Roadbridge JV (CRJV) is the maintenance contractor appointed by the NRA under the Motorway Maintenance and Renewals Contract (MMaRC) for Network B which includes Winter Service provision on the N/M18, in County Galway and County Clare and the N19 and the N85 in County Clare. For this part of their network CRJV run their

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operations out of their depot on the Tulla Road, Ennis incorporating 4 Treatment routes. Under the MMarC contract Winter Service provision commenced on 1st October 2013 and runs until the 15th May 2014.

During December 2013 CRJV provided Winter Treatments from the Ennis Depot on 10 separate days/ nights over the course of the month (4th, 16th, 19th, 22nd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 28th, 29th, and 31st).

With regards to particular issues experienced on the 19th December 2013 when An Garda Síochána (AGS) made the decision to close the M18 (between Jn. 14 and Jn. 16) at approximately 11am and again at 4pm the information and records held for that period show that the M18 received three precautionary treatments at c.00:00 and c10:30. Even though these treatments were carried out, the hail showers experienced on the day were of such severity and intensity that at one point (just after 2pm) they caused the road surface temperature to drop by approximately 5 Deg Celsius in a 30 minute period. Notwithstanding this, the precautionary salting treatments that were carried out prevented the road surface from freezing at any time throughout the 19th of December and a further treatment was carried out at 17:00.

There is no advance treatment that can protect against the hazard that develops as a result of intense hail showers and it is incumbent on drivers to adjust their behaviour to take driving conditions into account.

Variable Message signs were erected by NRA's motorway maintenance contractor at request of Gardaí as drivers were not driving with due regard for the road conditions. The continued use of these signs will be discussed between the Gardaí and NRA.

The safety barrier terminals used on the N18 are a P4 type terminal. The NRA Safety Barrier Standard TD 19/09 (January 2009) states that for "roads with a design speed of 100km/h or greater upstream terminals shall be of performance Class P4."

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

1674

The following reply was given:-

"Galway County Council entered into discussions with the NRA on the issue of caravans parked alongside the motorway. In the interim the caravans have vacated the site. Galway County Council will liaise with the NRA and local landowners concerning this site and area."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 22 – CLLR. G. FINNERTY

1675

The following reply was given:-

"Galway County Council will examine this area and if appropriate will enter discussions with the OPW on the need and costs associated with this scheme. Should the OPW consider this scheme appropriate Galway County Council will progress the scheme as required."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 23 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

1676

The following reply was given:-

"Galway County Council have a limited budget for the operation, maintenance and development of public lighting throughout the County. All available funding for public

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lighting is spent on the operation and maintenance of existing lighting for 2014. No funding is available during 2014 for the provision and development of new public lighting."

"To date Galway County Council have had no involvement in this scheme. However, should funding be made available Galway County Council in partnership with the local

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 24 – CLLR. J. MCDONAGH

1677

The following reply was given:-

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 30 – CLLR. M. FAHY

"Noted." *Following reply was given:-*

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 25 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

1678

The following reply was given:-

"Galway County Council are currently in discussions with the NRA concerning the provision of an overlay and improvements through the village of Claregalway. It should be noted that no allocation has been provided in the 2014 national roads grant for work in Claregalway. The development of the N17 route through Claregalway will require substantial planning and design in consultation with the NRA before works can proceed."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 26 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

1679

The following reply was given:-

"The Council is in receipt of a tender recommendation report in respect of a civil engineering contract which includes the works the subject of this notice of motion. With the advent of Irish Water it is now necessary to forward this tender recommendation to Irish Water for their evaluation prior to accepting this tender or the commencement of any works. It is therefore not possible at present to give with any level of accuracy a commencement date for the works in question."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 27 – CLLR. J. CUDDY

1680

The following reply was given:-

"Initially it must be noted that the dual carriageway pre dates the Costa na Mara housing development. Galway County Council have prepared a Noise Action Plan 2013 to 2018. There is a five year programme set out in this plan within which Galway County Council are required to identify specific area which warrant further assessment and monitoring. The plan also requires identifying appropriate mitigation measures. Galway County Council will progress noise monitoring in accordance with this plan."

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 28 – CLLR. M. FAHY

1681

The following reply was given:-

"Galway County Council have had discussions with the NRA concerning the improvement of the pavement and footpaths through Kinvara. However, the road improvement works and footpath will not proceed until the proposed sewer scheme is completed through the town of Kinvara."

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NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 29 – CLLR. M. FAHY

1682

The following reply was given:-

“To date Galway County Council have had no involvement in this scheme. However, should funding be made available Galway County Council in partnership with the local FAS scheme would consider completing this work.”

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 30 – CLLR. M. FAHY

1683

The following reply was given:-

“Galway County Council have been in contact with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport seeking funding for the provision of bus shelters, However, no funding has been made available for bus shelters in County Galway for 2014.”

Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin

SUBMITTED, APPROVED + SIGNED

Alan Connolly

24th FEBRUARY 2014

DATE

Minutes of Statutory Budget Meeting held on 16th December 2013

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

**MINUTES OF STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING FOR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT ARAS
AND CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL, GALWAY, ON MONDAY 16TH DECEMBER 2013 @ 2.00 pm**

I LATHAR:

CATHAOIRLEACH:

Cllr. Liam Carroll, Mayor of the County of Galway

BAILL:

Cllrs. T. Broderick, S. Canney, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, S. Cunniffe, J. Cuddy, Comh S. O'Cuaig, Comh T. Ó Curraoin, M. Fahy, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, M. Finnerty, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, S. O'Laoi, M. Maher, E. Mannion, T. Mannion, T. McHugh, J. McClearn, J. McDonagh, M. Noone, P. Roche, K. Ryan, Comh S. Ó Tuairisg, S. Walsh, T. Walsh, T. Welby, B. Willers.

OIFIGH:

Ms. Martina Maloney, County Manager, Mr. G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance, Messrs. J. Cullen, K. Kelly, E. Cummins, Directors of Services; Mr Liam Gavin, A/Director of Services, Mr Michael Owens, County Secretary & Meetings Administrator, Mr M. McGovern, Management Accountant, Mr. Evan Molloy, Senior Engineer; Mr. Michael Raftery, CFO, Mr. S Groarke, AO.

A proposal to adjourn the Budget Meeting for half an hour was proposed by Cllr. J McDonagh, seconded by Cllr. J. McClearn and agreed.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting to 2.40 pm

The meeting resumed at 2.40 pm and the Mayor invited the Co. Manager to present the Budget 2014 Report to the Elected Members.

BUDGET 2014

1651

The County Manager referred to the Draft Budget for the year 2014 together with a report detailing the main provisions which had been circulated previously in accordance with statutory timelines to each member of the Council.

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She stated that a summary report from the Directors of Service in respect of activities of their respective functional areas is also enclosed. In addition, she referred to a report setting out the principal achievements of the Council over the period 2009-2014, in line with the Corporate Plan adopted by the Council for its Term of Office in 2009. She advised that this set out the many projects brought forward during that period, despite the harsh economic conditions that existed and the limited human and financial resources which were available. In accordance with statutory requirements the Draft Budget was considered at meetings of the Corporate Policy Group on the 18th of November and the 6th of December 2013.

She advised that 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 16th December 2013, provided the process is completed by 5th January 2014.

She then presented the following report to the Council.

Context of Budgetary preparation

Local Government is entering a period of profound change, having regard to the publication of the recently announced reform proposals. Minister Hogan has stated that 'Putting People First' incorporates 'the most fundamental set of changes in local government in the history of the state from regional and county level through to the municipal level of governance.' The document proposed that 'Local Government will lead economic, social and community development locally. It will be the main vehicle of governance and public service at local level, deliver efficient and good value services, and represent citizens and communities, as effectively and accountably as possible'.

The Bill includes four key themes:

(1) Structures

The Bill introduces a new model of municipal governance within counties, with the establishment of new municipal districts which replace the existing town Councils. Elected members will decide relevant matters at district level and collectively they will form the plenary County Council. There will be a unified county-wide administration, with no duplication of functions between district and county levels. The eight regional authorities and two regional assemblies will be replaced by three regional assemblies, with new strategic functions.

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Galway County Council Actions arising 2014

The establishment of the Municipal Districts will be instigated following the local elections in May 2014.

The winding up of the West Regional Authority will take place following the local elections. The Town Councils of Ballinsloe, Tuam and Loughrea will be replaced by the Municipal Districts.

(2) Funding, Accountability and Governance

Local services administered by local authorities are funded through the new local property tax. This financial responsibility is intended to underpin local democratic decision-making. A new independently chaired National Oversight and Audit Commission for Local Government will be established with external evaluation expertise. The proposals include provision for the replacement of the position of County Manager with a Chief Executive and the strengthening of the reserved functions of elected members.

Galway County Council Actions arising 2014

Compliance with the requirements in the legislation

(3) Economic Development and Job Creation

The Council will have an enhanced role in economic development and enterprise support, with a dedicated Strategic Policy Committee for Economic Development. A Local Economic Strategy will be prepared and adopted as part of the County Development Plan. The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) will be integrated with the Business support unit to create a one stop shop for business. It is hoped that this innovation will be introduced in March 2014.

In addition the Council will establish a new local community development committee (LCDC), for planning and oversight of local and community development programmes. This will ensure better alignment of the Local Government and Local Development systems. Galway County Council is a front-runner for the establishment of the LCDC and it is hoped that the first meeting will take place early in the new year. In addition, in 2014, a new Local and Community Plan will be prepared by the LCDC identifying priority areas of activity for the next five years.

Galway County Council Actions arising 2014

Establishment of the Local Enterprise Office(LEO)

Establishment of the Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee

Preparation of the Economic Strategy for the County

Establishment of the Local Community Development Committee(LCDC)

Preparation of a Local and Community Development Plan through the LCDC

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Given the enhanced role of Local Authorities in the Economic Development area, the council also proposes a number of initiatives in 2014, of which the following are a sample:

Roll out of the Gateway Labour Activation Scheme

Continued Support for the Job-Bridge Scheme

The preparation of a feasibility study for the site at Carnmore, following completion of the proposed acquisition jointly with the City Council.

Support for the development of Pearses Cottage

Seek funding from Failte Ireland for the commencement of the Conamara Greenway proposal.

Work with Failte Ireland on advancing the Wild Atlantic Way in Galway.

Advance economic infrastructure proposals in the county including the City Outer Bypass and the M17/M18 PPP proposal.

Continue to harness the potential of the local food and craft sector through the 'Made in Galway' brand.

Review the 'MeetWest' initiative to determine the approach required for 2014.

Progress the new County Development Plan which will set the framework for development for the years ahead.

The designation of a specific staff member to advance applications for funding under relevant E.U. funding programmes.

Assist as required in the roll out by the DCENR of the Next Generation Broadband Scheme.

(4) Delivering Services Efficiently

The Reform proposals envisage the introduction of Service Level Agreements (SLA) between Government Departments and Local Authorities for the delivery of services on an agency basis. It is intended that Service Plans will be approved by Council in respect of each programme which the Council delivers.

There will be a continued emphasis on the achievement of efficiency savings in line with the recommendations of the Local Government Efficiency Review. This will include the development of Shared Services across Local Authorities and a Work Force Planning process to drive staffing and organizational rationalisation. The embargo on recruitment remains in place, except where specific sanction is received to fill a vacancy arising. The Council is losing ten staff under the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme.

Galway County Council Actions arising 2014

The Council is actively pursuing energy efficiency, with the assistance of the Tipperary Energy Agency,

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The Council will continue to comply with revised national public procurement mandatory arrangements and will work with Regional partners to ensure value for money is achieved.

The Council will introduce work practices and process improvements to ensure best value in service delivery.

The Council is co-operating with national initiatives in relation to the role out of sectoral Shared Services initiatives.

The Council has implemented the initiatives arising from the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements, including the reduction in pay, deferral of increments, longer working hours, reduced annual leave and reduced sick leave entitlements.

The Reform proposals present many opportunities for Local Government, particularly through the enhancement of the leadership role of the Council in the Economic and Community Development arenas. This widening of the scope of local Authority activity is a significant shift in emphasis and will be an exciting challenge. The recognition being afforded to Local Government as the main vehicle of governance and public service at local level is very welcome and reinforces the Councils position as the only democratically elected institution outside of the Oireachtas, charged with responsibility for the delivery of efficient and good value services, and representing citizens and communities, as effectively and accountably as possible.

Uisce Eireann / Irish Water

In addition to the reform proposals in 'Putting People First' the other most significant influence on the preparation of the Budget 2014 is the establishment of the new national Utility, Uisce Eireann / Irish Water, and the proposed transfer of functions from Local Authorities to the new Utility.

The Water Services (No. 2) Bill 2013 is the second legislative milestone for the reform of water services provision giving effect to the commitments in the Programme for Government. Uisce Eireann / Irish Water was established under the Water Services Act 2013, as a subsidiary of Bord Gáis Éireann. The 2013 Act provided Irish Water with certain water services functions relating to the installation of water meters in domestic properties. The Water Services (no. 2) Bill 2013 provides for the transfer of water services functions which are set out in the Water Services Act 2007 from the county and city councils to Irish Water, with the exception of functions relating to domestic waste-water treatment systems and Rural Water Services which will remain with the local authorities.

The Bill sets out the arrangements for the transfer of property of the water services authorities, relevant to and required for the delivery of water services, to Irish Water. It also provides for the transfer of certain water services liabilities to Irish Water. The Bill provides for the making of agreements between Irish Water and each local authority for the delivery of water services. An agreement has been reached between the Department

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of the Environment, Community and Local Government, Irish Water and the local authorities that the first service level agreements will cover a period of 12 years i.e. until 2025. The Bill provides Irish Water with the power to charge customers who are in receipt of water services and Irish Water will be required to prepare a water charges plan in this regard. The Commission for Energy Regulation will be responsible for the approval of water charges plans to be prepared by Irish Water. The Commission will also be responsible for the approval of codes of practice to be prepared by Irish Water relating to standards of customer service, including the resolution of any disputes between Irish Water and its customers.

Currently work is on-going on the finalization of the proposed SLA between the Council and Irish Water, in respect of the services we will provide on Irish Water's behalf. It is imperative that the Council is reimbursed for the direct costs and associated overhead costs associated with the functions to be performed on behalf of Irish Water. The draft budget is prepared on the basis that the provision of water services by the Council, on behalf of Irish Water, is cost neutral to the Council.

It is also imperative, in addition to the transfer of water services assets to Irish Water, that the associated liabilities e.g. loan charges are also transferred. In addition, I believe that the role of the Council as planning authority, must be protected and decisions of Council must inform decisions in relation to the provision of future water services infrastructure to support the implementation of local planning policies.

The Council looks forward to developing a collaborative working arrangement with Irish Water, building on the knowledge and expertise within the Council to ensure the delivery of quality water services for many years to come.

Other changes impacting on the Budget

A number of other items are impacting on the budget 2014.

These include:

- Transfer of the Driver Licensing function to the RSA.
- The winding up of the West Regional Authority, with resultant return of staff seconded to that Authority.
- The establishment of the Local Enterprise Office and associated Service Level Agreement with Enterprise Ireland for the delivery of supports to small business.
- The Local Election process 2014.
- The implementation of Keeping Communities Safe: Fire Service Reform proposal
- The introduction of Local Property Tax payable on Local authority rented housing stock.
- Loss of ten staff under the voluntary severance arrangement.
- Increased working hours for some staff under the Haddington Road agreement.

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2013 Achievements

During 2013, the Council continued to maintain the services in the County having regard to the available resources. The Council has worked to maximise value for money in the delivery of services, while prioritising legal compliance obligations in the context of reduced resources

Savings have been achieved through revised procurement arrangements. A continued focus on energy efficiency is also yielding savings. The Council is co-operating with initiatives at national level to explore the Business Case for Local Authorities sharing services in some areas. This was a key recommendation of the Local Government Efficiency Review. Costs have been reduced in the facilities management area. The council is endeavouring to improve Customer service through greater use of on-line services.

Major progress continues in the improvement of water services infrastructure in the county. Many long-awaited sewerage schemes such as Clifden, Oughterard, Claregalway and Miltown, Kinvara and Athenry are being progressed with a number of projects commenced in 2013. The assistance and co-operation of the Department of the Environment in this regard is greatly appreciated. Significant improvement has also been made in the operation and maintenance of schemes since the completion of the Remedial Action List. Galway County Council is responsible for the operation of 35 Public Water Supplies (PWS) serving a population of 132,270. The published EPA Report indicated that microbiological compliance in Galway County Public Water Schemes was 100% in both 2010 and 2011. Chemical compliance levels increased from 99.0% in 2010 to 99.6% in 2011. This performance is a testament to the endeavours of all staff in the water services area.

The year 2013 saw progress in the Roads area with many schemes being progressed under the pavement and minor improvements scheme. The completion of the local road pavement condition survey provides useful information on the condition of roads throughout the County and will help to inform future work programmes.

Roads funding

While the level of resources available for road maintenance and improvement falls short of that which would be desirable, the Council will continue to adapt in an effort to make the best use of allocations. The table below sets out the position in relation to funding in recent years.

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	Roads Grant Funding €m	Council's own contribution €m
2008	38.90	5.12
2009	35.39	4.09
2010	23.65	3.02
2011	21.80	2.71
2012	20.80	2.60
2013	18.40	2.50
% reduction from 2008 to 2013	53%	51%

The decision of the European Court of Justice in relation to the Galway City Outer Bypass was very disappointing. However, the Council with the assistance of the NRA has recruited consultants to commence work on a new proposal for the scheme which is vital to the future economic and social development of Galway county and city. Progress on the N59 Moycullen bypass is also welcome. A decision from An Bord Pleanála is awaited in relation to proposed upgrade works to the N59 from Oughterard to Maam Cross. It is hoped that early 2014 will see the commencement of the M17/M18.

Progress continues in addressing the issue of flooding throughout the County, in association with the Office of Public Works. In particular the preparation of a planning application for the Dunkellin river has been a key priority and it is intended to submit a proposal to An Bord Pleanála for approval in the coming months.

Community and Enterprise

The year 2013 was particularly busy for the Community and Enterprise Unit. The MeetWest initiative had another successful year and was acknowledged as the best Economic Partnership in the Local Government LAMA awards 2013. Numerous events supporting entrepreneurship were held throughout the County in association with the County and City Enterprise Board. The success of the 'Made in Galway' initiative is evident from the level of participation by local food and craft producers and also from its success in winning the Chambers Ireland 'Excellence in Local Government Award 2013 for services to business.

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The partnership arrangement with the Local Development sector for the appointment of a food development officer is very welcome.

The Year of the Gathering was a great success throughout county Galway, with over 100 events taking place. The communities proved their capacity to respond to this initiative, with support from Galway County Council. Many communities achieved national recognition in the Tidy Towns Awards and also the All- Ireland Pride of Place Awards. Perhaps the most prestigious achievement is that of Inis Oirr - the winner of the most Livable Community in the world in its population category and also the Healthy Lifestyle Award. The efforts of the communities throughout the County are to be commended and supported for ensuring the County is a great place in which to live.

Budget 2014

Galway County Council is conscious of the difficulties being experienced by residents of the County, businesses and communities during this period of economic turmoil and is committed to ensuring the cost effective delivery of services, within the current financial constraints. This has informed the proposals for expenditure contained in the draft budget and the decision not to increase commercial rates at this time.

Galway County Council provides essential services and spends significant resources throughout the County. The 2014 Budget represents a valuable injection of funds to the County.

The draft budget for 2014 envisages expenditure of €122 million which equates to a reduction of 4% on the budget adopted for 2013. This represents a significant further reduction in the resources available to the Council following on from the reductions since 2008. The draft budget reduction is also impacted by the establishment of Irish Water who will be taking over responsibility for the procurement function associated with water services, with the council providing the headcount only into the future. The draft budget is prepared on the basis of a cost neutral delivery of the water services function under the SLA with Irish Water.

TABLE 1: BUDGETARY TREND 2008 – 2013

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 - Adopted Budget	€144 M

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2012 – Adopted Budget	€136 M
2012 - Adopted Budget adjusted for the Reduction in Local Government Fund	€135M
2013 - Adopted Budget	€127M
2014 – Draft budget	€122M

In line with previous approaches, the budget includes a figure for road grants based on the original 2013 allocation as the 2014 allocation has not yet been received.

Key influences in the preparation of the Draft Budget.

(1) Local Government Fund

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government has not yet informed us what the provisional General-Purpose Grant allocation from the Local Government Fund is for Galway County Council for the year 2014. It is anticipated that the allocation will be adjusted for the funding transferred to Irish Water to fund the SLA. In addition it is also anticipated that the Local Government Fund will include the replacement of the NPPR income which is no longer available to the Council. The draft budget is prepared on the assumption that the allocation of the Local Government Fund, together with the Irish Water allocation will equal the allocation received for 2013 that is €27,400,744. This is supplemented by the pension deduction from Staff of Galway county council which is estimated at €2,125,000, giving a combined figure of €29,525,744. In preparing the draft budget I have estimated that the contribution to Irish Water from the Local Government Fund will be in the order of €17m, and that adjusting for the NPPR and pension levy income the Grant for Galway County Council will amount to €14.4M.

(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%
2012	€30.45m	7%

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2012(revised)	€29.67m	3%
2013(LGF plus pension deduction)	€29.47m	3%
2014 (to include Irish Water and NPPR)	€29.52	0%

Expenditure proposals

The following tables set out the expenditure and income breakdown proposed for 2014:

Expenditure by Programme Group	2013 Budget	2013 Estimated Outturn	2014 Draft Budget
		€	€
Housing and Building	11,041,804	10,410,073	11,022,540
Road Transportation & Safety	35,296,671	35,515,759	33,613,908
Water Services	25,806,028	25,892,889	27,241,980
Development Management	7,202,261	7,019,822	7,065,184
Environmental Services	17,142,539	16,985,847	16,878,683
Recreation & Amenity	8,013,997	7,981,244	7,996,675
Agriculture, Education Health & Welfare	11,871,773	9,821,342	8,395,796
Miscellaneous Services	10,241,600	10,066,366	9,862,347
Total	126,616,673	123,693,342	122,077,113

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

Estimated Revenue Income	2013		2014	
	€	%	€	%
Local Government Fund	27,400,744	22	12,251,819	10
Pension Related Deduction	2,075,000	1.5	2,125,000	2
NPPR	2,150,000	1.5	145,000	0
State Grants & Subsidies	43,026,874	34	37,307,005	31

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Non-Domestic Water Charges	3,230,000	3	23,620,428	19
Local Determined Income	31,396,813	25	30,841,840	25
Other Income	17,337,240	13	15,786,021	13
	126,616,673	100	122,077,113	100

Expenditure Adjustments

I attach hereunder a table setting out the principal variances between the Budget for 2013 and 2014.

Service	Service Description	2014	2013	Change
		€	€	€
B03 & B04	Regional & Local Roads	26,601,168	28,080,602	(1,479,434)
Division C	Water Services	27,241,980	25,806,028	1,435,952
D02	Development Management	2,131,479	2,562,640	(431,161)
G05	Educational Support Services	5,438,840	9,346,807	(3,907,967)
	Subtotal of above	61,413,467	65,796,077	(4,382,610)
	Total Expenditure	122,077,113	126,616,673	(4,539,560)

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

Unfortunately, due to the limited funds available, I have been unable to make provision in the draft budget for any contingencies which might arise in 2014, for example costs arising from severe weather events or other unexpected incidents.

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The reduction in service's B03 and B04 Regional and Local roads arises largely due to no allocation for specific road grants anticipated in 2014 together with a reduction in the Councils contribution to local roads. The increase in division C arises largely due to increased operating costs of plants that have been upgraded under the remedial action programme, however this increased cost is expected to be funded by Irish Water under the SLA agreement. The reduction in service D02 Development Management arises largely due to staff retirements who have not been replaced in addition to a reallocation of staff resources to other services.

The reduction in service G05, Educational support services, is as a result of student grants having moved to a new central processing agency SUSI and what we are in effect providing for are those students who commenced studies prior to 2012 completing their studies. It is anticipated that by 2016 Galway County Council will no longer have an involvement in the processing of Higher education grants. This expenditure is 100% recoupable from the Department of Education.

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. This area of expenditure supports significant voluntary efforts in communities throughout the County I acknowledge the support of the elected members in this regard. The draft budget includes provision to 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 largely at the level agreed in the adopted budget for 2013. I have in addition provided funding for the new proposed LEO and the program of works to be undertaken by the new local community development committee (LCDC).

Capital Investment in Infrastructure

Amongst the main priorities identified in the Capital Programme for 2013-2015 are:

Progressing the Gort to Tuam PPP with a view to the project going ahead within the next few years. Work has commenced on the preparation of a revised planning application for the Galway City Outer Bypass (N6). It is also intended to progress some relatively low cost targeted improvements on the National Secondary network where safety is an issue and in tourist areas, in particular the N59.

The Council will provide support through our capital office to Irish Water in respect of water services investment.

There will be continuing investment in flood defence and mitigation, with support from the OPW, in particular the progression of the Dunkellin Scheme.

The Council will continue to work with Failte Ireland on the development of the tourism product including the Oughterard to Clifden Greenway and the Wild Atlantic Way Orientation plan.

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The Council will advance the Ballinasloe library project and welcomes the recent allocation of € 200,000 from the Department of the Environment for the project.

The Council will continue to progress energy efficiency of the social housing stock, limited local authority housing output and the increased use of Voluntary housing agencies.

Conclusion

She stated that the preparation of the Draft Annual Budget for 2014 has been challenging, in the context of changing responsibilities and the establishment of Irish Water. She stated that the proposed Draft Budget would allow Galway County Council to deliver the optimum level of core services in 2014, having regard to available resources. However, there is no provision for contingencies included. The proposed gross expenditure of €122M together with the capital programme spend estimated at €40m, represents a very considerable investment of monies in the development of the County and the delivery of services throughout the County.

She wished to thank the elected members for their co-operation and support during 2013. She expressed her appreciation to the Mayor, Cllr. Liam Carroll, and the former Mayor Cllr. Tom Welby 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 2013. She stated that they 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 2014 to identify areas for efficiency improvement and cost saving. In particular, she acknowledged the work of Mr. Ger Mullarkey, Mr. Michael McGovern, Ms. Bernadette O'Connor, Ms. Caitriona Lusby and the staff in the Finance Unit. She stated that the preparation of the Draft Budget this year has been onerous and thanked all involved in delivering the draft budget.

She stated that the year 2014 will undoubtedly bring new challenges for Galway County Council, with the implementation of the major new reform proposals, but was confident that with support of the Members, Management team, and colleagues the Council will provide valuable services in 2014 to meet the critical needs of the citizens and adapt flexibly to the changes required.

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

The Manager then requested Jim Cullen, DOS to present a report on Irish Water. He presented the following report to the meeting.

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The Water Services (No. 2) Bill 2013 is being progressed at present through the Houses of the Oireachtas. This is the second part of the legislation to implement the reform of water services in Ireland, including the introduction of domestic water charges. The Water Services (No. 2) Bill 2013 provides for the transfer of water services function which is currently the responsibility of the 34 water services authorities to Irish Water. Generally the proposed legislation provides for the following matters:

- The transfer of water services assets and liabilities to Irish Water from the Water Services Authorities;
- The delivery of services by the water services authorities on behalf of Irish Water through service level agreements;
- The retention of powers by water services authorities for rural water functions as set out in Part 6 of the Water Services Act 2007 and for functions relating to domestic waste water treatment inspections as set out in Part 4A of the 2007 Act;
- Provisions prohibiting the sale of any part of Irish Water by Bord Gáis Éireann and the sale of water services infrastructure;
- The preparation of water services strategic plans and capital investment plans by Irish Water;
- The provision that Irish Water will charge all customers in receipt of public water services and that it will have the power to restrict a domestic supply in the case of non-payment.
- A prohibition on the disconnection of domestic customers due to non-payment of charges;
- The corporate governance provisions that will apply to Irish Water including the appointment of staff and directors to the company, grants by the Minister and reporting arrangements between the Irish Water and the Minister;
- Staffing and pension arrangements for staff of Irish Water;
- The designation of the Commission for Energy Regulation as the economic regulator for water services delivered by Irish Water.
- Provision for the Environmental Protection agency to be the environmental regulator for Irish Water;
- Provision for the National Rural Water Services Committee, established under Part 6 of the Water Services Act 2007, to be responsible for the approval of rural water strategic plans;
- Irish Water is to be provided with powers to take over private schemes in particular circumstances, including where there is a threat to human health arising from the failure of the private schemes to comply with environmental standards; and
- Various amendments consequential to the transfer of functions from the water services authorities to Irish Water;

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Service Level Agreements:

Of immediate importance is the provision in the legislation relating to the delivery of water services by water services authorities on behalf of Irish Water through Service Level Agreements (SLA). The SLA will define the general obligations on Irish Water and the Council and set out the respective roles and responsibilities of both parties under the headings of Values and Governance, Technical, Customer Services, Support Service, Communication, Administration and Finance.

It has always been an objective to achieve a seamless transition to Irish Water and, as far as possible, have business as usual from 1st January, 2014. The Service Level Agreement acknowledges that there will be a need for transition whereby Irish Water systems, procedures, and protocols are embedded and Local Authorities migrate away from our existing systems towards the new.

The provisions of the main SLA are generic and apply across all Local Authorities. It is supported by an Annual Service Plan (ASP) which is unique to each Council. The ASP sets objectives and targets for the coming year which will be measured against a baseline for current performance established in the first ASP.

The annual budget forms part of the ASP. The operational budget for 2014 has been set by Irish Water. The two main components of the budget are payroll, based on an identified headcount, and non payroll costs. Irish Water will recoup costs within the approved budget to the Council on a monthly basis. Any costs incurred outside of the budget provision must either be approved in advance or subject to a retrospective variance cost approval process.

The provisions of the SLA and ASP will place a considerable additional burden on the Council if it is to comply fully with the new reporting requirements. For example, there are additional reporting demands in the area of incident and environmental management, reporting to EPA, health and safety management and of course budgetary reporting and recruitment arrangements. This is in addition to the incorporation of new work processes and the use of new IT systems. Capital project management too will rely on a new set of IT systems and protocols.

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) will form the basis of the relationship and interaction between Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) and Galway County Council in to the future. It is the expectation that both Irish water and the Council will work collaboratively in discharging the water services functions. Both parties acknowledge that value for money and continuous quality improvement must be ensured to meet customer service expectations and comply with standards and requirements set by regulatory bodies such as EPA and, now, Commission for Energy Regulation (CER).

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It will be the intention of the council to continue to provide water services in the best interests of the public – albeit now that the council will be doing so on behalf of Irish Water under a Service Level Agreement.

The Co Manager then advised that the Council did not receive details of the actual Local Government Fund allocation of €12.5 million until the 12th of December and this is €202,000 less than what was anticipated even when the proposed funding from Irish Water was taken into account and consequently amendments were required to the draft Budget for 2014 as a result. The draft Budget was based on a Local Government Fund allocation comparable to the previous year. She stated that €400,000 of this referred to Ballinasloe Town Council leaving €12.1 million for the County Council. She requested Ger Mullarkey, Head of Finance to outline the adjustments to be made to the Draft 2014 Budget as a result of the actual LG Fund allocation and how the the establishment of Irish Water has affected the allocation and the recoupment of expenditure.

The Mayor Cllr. Liam Carroll then proceeded to initiate the debate on the Draft Budget.

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

The proposal not to increase the commercial rate for 2014 was broadly welcomed and it was noted that the Council had limited rate increases to just 1% since 2008. Opinion was expressed that relief from rates liability should be provided for businesses that are in financial difficulties as a result of the economic recession and where the owners are not receiving a living wage- it was suggested that more should be done to incentivise people to rent units for startup businesses.

Concern was expressed at the considerable reduction in the Council's Budget from €160 million in 2008 to €122 million in 2014 and the reduction of 33% in the level of the Local Government Fund allocation from €40 million in 2008 to €29 million in 2014. It was noted that the Budget was €5 million less than 2013.

Opinion was expressed that the Council should undertake an in- depth cost analysis of programmes such as Development Management and Housing to ascertain how efficiently they are operating. It was suggested that the budget of €7 million for Development Management and €11 million for Housing could be reduced as a result of cost analysis in line with the reduction of planning applications to 1,300 in 2013 and the phasing out of the local authority house building programme.

Concern was expressed in regard to the transfer of the Council's legal responsibility for water services to Irish Water which is a subsidiary of Bord Gais. It was noted that the Government recently approved the sale of Bord Gais to Centrica which is a private utility company located in the UK. It had recently announced major price increases for its gas customers in the UK and concern was expressed that Irish Water would be sold off to a

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private utility company in the future. Opinion was expressed that the price of water would be determined by a private UK company in the future whose only concern was profit and it was an affront to local democracy to have this power removed from local councillors. Opinion was expressed that the elected members had passed a motion that the ownership of Irish Water should not pass to the private sector. It was noted that the privatisation of Irish Water would have to be legislated for and the previous privatisation of Bord Telecom was a stark lesson. Opinion was expressed that local waterworks caretakers employed by the Council provided a reliable around- the- clock service in the past and that there could be a problem with Irish Water as regards the provision of a local service. Concern was expressed by the continual centralisation of services by the state which included not only water services but higher education grants, driver licences and local improvement schemes. The Council had an excellent record in providing these services in the past but it appears that local government services are being phased out and everything will be administered from Dublin.

Opinion was expressed that the Local Property Tax was a "con job" which the public were advised that the proceeds would be used to fund the provision of local services but instead much of it would be used by central Government. The public are required to pay motor tax and the LPT and would expect that potholes would be repaired but do not realise that only part of the proceeds are allocated for the provision of local services. Concern was expressed that due to the limited funding available the Council was unable to provide for emergency contingencies in 2014 such as the impact of severe weather and unexpected events.

Concern was expressed at the considerable reduction in the Roads Programme and the resulting knock on effect on the quality of the road network-the tertiary roads are rapidly disintegrating due to lack of maintenance and lack of funding for the proper repair of potholes on local and regional roads will lead to a network comparable to third world standards. It was noted that there was a decline in road grant funding of 53% from €39 million in 2008 to €18 million in 2013. Opinion was expressed that hedges were overgrown along most of the road network. Clarification was sought regarding whether construction of the N17/N18 Gort to Tuam PPP would commence in 2014 and whether it was proposed to have a toll on this road. The commencement of this project is vital to the local economy. Opinion was expressed that the community involvement in roadworks schemes administered by the Council in the past was very cost effective and it was suggested that the Council write to the Department requesting the re-introduction of the LIS scheme. It was noted that since the revised arrangements for the administration of the scheme was introduced there had been a marked decline in the number of schemes sanctioned- only 15 schemes were processed in 2013. A proposal was made that the Council should allocate 5% of the Discretionary Maintenance Grant to LIS schemes. Concern was expressed at the proposed reduction in the street cleaning budget and that this should be reversed. It was noted that there is a major problem with illegal dumping. Opinion was expressed that the tender process for road making materials and plant and machinery had become very competitive for businesses which are experiencing considerable reductions in income due

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to the economic recession. Clarification was sought in regard to whether the Council can recoup the €8 million deficit remaining on the Inis Mór Harbour project from the Department of the Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht. Progress on the the N84 at Luimnagh, the N59 Moycullen By-pass and N59 Clifden-Oughterard road was welcomed. Concern was expressed that 2013 was a setback in regard to Road Safety statistics. Clarification was sought as to whether the expenditure on G0101 Maintenance of Drainage would be recouped from the OPW. The progress achieved in regard to the flood relief measures undertaken by the OPW in conjunction with the Council was welcomed.

Opinion was expressed that the Council should provide a fund to remediate unfinished housing estates. Concern was expressed that there were currently approx 3,000 families on the housing waiting list and that only 3 rural houses were completed in 2013-there will be a major increase in the demand for social housing in the future. Concern was expressed at the proposed cutback of €50,000 in the Housing maintenance budget and the level of grants. Clarification was sought as to whether the Council could implement a program to upgrade unoccupied houses and it was noted that the Council housing stock had reduced. Opinion was expressed that the time limit for inclusion on the Rental Accomodation scheme should be reduced from 18 months to 12 months. Concern was expressed at the proposed reduction in the Mobility Aid Grant. Clarification was sought in regard to the recruitment of an official to deal with issue of traveller accomodation (A0103). Clarification was sought as to whether A0402 Tenancy Management was a payroll cost. Clarification was sought as to whether persons on long term social welfare were entitled to make an application under the RAS scheme. Clarification was sought as to whether the Council sent correspondence to the Department in regard to the requirement for a new Fire Station in South Conamara.

Clarification was sought as to whether the projected cost overrun on G0405 Animal Welfare Service including abandoned horses can be recouped from the Department of Agriculture. Concern was expressed at the significant increase in the level of abandoned animals and it was noted that the Council was involved in the implementation of a tender process with several other counties which would be cost effective. Opinion was expressed that the Council should examine the level of funding for Burial Ground provision and maintenance and the provision of grants to local Burial Ground committees represented good value for money. It was suggested that the Council be more pro-active in rewarding local effort in regard to this. Clarification was sought as to whether the funding for E0901 Maintenance of Burial Grounds included the grants paid to local committees or was there a separate budget for this. Concern was expressed at the level of funding for the provision of extensions to burial grounds. Clarification was sought in regard to the time frame for the Loughrea RWSS to be extended to Kilrickle. Clarification was sought in regard to the provision of a sewerage scheme for Kinvara –it was noted that the footpaths at Kinvara are in a terrible condition and cannot be remediated until the sewerage scheme is completed. Opinion was expressed that Eyrecourt was waiting 30 years for a sewerage scheme. Progress in regard to the Clifden Sewerage scheme was welcomed.

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Clarification of the funding of €250,000 for the Local Enterprise Office D0906 was sought. The indication that the Council would be more directly involved in economic development was welcomed as well as the tourism promotion initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way and the Oughterard-Clifden Greenway Project. Clarification was sought in regard to the estimated underspend on D0501 Tourism Promotion in 2013. Opinion was expressed that the County and City Councils should have been amalgamated in order to achieve efficiency of service delivery. Opinion was expressed as to whether the proposed increase in the number of councillors to 39 would be as effective as the existing 30 member Council and concern was expressed at the proposed cost of over €200,000 required for the re-design of the Council Chamber. Clarification was sought as to whether the €50,000 deducted from the Library Fund in 2013 in regard to a provision for Galway Airport would be restored.

Responses to the issues raised were as follows:

The Manager noted the proposal made regarding the need for an in-depth analysis on expenditure items appertaining to programs such as Development Management and Housing to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness and gave an assurance that every expenditure element has been subject to specific analysis in order to achieve value for money. Despite the significant decrease in the budget since 2008 the Council has endeavoured to achieve significant improvements in the delivery of services on a cost effective basis. In regard to the concerns raised regarding the future privitisation of Irish Water she advised that this was beyond the control of the Council and that the current position as regards the transfer of the water function to Irish Water was covered by Jim Cullen, DOS in his report. In regard to the clarification sought on the proposed commencement of the N17/N18 Gort-Tuam PPP she advised that according to the information available the contract should commence in 2014 and her understanding was that this road would not be tolled. In regard to the proposal to allocate 5% of the Discretionary Maintenance Grant to an LIS scheme to be administered by the Council, she advised that this was more applicable to the adoption of the Roads Programme and the Council should await the details of the roads grants for 2014. In regard to the requirement for a new fire station in Conamara she advised that the Council is required to implement the requirements of " Keeping Communities Safe " and undertake the detailed analysis required. She stated that consideration of the Fire Service is a reserved function which will come before the Council in 2014. The additional requirements for the fire service in the future would also have to be discussed by the SPC. In regard to the deficit on the Kilronan Harbour project she advised that the Council expected to recoup €300,000 this year and that consultations will continue with the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in 2014. In regard to the funding of €250,000 for the Local Enterprise Office she advised that this was a provisional estimate and the Council is awaiting details in regard to its commencement. In regard to the query on A0402 Tenancy Management she advised that recruitment of an anti-social behaviour officer was anticipated. In regard to projected underspend on D0501 Tourism Promotion she advised that this was due to funding from

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Bord Failte for the Conamara Greenway not being received in 2013. In regard to the query concerning the removal of €50,000 from the Library Book Fund to provide a fund for a Park and Ride facility operating from Galway Airport in 2013 she advised that this had been restored to the Library Service.

Mr. Mullarkey , Head of Finance, advised that the cost overrun on G0405 Animal Welfare service would be recouped from the Department of Agriculture. In regard to the query on G0101 Land Drainage he advised that €750,000 was the best estimate adopted by the Council but it was anticipated that the actual outturn would be in the region of €526,000 and this was recoupable from the OPW. In regard to the queries on the funding for A0103 Traveller Accommodation Management and A0402 Tenancy Management he advised that the bulk of those costs were payroll.

Mr. Cullen acknowledged the appreciation expressed regarding the service provided by the waterworks caretakers in the past and their availability to deal with emergencies and expressed hope that this would continue under the remit of Irish Water if Council staff still have a role. In regard to the proposed extension of the Loughrea RWSS to Kilrickle he advised that the Council had made a submission to the Department and to Irish Water on the matter. In regard to the provision of a sewerage scheme for Kinvara he advised that the documents were with Bord Pleanala. In regard to the query on E0901 Burial Ground Maintenance he advised that the provision of €344,680 consisted of €100,000 for grants for burial ground committees , €20,000 was provided for burial ground extensions and the balance was for payments to burial ground caretakers. He acknowledged that the grants paid to burial ground committees represented excellent value for money. The Council was constrained by the limited funding available in regard to the maintenance and provision of burial grounds.

Mr. Cummins explained that the Council was involved in the implementation of a tender process along with 8 other local authorities in regard to the Animal Welfare Service G0405 (abandoned animals) and it was anticipated that the contract would be awarded in the near future. He confirmed that the expenditure was recoupable from the Department of Agriculture. In regard to the concern expressed regarding the upgrading of unoccupied council houses –he confirmed that approx 5% of the stock would be unoccupied on a current basis and in his opinion the Council would not be able to rent a certain amount of these even if they were remediated. In regard to the query on whether persons on long term social welfare are entitled to make an application under the RAS scheme –he confirmed that their housing need can be met either through the RAS scheme or from the Council's own housing stock. In regard to the queries on the funding provided for A0103 Traveller Accommodation Management he advised that 90% of the salaries of the social workers was recouped from the Department.

Mr. Kelly addressed the query concerning the requirement for an in-depth analysis of the Development Management Budget of €7 million in light of the fact that the number of planning applications had declined. He explained that Development Management covered