



Galway County Council Archives

**LOUGHREA TOWN
COMMISSIONERS,
MINUTES**


LTC/1/24

JULY 2002 – JUNE 2006

**THE
FOLLOWING
BOOK HAS
TIGHT BINDINGS**

17/12/24

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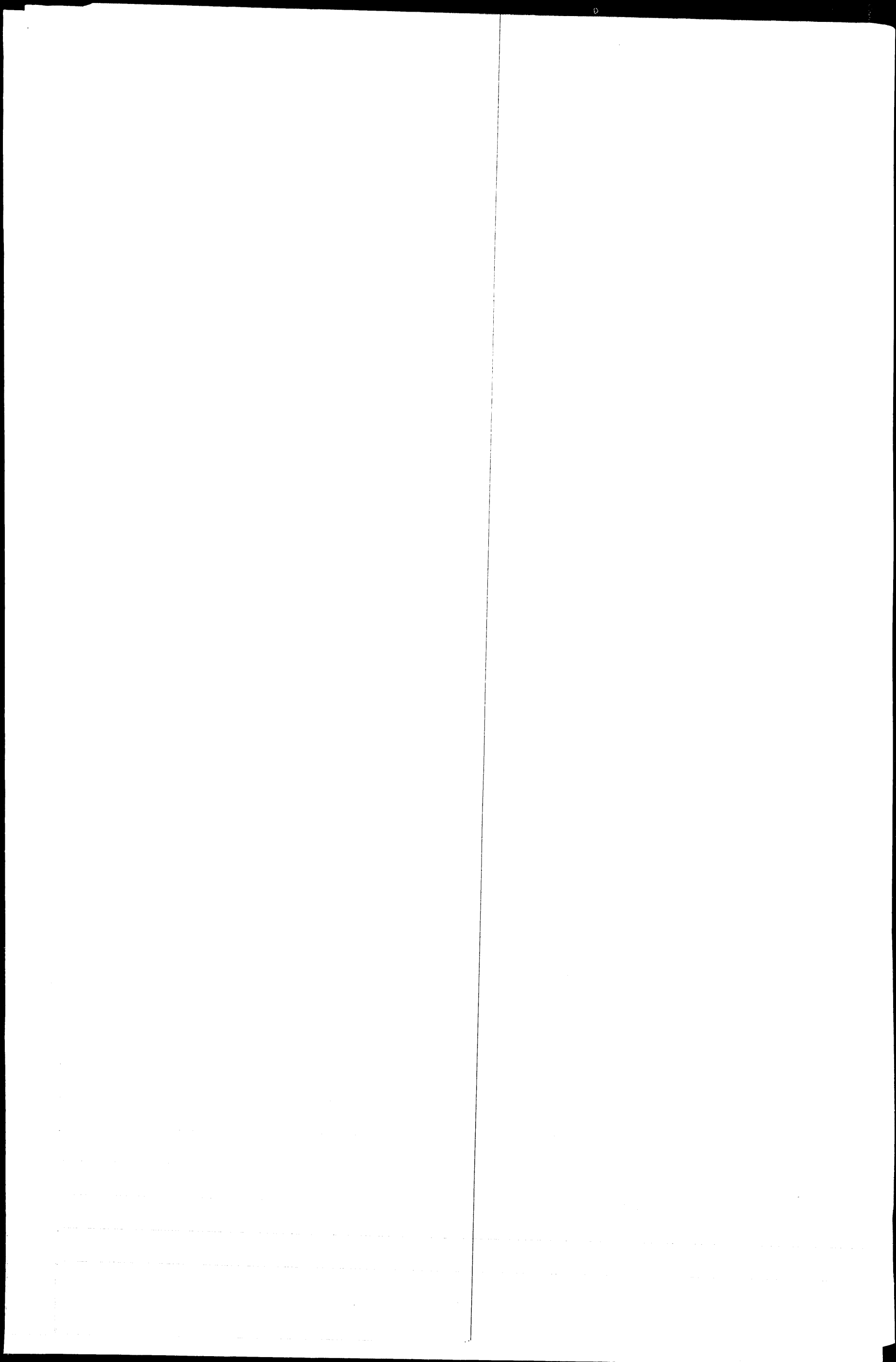
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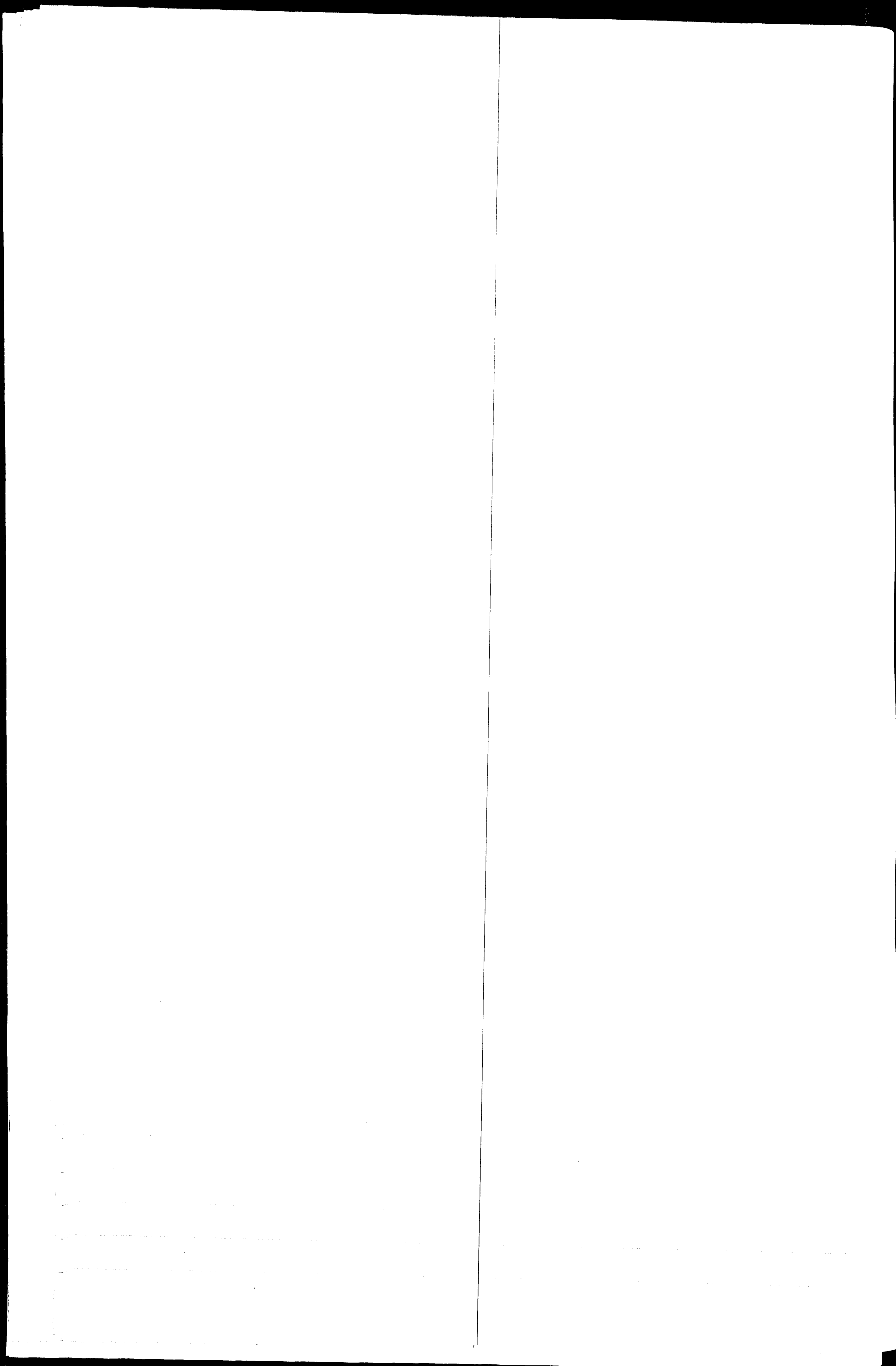
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Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 8/7/2002 in the Library, Church Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Cllr. Pat Hynes.

Members: Cllrs. Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, and Maura Kelly Stewart

Apology: Cllrs. Orla Burke and Matt Loughnane.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes of Annual Meeting

Referring to the minutes which had been circulated, Cllr. Regan said that he was disappointed that the comments made by him in relation to the manner in which he was treated by members of the Fianna Fail Party and events following his election as Chairman had not been recorded. He said that the statement made by him at the Annual Meeting should have been included in the Minutes. Cllr. Cronin said that she too had made a statement at the Annual Meeting with regard to the election of Cllr. Regan as Chair and it was not included in the Minutes either.

Mr. Cullen stated that the minutes are not and cannot be a verbatim record of every comment or remark made at Town Council Meetings. Rather, they are intended to record a synopsis and flavour of discussions and, most importantly, the decisions arrived at by the Council. He said that he would have no difficulty, in this particular instance, incorporating the statements from both Cllr. Regan and Cllr. Cronin into the Minutes.

It was agreed that Cllr. Regan and Cllr. Cronin would submit their statements to the Town Clerk and they would be incorporated into the Minutes which would then be presented at the September Meeting of the Town Council.

Minutes of Monthly Meeting

The minutes of the Monthly meeting held on the 10th June, 2002 were adopted and signed correct on the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Matters arising from the minutes: –

Public Toilets

Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked for an update on the Public Toilets at the Westbridge and if they would remain on the same site. She said that she was visiting Co. Roscommon and noticed that they had provided a modern toilet in a tiny space and wondered if Loughrea could follow that line. Mr. Cullen said that the Council was looking at the various options for public toilets and consideration seemed to be leaning towards the automated type of toilet. The Environment Department of the Council was in the process of establishing costs. The toilet would be located on the existing site.

Carparking:

Cllr. Regan enquired about the present situation with regard to the site adjacent to the Main Street Carpark. Mr. Cullen said that the site had been acquired and some accommodation works between the site and neighbouring boundaries had already been carried out. He said that the Council was obliged to undertake the statutory planning process following which development work would commence. He also confirmed that negotiations are taking place for the acquisition of a further site for carparking in the town.

Cllr. G. Burke asked if there had been any feedback from the Chamber of Commerce on the question of loading bays and commercial deliveries in the town. Cllr. Regan said that the Chamber of Commerce were discussing this issue and he would have a reply for the September Meeting. Mr. Cullen said that the question of loading bays and parking control would have to be dealt with by way of bye-laws.

Zoning of lands adjacent to Carmelite Order:

Mayor Hynes confirmed that he and Cllr. Curley had visited the nuns in the Carmelite Order to convey the support of the Town Council to their request to oppose zoning of a site adjacent to the Convent for residential purposes. He said he had been presented with a petition with over 3,000 signatures supporting the nuns and he had presented the

petition to the Mayor of the County Council during consideration of this issue at the County Council Meeting earlier in the day. He confirmed that Galway County Council had decided not to zone the lands for residential purposes. This was welcomed by the Town Councillors.

Visit to Achill:

Cllr. G. Burke enquired if any progress had been made by Mayor Hynes and Cllr. Curley in relation to the proposed visit to Achill to inspect the facilities provided by the Western Health Board. Cllr. Curley said that Noel Brett and Adrian Ahearne were on holidays and he would arrange the visit on their return.

Condition of roads:

Cllr. Kelly Stewart complained about the condition of the roads at Cross Street, Barrack Street and Fitzy's Corner. She also enquired about road markings. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer said that they would be examined and if funds were available this year, remedial works would take place.

Superannuation Gratuity for Councillors:

Mr. Cullen said that a summary document had been circulated to all members and that it was self-explanatory. A general discussion took place and some Councillors felt that they were discriminated against and were not treated equally with other Councils. It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke that a motion be sent to the A.M.A.I. Annual conference in Westport, Co. Mayo, "That all Town Councils should be treated equally in relation to gratuity entitlements." This was seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the two delegates attending the conference in Westport should also highlight this matter.

Revision of Remuneration:

An increase of 1% in accordance with Circular letter EL3/02 was approved on the proposition of Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. G. Burke.

Correspondence

E.S.B.

The Town Clerk read a letter from the E.S.B. with regard to the future of the E.S.B. shop in Loughrea. The letter stated that no decision had been made with regard to the future of the E.S.B. shop in Loughrea and it referred also to the extension of the E.S.B. bill payment facility to An Post.

Cllr. Regan said he had raised this matter and was still not fully satisfied with the reply. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the extension of bill payment facilities to the Post Offices was to be welcomed. Cllr. Cronin said that her reading of it is that the closure of the E.S.B. shop is not going to happen and they have painted a very positive picture. It was agreed to note the reply from the E.S.B.

Special Olympics

The Town Clerk stated that the Special Olympics Committee had expressed their thanks for the €300.00 donation for road signs.

Town Engineer

A thank you from Brendan McKenna, former town engineer for presentation and good wishes from Town Council had been received.

Notice of Motion:

Motions submitted by Cllr. G. Burke.

- (a) "That the path from the junction of Caheronaun and Bride Street to St. Brendan's Park be repaired"

This was seconded by Cllr. Cronin.

He said that this was the worst stretch of road in Loughrea and it should be repaired. Mr. Gallagher said that finances were stretched at the moment but he would look at the areas where need was greatest. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that heavy traffic goes up along by Garrybreeda cemetery and it is very dangerous and it should be made one way. Cllr. G. Burke said that the visibility at the top of Caheronaun road is very poor and it is impossible to see the traffic coming on the Dublin Road due to trucks and buses parked there. Cllr. Nix said that there is an auction held at this location twice a week, which attracts big crowds, and it causes chaos.

- (b) "That a path be provided from St. Brendan's Park to Cigna"

This was seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. Burke said that there was 110 staff in Cigna Factory and the majority was females. He said that the most of the employees walk to work and it is very dangerous especially during the winter. Cllr. Regan suggested that the I.D.A. should supply the material for the footpaths and the County Council could provide the manpower.

- (c) "That the road and path at the Hill be properly repaired after pipelaying last year"

This was seconded by Cllr. Nix.

Cllr. Burke said that road was dug up for pipelaying to a new housing estate by a private company and road and footpath was left in a bad state. He said that road is now subsiding and has a very uneven surface. Mr. Gallagher said that he had an estimate for this area and it would cost at least €22,000.00. Cllr. Burke said that outside the Jardin Estate is very bumpy and wondered if it could be repaired.

Mr. Cullen said that the repair and provision of new footpaths were dependent on the availability of funding and the requests made at the Town Council Meeting would be considered in the context of what was left this year and next years estimates.

Motions submitted by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

- (a) I will propose "that we request Galway County Council and the Gardai to leave the traffic lights at Main Street switched on during Race Week".

This was seconded by Cllr. G. Burke.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that people find it very difficult to cross the street during Race Week because the Traffic Lights are turned off to ensure the smooth running of traffic. Cllr. Curley said that the Gardai should be available to guide people across the road if the lights are turned off during Race Week.

- (b) "That Loughrea Town Council request the Minister for Health & Justice to re-examine the legislation governing the operation of Night Club entertainment. I am proposing this motion out of a sense concern for the health and safety of Patrons of such venues".

This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that a study carried out by the Western Health Board Environmental Health Department shows that guidelines set down by the World Health Organisation and the National Institute of Occupation and Health are well exceeded in a number of Night Clubs and music bars, which results in hearing being impaired. There is no legal standards in place for noise levels in music bars and nightclubs in respect of patrons, but the EC Protection of Workers (Exposure to noise) Regulations 1990 stipulates that "employees exposed to such noise levels must by law be wearing protective hearing protection". Protection should also be afforded to the patrons of such venues. She said that she was appealing to the relevant Government Departments to undertake a review of the legislation governing the following matters:-

- ❖ Noise levels, which will cause irreversible hearing damage.
- ❖ Access to excessive amounts of alcohol late into the night in Nightclubs.
- ❖ Better lighting to be made mandatory, so that patrons will be safer in such venues.
- ❖ Employers protect their employees in such venues by ensuring that they comply with the Regulations regarding their own health and safety.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that a recent article in the press stated that Ireland has made it to the top of the league for drink. She said that adults and representatives of the people should be shouting "stop" and asking the relevant agencies to tackle this serious health issue.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart also supported this motion and said that the opening hours of pubs and nightclubs should be looked at. She said that we must tackle this problem and attempt to address it. She said that there are long term health risks due to excessive drinking at a young age.

It was agreed that a letter be written to the relevant Ministers asking them to address these matters.

A.O.B.

Congratulations:

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that she wanted to congratulate Christian McLoughlin on her recent acting award.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said she wanted to congratulate the Minister for Justice for pursuing the Ansbacher Accounts and she hoped that the full rigors of the law would be imposed on offenders and that no leniency would be afforded to them.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that a letter should be written to the Minister for Sport and Tourism stating that no grants be paid to the F.A.I. because of the sale of the television rights to Irish soccer games to Sky for the next five years.

Cllr. Cronin said that a survey had been carried out in the town some time ago in relation to the Town Hall. It showed a significant proportion of the community wanted a place of entertainment such as a theatre/cinema. She said that she was aware a feasibility study was being carried out with regard to the Town Hall and would make available the findings of the survey to the people carrying out the feasibility study for the Council.

Cllr. Cronin also mentioned about the Edward Martyn weekend from the 23 - 25th August, 2002 which was taking place in O'Dea's Hotel, Loughrea.

Cllr. Regan said that he saw a notice on the local paper that Mayor Hynes was going to write to An Taoiseach to use his good office to progress the stand alone by pass for Loughrea. In this context Cllr. Regan said that the Chamber of Commerce had sought a meeting with Minister S. Brennan, Minister for Transport. He said that 4 delegates were nominated from the Chamber of Commerce and that 4 councillors from the Town Council were also invited. It was agreed that all of the councillors would attend the proposed meeting. Cllr. Regan said that he would inform the Town Clerk of the date, time and venue when he got confirmation from the Minister. He wanted to inform the members as he expects that this will take place before the next meeting in September. Cllr. Curley suggested meeting the Chamber of Commerce prior to the meeting so that they would all be singing from the same hymn sheet. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that building super roads, motorways, etc. should be looked at as large chunks of land are being taken to the detriment of the environment. She suggested that the rail system should be seriously looked at and that some of the rail lines should be reactivated. She said people are stuck in traffic jams for more than 1 hour on the Derrydonnell to Galway road every morning between 8.00 - 10 a.m.. Cllr. G. Burke said that the County Development Board Strategy "Working Together" encourages the development of the Rail System and he said that this should be pursued and that the rail system be upgraded in the county.

Sympathy:

A vote of sympathy was extended to Dr. Mary O'Connor on the death of her brother Michael O'Carroll.

Venue for meetings:

It was unanimously decided by all members to hold the meetings from September onwards in O'Dea's Hotel.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 9th day of September, 2002.

Mayor: 

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 9/9/2002, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Cllrs. Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Orla Burke, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Maura Kelly Stewart and Matt Loughnane.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, John Diskin, S.E.E., Enda Gallagher, E.E. and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Deputation:

Mayor Hynes said that the Town Council would be receiving a deputation from concerned citizens from the West End area of Loughrea regarding the siting of the proposed regional offices in the Fairgreen. It was proposed by Mayor Hynes and agreed by the Councillors to hear the deputation first. Mayor Hynes introduced the deputation which comprised of Rose Fahy, (Spokeperson), Peter Murphy, Gerry Connaughton and John McCormack.

Rose Fahy said that she would like to thank the Mayor and Councillors for affording them the opportunity to address the Town Council on the proposed regional offices in Loughrea Fairgreen. She was 36 years living in Loughrea and used the Green daily and said that it is a valued amenity for recreational purposes. She said that a lot of youngsters and different sporting codes also use it and a number of soccer clubs utilise it because of its central location and safety.

She said that everybody welcomed the fact that there is a move to open a regional council office in Loughrea. The provision of additional services would be an asset to the town and surrounding area. She went on to say that they were totally opposed to the siting of such a building or any such development which would compromise the integrity of the fairgreen.

She said that a number of years ago Corry's field was acquired. It is a wonderful amenity and all indeed are to be commended. The argument now being made is that the provision of Corry's field makes it possible to build on the Fair Green. She said that her group disagreed and would view construction on the Green as no different to building on the Walks or Corry's Field. We should be continuing the effort to enhance the green, not facilitating its degeneration. The location of civic offices on the green would further exacerbate the traffic congestion often experienced between this corner and the Westbridge. In addition, the feeling is that the car park for 14 spaces is too restrictive to service the building. Pressure would be brought to bear for the provision of additional parking for customers. She said that people were only beginning to tune into this controversial scheme for the Green and there is a growing groundswell of opinion against it and a significant number of signatures had been gathered over the previous 3 days in support of the preservation of the Green.

She said she hoped the town council will give a clear signal to the Councillors that development of the Green is unacceptable.

Councillors then questioned Ms. Fahy on her submission. Cllr. Cronin said that she welcomed the high level of interest from the people in Loughrea and thanked Ms. Fahy for her presentation. She said that this raises a number of issues. She said there was no communication from the Galway County Council on this matter, even though, a town council meeting had taken place shortly before the announcement on local radio and local press. She said that this project was in the pipeline for months before the announcement and detailed plans of four sites were presented. She said that the elected representatives should be treated with respect and be kept informed of all plans for the town. Cllr. Regan said he was not aware of this project until he read it on the local paper and heard it on local radio. He said that 90% of the town were opposed to this project in the fairgreen. Cllr. Gunter Nix enquired on how many signatures they had received to the petition and was informed 555. Mayor Hynes said that he would move on with the matters on the Agenda and people could discuss the proposed regional office under any other business.

Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr. Gunter Nix and seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 8th July 2002 were adopted.

Annual Meeting.

On the proposition of Cllr. Kelly Stewart and seconded by Cllr. Cronin the minutes of the Annual meeting held on the 10/6/2002 were adopted.

Auditor's Report

The Auditors report for the year ending 31/12/2001 was noted. Cllr. Loughnane said that the Auditors report was very satisfactory and he complemented all staff concerned with the report.

Correspondence

The Town Clerk read out correspondence from various government departments acknowledging receipt of representations from the town council pertaining to matters raised in minutes of 8/7/2002 i.e. Health and Justice to examine the legislation governing the operation of night clubs: Sport – Sale of television rights to Irish Soccer games to Sky Television. Cllr. Gunter Nix requested that a follow up be done in a months time. This was agreed by the Town Clerk.

Cllr. Regan said that he hoped that a meeting would take place on the 27th or 28th of September with Minister Brennan in relation to the proposed by pass for Loughrea. He said that he would inform the Town Clerk when the date is confirmed.

Notice of Motion.

Motions submitted by Cllr. Cronin.

(a) "I propose that the problem of the Westbridge regarding traffic be addressed"
Seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. Cronin said that the Westbridge continues to have traffic problems and that this matter would need to be addressed. She said that 12 months ago it was stated that a mini-roundabout

would be erected at this location. She said that this is the most populated area of the town and the traffic is like Russian roulette. She said that a survey was carried out on a quite day and did not reflect the volume of traffic. Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the mini-roundabout was found to be unworkable as articulated trucks could not mount and go around it as the area was too narrow. Cllr. Cronin wondered if a pedestrian crossing would solve the problem at this location but was informed by the engineer that the road regulations laid down by the NRA specify that there must be a 60 metres view of both lamps which would push the lights up as far as Dunkellin Street or down to Mount Carmel Crescent. Cllr. Curley wondered how could they meet the regulations laid down by the NRA in the absence of a mini-roundabout and pedestrian crossing. Mr. Gallagher said that Galway County Council in conjunction with the NRA Authority were at present carrying out a survey to address the traffic jams in the town. He said that pedestrian facilities would have to be 270 metres from existing lights.

(b) "I propose that an Zebra crossing be placed on both Dunkellin Street and Bride Street"
Seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart

Cllr. Cronin said that there was 300 metres of throughway in the town and the traffic was shivering our town. She said that zebra crossings should be placed as required on Dunkellin Street and Bride Street. She said that people have to walk up and down the streets trying to do business, as there is only one pedestrian crossing. Mr. Diskin explained the criteria for pedestrian crossings and said that it would depend on the width of the streets, the number of people crossing over 12 hours and that it applies to any Public Road. Cllr. Curley said that the NRA had a statutory role to play in the safety of people and that there was one fatal accident recently. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that if motorists travelled at the proper speed, in built up areas, besides doing 60 m.p.h in a 30 m.p.h zone area it would reduce accidents.

Cllr. G. Burke proposed to send a request to the N.R.A. to provide traffic lights at the Westbridge. This was seconded by Cllr. Loughnane.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart mentioned about the speed on Cross Street and enquired if some traffic calming measures could be put in place at this location. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that if people are committing an offence that it should be reported to the Gardai as they were the people trained to deal with it. She proposed that the Gardai Authority be invited to address the meeting and that the concerns, which the councillors had, could be brought to their attention. Cllr. Cronin said that she would distance herself from that request which was in effect telling the Gardai their business. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that if the Gardai are made aware of our concerns in regard to speed, they might put an action plan in place. This was also supported by Cllr. Loughnane.

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter Nix and seconded by Cllr. G. Burke that the Gardai should be invited to a meeting of the Council on this matter.

(c) "I will propose that a double line be painted on the road which runs alongside the park leading up the hill. The No Parking sign is necessary in order that emerging traffic from the Caheronaun Road have sight view for a safe exit".

This was seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Cronin said that lorries and juggernauts were parking 30 metres from the junction, which leaves a limited distance to see the traffic coming on the Caheronaun road. Cllr. Gunter Nix

said that there is an auction held at this location twice a week, which attracts a lot of visitors and it causes chaos.

Mr. Gallagher undertook to investigate this matter further and report to Cllr. Cronin.

A.O.B.

Cllr. Gunter Nix asked on an update on the visit to Achill to view the facilities put in place by the Western Health Board for elderly persons. She said that this was to be arranged by Mayor Hynes and Cllr. Curley. Mayor Hynes said that he did not know if it had progressed or not. Cllr. Gunter Nix, said in the absence of Cllr. Curley (as he had left the meeting) that she had been speaking to one of the officials of the Health Board and was informed that the visit still stands.

At this point Mayor Hynes allowed Cllr. Gunter Nix to make a comment on the minutes of the Annual Meeting. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that the statement which had been incorporated into the minutes by Cllr. Regan was a completely private matter for the Fianna Fail party and not the business of the Town Council and felt that it was wrong to have it recorded in the minutes.

Cllr. Cronin enquired on the up to date position regarding the damaged statute at St. Brigids Well and was informed by Mr. Diskin that they were in touch with the Principal of St. Raphaels College and the pupils in the college would replace the statute that was damaged.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that the results of the National Tidy Towns competition had been announced and she was walking through some of the amenity areas in Loughrea and there was a lot of litter and debris around. She suggested that a clean up day should be arranged and that the communities would get involved and show a bit of civic spirit and clean up their area. Cllr. G. Burke also supported this idea. Cllr. Cronin said that the litter bins at Corrys field and the Main Street seem to be always full and wondered how often they are emptied. Mr. Gallagher said that they are emptied twice a week at the moment. Cllr. G. Burke said that people are using the litter bins in the town for domestic rubbish and it is impossible to keep them emptied.

Cllr. G. Burke complained about water leaking outside Dr. O'Flaherty's house. Mr. Gallagher stated that he was aware of the matter and that it was being investigated.

Cllr. O. Burke said that the road at Cross Street had been tarred recently and the gullies were covered up. Mr. Gallagher said that the Company had rectified the problem earlier that day.

Cllr. Loughnane proposed a vote of sympathy with the Angela Murphy, (O'Deas Hotel) Kiltulla, on the tragic death of her brother.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said she wanted to compliment all involved in the Edward Martyn weekend. It was a wonderful success and the talk by Paul Gosling was very informative. Cllr. G. Burke said that he would like to congratulate the Loughrea Youth Theatre on a very professional and successful show held recently in the Temperance Hall.

Regional Office, Fairgreen, Loughrea.

Mayor Hynes said that he would be taking comments from Councillors on the proposed regional office for Loughrea.

Cllr. Cronin enquired what is the next procedure now and where does it go from here. Mr. Cullen said that it would be brought before the Loughrea Area Meeting later in the week. Cllr. Cronin said that the second Monday in July at the Town Council meeting, there was no mention of plans for proposed regional office, and a week later plans were in print and finalised. She said that it was unacceptable that members have to hear it on local radio or read in the local paper. Mr. Cullen said that Mr. Diskin and himself had consulted with Town Councillors prior to this meeting and the plans were on display for public inspection in the Area Office. He said that no detailed plans had as yet been drawn up for the building but he expected it to cost less than the estimated €2 million required to refurbish the Town Hall. He said that each of the Councillors had been contacted and invited to come and inspect the proposals. Cllr. Regan said that there was a 46-page feasibility study carried out and this project had been in the pipeline for quite some time and the Town Councillors were not made aware of it. He said that they were democratically elected members and should be kept informed of any developments in the town. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she proposed over the years that there should be more liaison with the Loughrea Electoral Councillors. She said that the Town Councillors should meet the Loughrea County Councillors a few times during the year to discuss matters of mutual interest. Cllr. Loughnane said that the Councillors do business during the day and it is difficult to meet members of the Town Council. Mayor Hynes said that the fairgreen was sacrosanct to the people in Loughrea and did not agree to siting of the regional office there. He said that the Courthouse is a monstrosity and could not support any development at this location. He said that we should listen to the voice of the people and the vast majority of the people that contacted him were not in favour of this building in the fairgreen. Cllr. Loughnane said the Council's proposals were daft and crazy. He described the fairgreen as Loughrea's "front lawn" adjacent to the lake and enhancing the whole area. He said that the Council had adequate supply of zoned land on which to build the proposed regional office. Mr. Cullen said that the town would benefit from having a very significant civic building and the proposals were not "daft" or crazy and what was before the Town Council was a very significant opportunity to make a positive decision for Loughrea town. Cllr. O. Burke said that was a beautiful area and a great amenity and she was opposed to it. She also asked Mr. Cullen if Galway County Council were the freehold registered owners of the site. Mr. Cullen stated that as far as he was aware, the site was in the ownership of Galway County Council and he would make available copies of relevant legal documents when available from the Councils solicitors. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that all over Europe that the public is sorry for losing their green areas in central locations. She said that children have no place to play anymore, as they have no gardens, with the construction of town houses. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she was in favour of the regional office in the fairgreen and she did not consider the courthouse a monstrosity. She said that the new building would enhance this corner of the fairgreen. She said that children never play in this area near the Courthouse. She said that the view of the lake went when the boathouse was built. She said that a regional office would improve the commercial life of the town as well. She said that the information about the proposed building and the times that it was on display were published on the parish newsletter and if people were interested enough they had plenty of opportunity to see them. Mayor Hynes said that the general consensus of the public was that Galway County Council had purchased a private dwelling house, next to the Town Clerk's office, with public funds and this should be the Regional office. Mr. Cullen said that the purchase of the house in question was necessary simply to accommodate the additional staff which had been already assigned to Loughrea. Cllr. G. Burke said that the facilities are hardly ever used in the fairgreen. The County Council had a building there before and the only use that is made of the fairgreen is the circus once or twice in the year. He said that he welcomed the building of the civic offices and said that he thought the fairgreen was ideal. He said that if the Civic Offices are built in conformity with the Courthouse and that it will enhance this end of the town and leave plenty of space for parking while people are doing business.

Mr. Diskin, said he was in Loughrea since 1985 and he had never seen anyone use that part of the fairgreen where the new council offices would be situated. He said that he was one of the people who identified the site. He said that a lot of Loughrea Councils customers were elderly people and did not have cars and the proposed site would be within walking distance for them. He said that it is important to have the regional offices situated centrally in the town to conduct the business of the County Council. He added that it would be one of the better locations from a traffic point of view and would take up less than one quarter of an acre of the entire fairgreen, which in itself was just .07% of the entire open space area of the town. He said that the proposed building would not hinder the view of the Lake, as the road would run between it and the lake. He said that the Architects who had looked at the proposal said that the proposed building at this pivotal corner would revitalise and enhance that area of the town. He said that the only day where parking might become a problem was on a day of a Court but this only happens one day a month.

Cllr. Cronin urged her colleagues to nail their colours to the mast and state publicly whether they were in favour of the proposed offices or not. Cllr. Gunter Nix proposed that a deputation be received from the Town Council to make their view known to the County Councillors at the Area Meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. G. Burke. Cllr. Cronin said that this was the Forum to make the decision and said a vote be taken on offices in the fairgreen.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cronin and seconded by Cllr. Regan that Loughrea Town Council want a regional office in Loughrea.

Vote: All in favour.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cronin and seconded by Cllr. Regan that Loughrea Town Council opposes the siting of the Regional offices in Loughrea Fairgreen.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows –

For the motion – Mayor Hynes, Cllrs. Cronin, Regan, Loughnane, Kelly Stewart and O. Burke

6 Votes.

Cllrs. Gunter Nix and G. Burke abstained.

Cllr. Loughnane said that the words “daft” and “crazy” he had used in relation to the proposal earlier were inappropriate, but he said that he is strongly opposed to this project and that seems to be view of most of the people in Loughrea.

A deputation was arranged to meet the Area Councillors on the 23rd September, 2002. Members requested that at least two days notice be given so that they will be available.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 14th day of October, 2002.

Mayor: 

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 10/10/2002, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor Pat Hynes.

Councillors: Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Maura Kelly Stewart and Matt Loughnane.

Apologies: Cllrs. Orla Burke and Jimmy Curley,

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 9th September, 2002, were adopted.

Deputation:

Mayor Hynes said that the Town Council was receiving a deputation from Norman Morgan regarding the siting of the proposed regional offices in the Fairgreen. It was proposed by Mayor Hynes and agreed with the Councillors to hear the deputation first.

Norman Morgan said that he would like to thank the Mayor and Councillors for affording him the opportunity to address the Town Council on the proposed regional offices in Loughrea. He said as a former Town Commissioner, for 32 years, and County Councillor he was very familiar with the fairgreen and had done a lot of work there at his own expense as a County Councillor. He provided seats, fenced the area and planted trees etc. Nobody else in the town had taken an interest in the fairgreen except himself. He said that this was the best possible site for the building in a beautiful spot over looking the lake. He said that it would be a building to be proud of and would be very impressive if Irish or Foreign tourists visited the area and also for the general public. He said that it would be very convenient for motorists and pedestrians to do business and it would improve the commercial life of the town. A site outside the town environs would be of no benefit to the town as the public would do their business in the council offices and then leave. He said that there was building there in previous years known as the “Bridewell” and he would strongly recommend that the council offices be sited there. He said that we need a municipal building in Loughrea and suggested that a plaque be erected on the new building informing the public of all the history attached to this site. He said that the County Councillors would be making the decision and not the Town Council. He said that the proposed building will be moved to another site in the County if Loughrea rejects this one. He said that the Town Council has already rejected funding from the County Council and Heritage Council for the refurbishment of the Town Hall. He appealed to them to make a positive decision in relation to the

proposed building. He referred to the petition that had been handed in by a former deputation, with 555 signatures, and said that whole households had signed the petition including children and babies which was illegal and immoral. He said that some councillors had been scaremongering the public saying that the fairgreen was going to be turned into a car park. He said that the building would have to go through the Planning Process and plans would be on display giving people an opportunity to object to the siting of the building at that point if they wished.

Mayor Hynes thanked Norman Morgan for his presentation and for all of his achievements for Loughrea including the Fairgreen and the Walks. Cllr. G. Burke said that Mr. Morgan was very involved in the history of the town and was a member of the Historical Society. Cllr. Loughnane said that Mr. Morgan would be delighted to hear that the Loughrea Regional Water Supply Scheme would be extended to Craughwell shortly. Mr. Morgan said that he had fought for years for this to happen and he was delighted to hear the good news.

Minutes:

Cllr. Loughnane said that an important issue had arisen in relation to the Title Deeds for the proposed site of the regional offices and it should be discussed. He said that it is an established fact that portion of the lands belong to the Town Commissioners who have a 999 year lease on it.

Cllr. Regan enquired from Mr. Cullen if this was the actual document pertaining to the site and was informed that it was the official document received from the Law Agent. He said that he had a Memorial in his possession which he understood was the root document. Mr. Cullen said that the document was not made available to him and he did not know anything about it. Cllr. Regan said that he would make a copy available to him. Cllr. Cronin said that she wanted it clarified in simple terms if the Loughrea Town Council has an interest in that piece of ground and if the 1/= annual rent was paid. She said that Loughrea Town Council had a legitimate right to the fairgreen and the document that had been circulated to the Councillors was not the original root document. She said that Loughrea Town Council were Leesees and not defaulters. She said that the members were led down a blind ally way. She said that there is no transparency from the officials and wondered if Cllr. O. Burke had not questioned this matter at the last meeting would it have been brought to their notice. Cllr. G. Burke enquired if the rent was paid and up to what year. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that some Councillors were privy to information not available to everybody and wondered if they could make it available to the rest of the Councillors. Some of the members had seen a 48 page feasibility study before it had come into the public arena leaving other Councillors at a disadvantage.

Mr. Cullen replying said that the facts are very clear that Galway County Council own portions of the green and Loughrea Town Council own a small portion in the middle of the area. He said that the rent had lapsed but the legal advice is that 1/= would have to be paid if demanded and it was just a token payment. He said three Councillors from the

Loughrea Town Council had sought information under the Freedom of Information Act as to the Title Deeds but he said that it was unnecessary as the documents were going to be circulated to all of the members. He said that when Cllr. O. Burke raised the question of the Title to this piece of land he said that it would be investigated and this is what has transpired as a result. He said that a lot of the documents are quite old and when the information became available to him he informed the Loughrea Area Councillors at their meeting. He said that the Title to this portion of land would be investigated, as is the norm, in all legal transactions conducted by the County Council.

Cllr. G. Burke said now that this problem of the site is unearthed, proposed that this piece of ground should revert to Galway County Council. He wondered if an accident occurred at this location could the person be suing Loughrea Town Council. He said who pays the insurance and cuts the grass. He also questioned what body does the circus company indemnify. Mr. Cullen said that the Circus company would apply to Galway County Council and lodge a deposit for the clean up and reinstatement of the area.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke that the land owned by Loughrea Town Council revert to Galway County Council. This was seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix.

Cllr. Loughnane said that he thought the Town Council also owned another area of the Fairgreen and this should be checked out before agreeing to Cllr. Burke's proposal.

Cllr. Burke withdrew the resolution until this matter in question is established. Mayor Hynes requested that this information be made available for the next meeting or as soon as possible thereafter. Mr. Cullen agreed to make the information available to the members.

Notice of Motion.

Cllr. Cronin enquired if any progress had been made in relation to her proposal to provide an zebra crossing for Dunkellin Street and Bride Street and traffic lights at the Westbridge. She was informed that a request had been sent to the NRA on this matter. Cllr. Gunter Nix enquired if any progress had been made on the clean up day for Loughrea. She was informed that the Community Warden had a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and this would be put in trail as soon as possible. She also enquired if there was any response from the various government departments to the issues raised at a previous meeting and was informed no. She enquired if any response had been received from the Gardai to address the meeting in relation to speed and traffic. She was informed that the Gardai were busy with the International Road Race and they would attend as soon as possible.

In relation to the Road Race Cllr. Loughnane said that he wanted to congratulate the Gardai and the Athletic Club for a very successful event which was a great benefit to the town. He said that it is such a huge international event for Loughrea that a Perpetual

Trophy should be presented by Loughrea Town Council to the winner of the event in whatever category they proposed. Cllr.G. Burke said they would like to compliment the Council Staff for the help given to the Athletic Club and Gardai in closing of the roads, erecting the detour signs, sweeping the town and tidying up the area.

Mayor Hynes said he also wanted to be associated with the compliments to the organising committee for a magnificent event. He said that it was great publicity for the town and there would be an hour long television programme on T.V.3 the following Tuesday and on Sky Sport on Thursday night featuring the race. The other members associated themselves with the sentiments expressed by Mayor Hynes. Mr. Cullen also complimented all of the staff involved in this major event. He said that he would look, when preparing the estimates, and see if funding can be made available for this event.

Cllr. G. Burke enquired if a skip would be provided in Loughrea this year and was informed by Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, that the Council would not be providing it this year as it is encouraging people to recycle rather than landfilling.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan to send a "Thank you" note to Deputy Callanan for arranging the meeting with Minister Brennan for the Town Councillors and the Chamber of Commerce in relation to the proposed by pass for Loughrea. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Fixing of date for statutory estimates meeting.

It was agreed to hold the Estimates Meeting in conjunction with the monthly meeting on the 11th November, 2002. This was proposed by Cllr. Gunter Nix and seconded by Cllr. Loughnane.

Correspondence:

A letter from the Baffle Festival Committee seeking a contribution towards the cost of staging the festival. It was proposed by Cllr. Loughnane and seconded by Cllr. Burke to support this project.

Mr. Cullen said he would look at the financial situation and see if funding could be made available.

AOB.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that this was cancer awareness month and once again she is appealing to the Western Health Board to provide facilities similar to the Eastern, North Eastern and Midland Health Boards in the detection of breast cancer. She said that people living in those areas could walk off the street and have checks carried out without going through a Specialist. A general discussion took place and it was proposed by Cllr. Loughnane that C.E.O of the Western Health Board be invited to address a meeting to discuss this matter and the Health Services generally. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly

Stewart. Mayor Hynes said that there are anomalies in the Health system with private and public patients and he fully supported this matter.

Cllr. G. Burke said the Bus Bay has not been marked out on the road at Cross Street since it was resurfaced. He requested that this be attended to as soon as possible as it causing inconvenience for the drivers. He also suggested that a letter be written to the Board of Management of St. Ita's National School to provide shelter for the pupils until the classroom opens. Cllr. Cronin said that the Board of Management could not be responsible for pupils until the official opening time as there would be no supervision. Cllr. G. Burke said that 500 children could not all go in the gate at the one time and there should be facilities provided for the children.

Swimming Pool.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the Swimming Pool was progressing favourably and there was an expression of interest from the private sector to design and build it. He said that he would report again when there is more concrete information available. Cllr. Cronin enquired what site is proposed for this project and was informed by Cllr. Burke that it was in Athenry Road/St. Laurencefields. Cllr. Cronin said she was under the impression that Gaelscoil has a lease on this property and the remainder was for a childrens playground. Mr. Cullen said that Gaelscoil has been given temporary accommodation at this location until a permanent site is found and funding made available from the Department of Education. Cllr. Cronin requested that a map, of the proposed swimming pool site, be made available.

Walks.

Mr. Cullen said that Galway County Council would be carrying out improvement works at the Walks and suggested that €5,000=00 be made available by Loughrea Town Council as a contribution towards the work. He said that new gates would be erected at both ends and the wall built up. He said that there is money allowed in the Estimates for Urban Renewal but that will not be going ahead this year and suggested that the funds for this project be transferred to the Walks.

Vote of Sympathy.

The sympathy of the Board was extended to Lucy Lyod Keighrey, Ballinasloe, on the death of her mother.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed this the 11th day of November, 2002.

Mayor: P. E. Hynes

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 11/11/2002, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Cllr. Pat Hynes.

Members: Cllrs. Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Orla Burke, Jimmy Curley and Maura Kelly Stewart.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

On the proposition of Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 14th October, 2002, were adopted.

Matters arising:-

Cllr. Cronin enquired on the up to date position in relation to the siting of the Regional offices in the Fairgreen and if the Town Council had any say in the matter. Mr. Cullen replied that the Town Council has an interest in the portion they have leased. Cllr. Cronin also enquired if any progress had been made tracing the root document pertaining to this property. Mr. Cullen said that he is awaiting information from the County Law Agent on this question. Cllr. Regan requested confirmation from Mr. Cullen that he had received a copy of the Memorial, which he had produced at the last meeting, in relation to the Fairgreen and Mr. Cullen replied in the affirmative.

Cllr. Cronin asked what the position was with regard to the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities at the Westbridge. Mr. Diskin explained that the regulations governing the provision of pedestrian crossings are set out in the Department of the Environment and Local Government document "Warrants for Pedestrian Crossing Facilities R.T. 206". In the regulations, certain requirements are needed in respect of a "conflict warrant" and "accident warrant". He said that a survey and traffic count had been undertaken at the Westbridge and they did not meet the criteria for either warrant and so pedestrian facilities could not be provided.

He also said that a draft traffic management plan for Loughrea would be prepared in 2003. It would be considered by the County Council in the first instance and would then be put on public display and submissions would be invited. The Town Council could also make submissions on the Plan.

Cllr. Cronin said that there was a serious parking and traffic problems at Caheronaun and that something will have to be done to rectify this matter sooner rather than later. Mr. Diskin said that parking restrictions would be dealt with as part of the traffic management plan.

In response to an enquiry from Cllr. Regan regarding car parks, Mr. Cullen stated that the County Council had acquired a site adjacent to the existing Main Street car park and a further site was being acquired at Station Road. He said that some further land acquisition was needed at the Station Road site. When developed the Main Street car park would provide in the order of 35 additional car parking spaces. The Station Road site had the potential for 70 to 85 depending on final layout. A feasibility study is being undertaken at present to ascertain if there is any potential for a Public Private Partnership for the development of car parks in Loughrea. Cllr. Kelly Stewart enquired if disc parking was being considered in the town. Mr. Cullen said that paid parking would be one option that the County Council would be looking at. He said that bye-laws would have to be adopted for paid parking. Cllr. Cronin enquired if Galway County Council were the legal owners of the car park at Barrack Street and Main Street. Mr. Cullen said that as far as he was aware the car parks were owned by the County Council. Mayor Hynes said that it should be remembered that the following sums of money from the taxpayers pocket were paid towards the acquisition and development of the lands formerly known as Bernie O'Malley's, Main Street, Loughrea for the provision of the present car park. Loughrea Town Commissioners contributed £50,000; Galway County Council contributed £50,000 and the then Minister for the Environment, Mr. Michael Smyth contributed £150,000 from his Department, this means that the taxpayer has invested Two Hundred Thousand Pounds in this particular car park located at Main Street, Loughrea. We as a Local Authority have a stake in this car park.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart enquired if any response was received from the Western Health Board regarding Breast Cancer Screening. The Town Clerk read out the correspondence received from Dr. Sheelagh Ryan, Chief Executive Officer dated 22nd October, 2002. She said the National Breast Cancer Screening Agency has submitted a business plan to the Minister for Health recently recommending the extension of the screening to the West and South. She said the Minister expressed his full support for the programme and said the matter would be looked at in the context of the estimates for 2003. Provision of screening is a matter of National Policy and the Health Boards would not be in a position to initiate the type of programme that now exists in the Eastern half of the Country without the support of the Department of Health and Children.

Cllr. Cronin enquired if any progress had been made in relation to the Walks. Mr. Diskin said the stone for the wall had been ordered and tenders for the gates were sought. Five firms had tendered for the gates and they would be placing an order shortly with the successful tenderer. Cllr. Cronin enquired if the design submitted by Patrick Sweeney is the one being used. Mr. Diskin said that the one submitted with the successful tender was the most appropriate and in keeping with the environs. Cllr. G. Burke enquired if there were gates going at either end of the Walks and if they would be locked at night. Mr. Diskin said that gates will be erected at either end of the Walks and there would be a pedestrian entrance at the Main Gate. Cllr. Regan enquired what material would be used in the pillars and Mr. Diskin informed him that they would be dressed limestone. Cllr. Cronin said that there is a lot of litter and debris strewn on the Walks and the litter bins are always full. Mr. Diskin informed her that the bins are emptied on Monday and Friday of every week. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that people are putting their domestic rubbish into the bins and that is why they always seem to be full. Mayor Hynes welcomed the erection of the new gates at the Walks and he said that this is a wonderful amenity to have in Loughrea.

Fixing of date for statutory estimates meeting.

Mr. Cullen said that it had been decided to hold the Estimates Meeting on the 11th November. However, the Department of the Environment and Local Government had not confirmed the statutory dates at that stage and it had been expected that it would be the same as usual. The Department of the Environment and Local Government had now confirmed the statutory dates, which are between the 15th November, 2002 to 16th December, 2002. It was unanimously agreed to hold the Estimates meeting on the 9/12/2002. It was also agreed that no other business would be conducted except confirmation of minutes and that the meeting would commence at 7.00p.m.

Revision of Remuneration under the PPF Agreement.

An increase of remuneration in accordance with Circular EL 7/02 for General Operatives and related grades for employees of Loughrea Town Council was approved on the proposition of Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Annual Allowance of Members.

Circular Letter L.G. 14/02 from the Department of the Environment and Local Government stating that the members annual allowance has been increased from €814.00 to €835.00 was read to the meeting.

Correspondence

The meeting considered the following resolution from Naas Town Council -

"Naas Town Council ask the Minister for Health to give free medical service to children up to the age of 7"

On the proposition of Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Regan it was decided to support this motion.

Mayor Hynes enquired on the upgrading of the Public Lighting at Fahy Gardens and was informed by Mr. Diskin that there is a five-year plan to improve the Public Lighting. It is done on a phased basis and subject to the level of available funding in 2003 it is hoped to continue the programme.

Cllr. Regan handed a memo (undated and unsigned) to the Town Clerk to read out which he said was sent from the NRA to Minister Brennan - N 6 Loughrea Bypass Current Status (1st October, 2002). It read "The Loughrea By Pass is currently being advanced towards CPO as part of the Ballinasloe to Oranmore PPP Scheme (on the Galway to Dublin Major Interurban Route). This project will likely be ready for the CPO Order by the end of this year. However, as the Loughrea By pass element of this project could run as a stand-alone improvement for the town at an approximate cost of €20m the NRA has encouraged Galway County Council to determine if the necessary land for the bypass could be acquired by agreement rather than through the more prolonged CPO process. All affected landowners, except for one, have co-operated to date in granting access to their lands for surveys, etc. but no land negotiations have been pursued to determine if acquisition by agreement is likely. However, Galway

County Council has up to now interpreted this co-operation as an indication that land acquisition from them could be achieved without the need for CPO. It would be unwise to make such an assumption without having attempted such negotiations. Significantly the unco-operative landowner is pursuing this "non co-operative" course of action as he believes that his land should be valued at 'zoned land' value rather than as agricultural land, has sought an unrealistic sum for it, and due to the stand-off has refused to allow any surveys, etc. on his lands. At the request of the NRA Galway County Council recently got his land valued in the context of the 'IFA Agreement' and this has indicated a higher than agricultural value. This value has been discussed with the landowner and has been rejected out of hand, so as a result progress on securing a deal with this landowner outside of the CPO legal framework appears impossible. As a consequence all landowners must be subjected to the CPO process and therefore there currently appears little hope of being able to advance Loughrea By pass ahead of the much larger PPP Scheme incorporating it" Cllr. Regan said that a meeting had taken place recently between Dail Deputies and Loughrea Chamber of Commerce but he had not been invited even though he was the Town Council's delegate to attend Chamber of Commerce meetings. He said that one individual should not be singled out and held to ransom. Cllr. Cronin said that she was not surprised they had not made progress with the landowners if that was their attitude. Mayor Hynes said he agreed with the other speakers on this matter and justice must be done and be seen to be done. Cllr. Regan requested that Mr. Michael Tobin from the NRA be invited to address the meeting and to clarify the situation. It was proposed by Cllr. Cronin and seconded by Cllr. Curley that a representative from the NRA be requested to attend a meeting of the Town Council.

Cllr. Gunter Nix enquired if there was any response to the Garda Siochana invitation to address the meeting to discuss traffic and parking problems in the town. The Town Clerk read a letter dated 4th November, 2002, from Superintendent Lally. In it he said that the Gardai are continuously monitoring speed on Bride Street and Cross Street and all the approach roads to the town. Parking of juggernauts at Bride Street and parking of cars outside the auction rooms in Bride Street could be prevented if the County Council put double lines in place. The councillors were disappointed that a Garda representative had not attended the meeting as they wished to discuss a wider range of issues than those dealt with in the letter. Cllr. Regan said that the Town Council should demand a meeting with the Gardai and have an open agenda. Cllr. G. Burke proposed that we should request rather than demand a meeting with the Superintendent to discuss public order. This was seconded by Cllr. O. Burke. Cllr. Cronin said the speeding of cars up and down Coy's Boreen will have to be addressed. Mr. Diskin stated that it would be difficult to get up to high speed on Coy's Boreen due to its short length. However, he agreed to inspect the location to see what might be done.

AOB

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she would like to congratulate the participants in the Baffle Weekend and said it was a great success.

Cllr. G. Burke requested Cllr. Regan to furnish a report to the members on the Municipal Authorities Annual Conference in Westport. Cllr. Regan said he would have it for the next meeting.

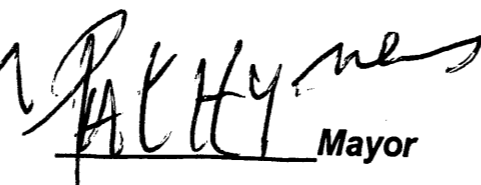
represent the views of the Town Council and wanted to know if their views were being represented on the Heritage Development Committee. Cllr. Gunter Nix said the Town Council had taken a decision that Mayor Hynes would represent the Town Council's views when he met with the Consultants in relation to the Town Hall recently. She said that she had gone to meet the Consultants as part of the Heritage Company group and the views of the Heritage Company were expressed there. Mayor Hynes said that he had called a meeting himself of the Town Council to discuss proposals for the Town Hall twenty four hours before the Consultants meeting. Cllr. G. Burke said that the Town Council meeting was not a formally convened meeting but was to draw up the submissions of the Town Council for the Consultants. Mayor Hynes said he had sent a written invitation to each Council member with an Agenda which outlined the intention for the members to compile the Council's own submission for the Consultants. Cllr. Regan said that the Town Council Meeting convened at the time was above board but he could not say the same of other bodies around the Town. He said the Chamber of Commerce just went on their own bat to meet the Consultants and even though he was the Town Council representative on the Chamber he had not been invited to attend their meeting on the matter. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that if Cllr. Gunter Nix was representing the Town Council she could not give her own views at Heritage Company meetings. She then quoted a passage from Louis the 14th "I only have to look after my own soul".

Mr. Cullen said that the Town Council was not doing itself any favours by the discussion that was taking place. It had arisen simply from a request to Cllr. Regan for a report from the conference he had attended and which he said he would be glad to do. Cllr. Nix had said also that she would be glad to report from the Heritage Company. He said that the various groups in the town got an opportunity to air their views with the Consultants in relation to the Town Hall. Mayor Hynes had represented the views of the Town Council and every other grouping or individual had had an opportunity to do so also. Cllr. Cronin suggested that the Environmental Groups should send submissions to the Heritage Company for the restoration of Railway House or Thoor Ballylee. Mr. Diskin said that the request for funding should come from the owners. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that Town funding could be made available to interested people for worthwhile projects in the town. Cllr. Kelly Stewart requested that St. Brendan's Cathedral be signposted. Mr. Diskin said that it was a matter for the church authorities to apply for planning approval for any signs.

Cllr. Cronin asked Mr. Cullen if Galway County Council were pursuing sites for the Regional Offices. Mr. Cullen said the County Council was still looking for an alternative.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the _____ day of December, 2002.

10th FEBRUARY 2003

 Mayor

Minutes of proceedings at the Annual Budget Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9th December, 2002 in O'Deas' Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Orla Burke, Anna Cronin, Matt Loughnane and Maura Kelly Stewart.

Officials: Donal O'Donoghue, County Manager, Jim Cullen, Director of Services, John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Meeting opened with prayers.

Mr. Cullen said that it was originally planned to consider the Annual Budget for Loughrea Town Council on the 11th November, 2002, but unfortunately the Department of the Environment and Local Government had not confirmed the statutory dates at that stage. The statutory dates are now confirmed which is between the 15th November and 16th December, 2002.

In accordance with Section 9 and 10 of the County and City Management (Amendment) Act, 1955, Mr. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, presented the Draft Annual Budget for the year 2003. Mr. Cullen stated that the expenditure for 2003 is estimated at €72,460.00 with receipts of €11,301.00. The rate proposed for 2003 is €2.44 i.e. an increase of 7.5%.

Mr. Cullen said that he had made provisions under the heading Receptions/Presentations to cater for the Special Olympics and he had also made provision for a Perpetual Trophy to the Athletic Club for the international road race. He also said that there was an increase in the budget for necessary repairs to a house under rent at Lakeside and for the representational payment to Councillors.

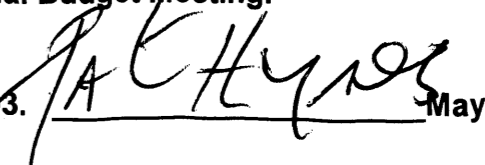
Cllr. Loughnane welcomed this gesture for the Special Olympics and the Athletic Club. Cllr. Cronin enquired how much the rate in the £ had increased over the last three years and was informed by Mr. Cullen that the increase for 2003 is 7.5%, 6% in 2002 and 5% in 2001. Cllr. Regan enquired if the proposed rate in the £ was comparable with other Town Councils and Mr. Cullen said the Loughrea Town rate compared favorably. Cllr. Gunter Nix said she welcomed the contribution for the Special Olympics and said that it was a very worthy cause and one of the biggest events to be staged in the Country.

On the proposition of Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix it was resolved that the Draft Budget of the Loughrea Town Council for the Financial Year ending 31st December, 2003, as set forth at A, B, C. on the Form of Draft Budget be adopted and the Form of Annual Budget be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

It was also resolved that the Demand be made on Galway County Council by the Loughrea Town Council for the sum of €61,159.00, for the Financial Year ending on the 31st December, 2003, and that the Form of Demand be signed by the Mayor and by the Clerk.

This concluded the business of the Annual Budget Meeting.

Signed this the 13th day of January, 2003.


 Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 9th December, 2002, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Cllr. Pat Hynes.

Members: Cllrs. Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Orla Burke, Jimmy Curley, Maura Kelly Stewart, Matt Loughnane.

Officials: Donal O'Donoghue, County Manager, Jim Cullen, Director of Services, John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Mayor Hynes extended a warm welcome to Mr. Donal O'Donoghue, County Manager, to the meeting. He said that since the last meeting two former commissioners had died namely P.J. Duane, (Laddin) and Bertie Donohoe. On the proposition of Cllr. Jimmy Curley, seconded by Cllr. Regan the following proposal was unanimously passed that the monthly meeting of the Loughrea Town Council be adjourned as a mark of respect to the deceased commissioners.

Tributes were paid to both families by members and officials. Mayor Hynes read a special tribute to Bertie Donohoe who was press reporter to the commissioners as follows:- "For over sixty years Bertie Donohoe reported the proceedings of this Council. In actual fact he served as a member of Loughrea Town Commissioners. He was a lover of democracy and in keeping with all those who cherish the democratic ideal he loved debate. A man of principle, he was prepared to avidly defend his point of view but was always prepared to listen and engage his opponents. As an outstanding journalist, he was in all aspects a modern day chronicler who recorded some of the most momentous changes in the town's recent history. Every club, every organisation, every business - indeed every public representative - has relied on Bertie at one time or another to get their message to the people. In his coverage of local and national events he endeavoured to present an impartial and truthful view and always tried to give voice to all opinions with style and clarity. In short, his approach to journalism was exemplary and irreplaceable for when the chronicler passes; a large part of the soul of the community passes with him. Many people will remember Bertie as a tireless collector of historical information and long before the present upsurge in historical publications, Bertie was the fountain that bore the treasures of our past. He did not need computers, his keen intellect ensured that his encyclopedic knowledge of the Loughrea area was published for the local community to enjoy. But he was not just a collector, in keeping with his generous nature he was prepared to share his knowledge with the broader community. I can only hope that we can similarly preserve the work of Bertie for future generations. On a more personal note, I spent many pleasant evenings enjoying the vast repertoire of Bertie's often hilarious stories, I valued his friendship and I will always cherish his memory.

Ken Kelly on behalf of the media said that there was a tinge of sadness surrounding him on the news of the death of Bertie Donohoe. He said that Bertie Donohoe and himself had shared the same table for a number of years as reporters and now there was a void in his life. He said that he was a very likeable character, great journalist and a great family man. He extended his sympathy to the Donohoe and Duane families.

Mr. Donal O'Donoghue, County Manager, also paid his respects to both families on his own behalf and on behalf of the County Council.

Congratulations: Cllr. Cronin proposed a vote of congratulations to St. Brendan's Choral & Dramatic Society for its production of "Honk". This was supported by all.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 13th day of January, 2003.

 Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 13/1/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor Pat Hynes.

Members: Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Orla Burke, Jimmy Curley and Matt Loughnane.

Apologies: Maura Kelly Stewart.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

On the proposition of Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Curley the adoption of the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 11th November, 2002, was proposed.

Mayor Hynes said that the minutes were not accurate account and until such time as the following amendment was incorporated into the minutes they could not be adopted. He wanted to put it on record that Galway County Council had donated £50,000.00, Town Council had donated £50,000.00 to the acquisition and development of the car park. Cllr. G. Burke said that the minutes should be adopted and the amendment could be made subsequently. This was supported by Cllr. Gunter Nix. The Town Clerk said that the minutes are a record of decisions taken and not a verbatim report. Cllr. Cronin said that the minutes were not correct and until such time as the amendment is made they can not be adopted. She said that in addition to the other funding the Department of the Environment and Local Government had donated £150,000.00. Cllr. Regan requested the proposer and seconder to withdraw the adoption of the minutes until the next meeting. This was agreed.

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Burke the minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting held on the 9th December, 2002 were adopted.

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 9th December, 2002 were adopted and signed as correct on the proposition of Cllr. Gunter Nix and seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Local Elections (Disclosure of Donations and Expenditure) Act, 1999.

Under this Act members of a local authority are required to furnish to the Town Clerk, not later than the 31st January each year a statement indicating, whether during the previous year, that a member received a donation the value of which exceeded €634.87. A member of a local authority must not accept donations exceeding €634.87 in any particular year. There is also a requirement to open and maintain a political donations account in a financial institution in respect of any monetary donation of more than €126.97 and to return specified statements in relation to the account. If they receive any further donation during the year it must be lodged to this account. The Town Clerk will, within 14 days after the latest date for receipt of the various statements, publish a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area the time and place where the statements can be inspected and the names of members who have not furnished statements. The Town Council is required to consider every donation statement furnished to it by members of that authority. Guidelines were forwarded to each member of the Loughrea Town Council on 5th December, 2002. The members noted these requirements.

Correspondence:

Notification of AMAI Spring Conference being held in the Holiday Inn, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, on 14th and 15th February, 2003 was read.

Notice of Motion:

Motions submitted by Cllr. G. Burke.

- (a) That Loughrea Town Council congratulates the management and staff of Cigna Ireland Ltd. on the creation of (50) fifty new positions at their office in Loughrea.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. G. Burke said that he would like to congratulate Michael Stankard, Manager of Cigna, on the creation of 50 new positions which now brings the total employed in Cigna to 120. He said that the Company had to fight off the claims of other branches to secure the jobs for the Loughrea facility. He was delighted to see Cigna going from strength to strength and wished them luck in the future. He requested the Town Council to come on board with him in acknowledging this achievement. Cllr. Curley said he was encouraged to see employment figures in Loughrea and Gort were holding their own and he was delighted to see Cigna creating more employment in the town. Mayor Hynes said that he would also like to extend his congratulations to Cigna on the creation of more jobs for Loughrea. He said that when the County Development Plan is adopted more land would be made available for commercial and residential purposes, which will assist in bringing industries to the town. Cllr. Cronin said that she is dismayed at the members sending their

congratulations on this motion on the creation of 50 new jobs. While she welcomes the expansion of Cigna she said that Loughrea has failed miserably in attracting industries to the town for over 20 years. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that we should have a positive outlook and market the town and invite Government Departments to relocate to the town. Cllr. Regan said that the Dail Deputies for the area should be invited to the February meeting. He said that there is 10,000 square feet in the Business Park in Loughrea vacant and that a letter should be written to the I.D.A. informing them of this and to find an industry for this area. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that a submission was prepared and sent to the Government Department dealing with decentralisation about 3 years ago. She said a lot of work and energy was put into the submission and she was wondering if this document could be updated and resubmitted to the relevant Department for consideration. Mr. Cullen said that it would be a positive step to update the previous submission aimed at attracting a Government Department to Loughrea. He said he would circulate a copy of the proposal to the Councillors who could make suggestions and would request the assistance of the Community and Enterprise office for the area in updating it.

- (b) That Loughrea Town Council sell back the lease to Galway County Council the site of the old Bridewell, which was leased to Loughrea Town Commissioners by Galway County Council some years back.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix.

Cllr. G. Burke said that he knew it was an emotive issue but he believes the Regional office should be built in the fairgreen as no alternative site is available. He said he had tabled this motion for the sole purpose of providing a regional office in the fairgreen. He said that Loughrea has a negative approach to every development that is proposed in Loughrea. He said when proposals come before the Town Council we often say "No" first instead of looking at the broader picture. He said if the Town Council can not put a regional office in Loughrea it would be difficult to attract Entrepreneurs or a Government Department to the town. He said the town nearly lost the grant for the swimming pool because of our negativity. He said the need for a regional office in Loughrea was highlighted recently with the number of personal callers to the Motor Tax office in County Hall. He said if Loughrea had a regional office and if only 10% of these people came there it would be a great benefit to the town. He believes the offices should be accommodated in the fairgreen, which is worth €2 million and providing jobs for 16 people and urged his colleagues to say "Yes" to this project. Cllr. Cronin said she was dismayed why a fellow member of the Town Council would agree to sell back a lease. She said that we are a growing town and aware of the feelings of the townspeople. We in the Town Council welcome the idea of a regional office in Loughrea but not on the site proposed by Cllr. G. Burke. She said that a lot of answers had to be given by Cllr. G. Burke in his role as Chairman to the swimming pool and other issues. She said that he had thrown dust in the eyes of the people of the town for seven years over the site of the swimming pool. He was selling tickets in the town for a site that was too small for a swimming pool and the

blame would lie with him if the grant was lost. She said she had never been invited to attend a Swimming Pool Committee meeting and requested that she be invited

to ascertain the fact for herself. She said that Cllr. G. Burke was one of the first objectors to the long awaited by pass for Loughrea and she had photographic evidence of it. Cllr. Gunter Nix said she hoped for the first meeting of the New Year that they would show leadership and work together for the betterment of Loughrea. She said that it does not improve the image of the Town Council to have slagging matches night after night and getting headlines on the newspaper. She said that they had adopted Standing Orders some six months ago and they should refresh their memory on how to conduct the meeting. Mayor Hynes requested more co-operation from the members from now on and not be a laughing stock in the eyes of the public. Cllr. Curley said that he was 100% behind the regional office for Loughrea but not on the site mentioned. Cllr. Regan said that he was completely opposed to the fairgreen site for the Council Regional offices and would always oppose any development on the fairgreen. He said that the Town Council had purchased Corry's field to add to the amenity area and not to make the fairgreen available for development. He said that this matter had already been raised and a decision taken on it and that Cllr. Burke was trying to divide the members. He said that there are plenty of sites out there and the Council should pick the right one and provide the regional office. Cllr. G. Burke said that he did not like the remarks made by Cllr. Cronin in relation to the swimming pool and other matters. He said that he had made a mistake by saying "No" to the by pass for Loughrea but any transaction he had with the Swimming Pool were well above board. He said that this site would have to go through the planning process and people would have an opportunity to object to the development at that stage if they wished. Cllr. O. Burke said that the town needs a regional office but she would not like to sever the lease because then the Town Council would have minimal say on the site. She said that the fairgreen is one of our cherished civic trusts. She said that the Council had purchased Mary Duffy's house for the regional office and this site should be developed. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, told the meeting that so far the County Council had failed to find an alternative site for the regional offices but they were still pursuing the matter. He said that Mary Duffy's property was very restrictive and the compliment of staff was increasing all the time in the regional office. Mr. Diskin said that Barrack Street is mainly residential area and it would be difficult to put a regional office on the site and would not allow for expansion. Cllr. Cronin said that she had proposed that the Town Hall be divided in two halves. One half could be for the County Council to accommodate the regional office and the other half for Heritage Area. Mr. Cullen said that it would be difficult to accommodate the requirements of the Regional Office in 50% of the Town Hall and it would be important to allow for future expansion. Mayor Hynes said that this was the end of the discussion on the matter and asked for a vote on the motion.

For the motion - Cllrs. Gunter Nix and G. Burke -2
Against the motion - Cllrs Hynes, O. Burke, Cronin, Regan and Curley -5

(c) That Galway County Council remove the pools of water on the side of the road at Main Street and Bride Street.

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter Nix and seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr G. Burke said that trucks have moved the road onto the footpath and tar has blocked the gullies which is causing flooding on the Main Street. Mr. Diskin S.E.E. said that all the water flows on concrete channels and goes to culverts on the side streets. He said that there were remedial works carried out recently at this point which should eliminate the problem. He said that the areas mentioned were the narrowest part of the town and the only maintenance can be carried out is between 2.00 a.m. and 5.00 a.m. Cllr. Cronin said that road repairs were needed at the Westbridge and the Gort Road. Mr. Diskin S.E.E. informed her that repair works were carried out recently at the Westbridge and the problem on the Gort Road is the responsibility of a private contractor.

A.O.B.

Cllr. O. Burke said she is concerned about the drinking problems of teenagers in the Walks and the Convent of Mercy Grounds.

Mayor Hynes said that Bottle banks seem to be always overflowing and wondered if extra containers were needed. He would also like to see proper public toilets provided in the town. He requested that those two issues be addressed as soon as possible.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said she had a request from the staff of the GMIT College, Galway, recently, for premises for a School of Music in Loughrea. She urged the support of her colleagues to this project and it could be part of the decentralisation programme. It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter Nix and seconded by Cllr. G. Burke to support this project. Cllr. Cronin said that the Galway V.E.C. were looking at the Grammar School in Galway for this project as well. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that reference was made to no recreational facilities for the young people in the town and she recommends that a "No Name Club" be set up in the town. She said that she had a contact in Tuam who would initiate this project and get it up and running.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 10th day of February, 2003. Pat Hynes Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 10/2/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

- Mayor** Pat Hynes.
- Members:** Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Orla Burke, Jimmy Curley, Maura Kelly Stewart and Matt Loughnane.
- Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

Mayor Hynes said he had requested an amendment in the minutes of the monthly meeting of the 11th November, 2002, and this has now been done and the minutes could be adopted.

On the proposition of Cllr. Gunter Nix and seconded by Cllr. Cronin the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 11th November, 2002, were adopted.

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. O. Burke the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 13th January, 2003, were adopted.

No Name Club.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she had discussed this matter at the last meeting and she felt that the Town Council meeting was the platform to launch it. Helen Butler from Ballinasloe and Garda Oliver King from Mountbellew had been invited to address the Town Council to set up a branch in the town. Oliver King said that this organisation for teenagers was first founded in 1978 in Kilkenny, with former inter-county hurler Eddie Kehir. The group which chose the title of "No Name" to avoid being associated with any existing organisation, now has between 25 - 30 branches around the country. He said that Loughrea has two major secondary schools and a club like this would give them an opportunity to meet in a non-alcohol environment. He said that he had set up one in Mountbellew in 1995 and the young people organised events themselves which was important to their personal growth and very good on their C.V. later on in life. The ideal way to provide activities for young people was to have a good Youth Club and a well organised "No Name" Club. He said the Youth Club would serve the first and second years students and the "No Name" Club would cater for Junior Certificate on to Leaving Certificate. Helen Butler said that she had helped to set up a club in Ballinasloe and they had a committee of five people including two members of the Garda Siochana. She said that she had organised discos, which attracted attendances of 250 to 300 young people and provided a safe place for them to socialise. She invited

members of the Town Council to visit the discos in Ballinasloe to see how well organised they were and they could be assured that all events were alcohol free. Both speakers said that they would give every assistance to Loughrea whenever they are setting up a club. All of the members said that they would like to thank Helen Butler and Oliver King for their words of encouragement on setting up the Clubs and hoped that in the not too distant future we would see one in Loughrea.

Local Government Act 2001 - Ethical Framework for Local Government Service.

Mr. Cullen said that two documents had been circulated to the members recently namely the Disclosure of Donations and Expenditure and the closing date for return of this document was the 31st January, 2003. The second document was Declaration of Interest and the forms had been circulated to all members. It was called Ethical Framework for Local Government Service. The closing date for return of this document is the 28th February, 2003. The Town Clerk asked the members if they had received copies and all answered in the affirmative except Cllr. O. Burke who said she had not received one. Town Clerk agreed to deliver a copy to her.

Government Decentralisation Programme - update document.

Mr. Cullen said that Kieran Coyne had agreed to update the document submitted to the Department of Finance in 2002. Kieran Coyne then addressed the meeting and outlined a proposed procedure for updating this document. He said that he would like to meet with the previous committee on Monday 17th February at 7.30p.m. in O'Dea's Hotel and go through the document and see what additions or deletions could be made. Cllr. Regan proposed that Cllr. Hynes be added to the committee. This was agreed. Mr. Cullen said that the Town Clerk would notify the non-council members of the impending meeting and would also send a copy of the document to them. Mr. Cullen said that the document should be finalised and sent to the relevant department on the agreement of the committee. He said that there is a lot of interest all over the country and competition is very keen this time in relocating a government department and time is of the essence.

Correspondence.

Town Clerk read out a letter from the Matthew Cronin, Secretary of the Snooker and Billiards Club for funding. Cllr. Regan said he would recommend that this club be given a subscription, as it was one of the first clubs to be established in Loughrea. It has a membership of 65 members from the age of 12 upwards. On the proposition of Cllr. Kelly Stewart and seconded by Cllr. Regan it was decided that €100.00 should be given to this club. Cllr. Cronin thanked the proposer and seconder for their gesture.

Motion from Bantry Town Council - "That this Council forthwith pursue the goal of attaining the same powers that former Urban District Council's now also constituted as Town Councils have. Bantry along with a number of other Town Councils in County Cork once "enjoyed" the previous status of Town Commissioners having exceptionally

limited financial means and no input on planning matters. Bantry Town Council, should on its own individual basis and collectively with these former Town Commissioners commence a strategy that will lead to an enhancement of its role in the social and civic life of the Community". It was proposed by Cllr. Kelly Stewart seconded by Cllr. Hynes to support this motion.

Cllr. Regan enquired if the Gardai would attend the meeting and was informed by the Town Clerk that no reply had been received.

Notice of Motions

Motion submitted by Cllr. Curley – "I will propose that the water pressure in An Chranog be urgently reviewed, as the pressure at the moment is insufficient to meet the necessary needs of the residents. Cllr. Curley said that the residents of An Chranog in the west end of the town were experiencing a lack of water pressure. Cllr. G. Burke said that this problem was not confined to An Chranog, but also Athenry Road and the Hill. He said that the council is continually repairing leaks because the pipes are so old and with heavy traffic on top of that the problem is getting worse. Cllr. Curley said that planning permission was currently being sought for a hotel on the Athenry road and it was badly needed in the town but the infrastructure is not there unless a booster pump is installed. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the pipes were continually being surveyed by Galway County Council to monitor leaks. He said that there is enough water in the town but the difficulty is to get the water into the taps in the houses. He said that it would not be feasible to put boosters in the system to enhance certain areas because it would take the pressure away from other areas. It was suggested that pressure be put on the T.D.'s and County Councillors in the area to seek funding to bring Loughrea Water Supply up to an acceptable standard. Mr. Cullen said that Loughrea Regional Water Supply Scheme is on the Sanitary Services Programme with the Department of Environment and Local Government and that it is a Major Capital Scheme. He said the Council will continue repairing and checking the existing supply.

Motion submitted by Cllr. Cronin. –

(a) "I propose that a discussion take place regarding the development of the Town Hall having as a priority the needs of the community, and particularly the need for additional recreational space. I urge this as the condition of the Town Hall is deteriorating through neglect. Let us, the Town Council ensure that it serves the people. My proposal for the past three years has been for the Hall to become a multifunctional space;- Theatre, Film Club, Civic Reception area, Tourist Office, and also perhaps contain an area for visiting exhibitions. My research had shown that this is a financially viable proposition. In these times of financial cut backs surely this fact is of the utmost importance".

Cllr. Cronin said she urged Galway County Council to help breath new life into Loughrea Town Hall, a structure that is one of the finest buildings in the town and one which is in a great location. She proposed that the building become a multifunctional space housing a theatre, a film club, a civic reception area, a tourist office and an area for visiting exhibitions. She called for a discussion regarding the development of the Town Hall because of the need for recreational space in the town. She said that were

new organisations setting up in the town, "No Name" Club, Foroige and there was a scarcity of venues while the Town Hall was deteriorating through neglect. Loughrea has a growing population with more and more housing estates being developed locally. She said that Town Council had a duty to its young people to make facilities available and ensure that they were used for the community. She said that Galway County Council and Loughrea Town Council would be the main stakeholders in the restoration of this historic building. She said that her proposition would be financially viable and she urged her fellow councillors to support this motion. Mr. Cullen said that the Goodbody report would be brought before the Area Meeting early in March for consideration. He said that any plan proposed would have to be costed and funding would have to be made available. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that there were three very famous buildings in close proximity in the heart of Loughrea –namely Town Hall, Cathedral, and Library. Cllr. Hynes said that this is a beautiful building and the restoration work would be expensive. Cllr. Gunter Nix said it was a little premature talking about the Town Hall until the recommendations of the Consultant are received.

(b) "I propose that this Council support me when I call on the Minister to immediately change decision regarding cutbacks for facilities for people with Learning Disabilities. I speak here of Human Rights, that of the right to education being foremost."

Cllr. Cronin said that people with disability are being treated unfairly. She said that a recent article in the local paper it said that children with disability go to school for five days at present but it will be reduced to three days because of financial constraints. She said that it was a poor reflection on society when the least vulnerable are being hit with cutbacks especially in relation to education. She requested the support of the Town Council. This was seconded by Cllr.Hynes.

(c) "I propose that the Council ensure that the Caheronaun Road does not become Hazardous for motorists in view of the intensive building development taking place there".

Cllr. Cronin said that the Caheronaun Road is becoming more dangerous with all the development taking place at this location. She said that the mud on the road is not cleared on a daily basis. Cllr. G. Burke said that there are two Builders working at this location and they are moving clay on both sides of the road. Each Builder sweeps their own portion of the road at different times of the day, which is not satisfactory. He said if there was a more concerted effort and more co-operation by the Builders that this problem would not arise. Cllr. Cronin said that the proposed by pass would alleviate a lot of the congestion in this area when constructed.

AOB

Cllr. Regan said that there is an anomaly with the Builders of the Dun an Oir Housing Estate in Loughrea under the Affordable Housing Scheme. He said that the houses on the right hand side of the road are blocked houses, which are tiled from the front to the

back door. They are painted from top to bottom and there is a thermostat to control the central heating and the floors upstairs are wooden. He said that the houses on the left hand side of the road are Timber Framed houses, which are not tiled, painted and the floors upstairs are made of Plywood and no thermostat to control the central heating. Mr. Cullen said that it was quite common to have a variety of house types and styles within any one development. The houses were purchased having regard to the type and finish involved. In some cases, applicants under the affordable housing scheme were allowed to carry out decoration themselves. There was no question of the houses not being habitable and the scheme had proved to be very successful. Cllr. Cronin said that timber framed houses were considered to be warmer than cavity wall houses.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that it is rumored in Loughrea that the Post Office is going to be downgraded to a Sub Post Office. She said that a letter should be written to the relevant Minister to oppose such a move. Mayor Hynes supported Cllr. Kelly Stewart's proposition to write to the Minister for Communications.

Cllr. Regan requested information on the outcome of the Council Area Meeting held earlier that day in relation to the Draft Development Plan. Mr. Cullen said that two submissions had been received – one from the NRA and one from the DOELG. He said that it was decided by the Area Committee that the piece of land north of the proposed bypass in the townland of Greeneenagh be zoned industrial. He said that the Chamber of Commerce had sent in a submission objecting to the lands at Gorteenapheebera being zoned commercial. He said he would need to check the notes from the area meeting to be sure about what decision was reached in relation to that particular piece of land. Cllr. Hynes said that he did not agree with zoning lands at Gorteenapheebera to commercial and did not vote in favour of same as he has seen too many family businesses closing down in the town. Cllr. G. Burke said that commercial did not mean jeopardising family businesses but it could mean electrical shop, could operate away from the Main Street. He said a drapery store would have to operate on the Main Street but light industries could operate in the commercial centre. Cllr. Cronin said she welcomed this zoning at the east side of the town as it was crying out for a supermarket. She said that she has to go through the town ten times a day to get to a supermarket. She said that they are all located at the west end of the town. Mayor Hynes said that County Councillors from the Loughrea Electoral Area had been lobbied by the Chamber of Commerce to change zoning from Commercial to Industrial at this location in order to protect the businesses in the town. Cllr. Cronin said Loughrea is expanding rapidly and there is a room for another supermarket at the east side of the town and competition is the life of the trade. Cllr. G. Burke proposed that the commercial zoning be supported by the Town Council. Cllr. Kelly Stewart seconded this view which was unanimous.

This concluded the business. *APAC*
Signed this 14th day of ~~March~~, 2003.

Mayor

PAC Hynes
M.C.C.T.C.

Minutes of proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 10th March, 2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Cllr. Pat Hynes.

Members: Cllrs. Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Orla Burke, Jimmy Curley and Maura Kelly Stewart,

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies: John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer and Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer.

Mayor Hynes said that since the last meeting Bertie Kelly, former town commissioner, had died. He was father of Maura Kelly Stewart, who is presently, a member of the Loughrea Town Council. He requested that the meeting be adjourned as a mark of respect to the late Bertie Kelly. On the proposition of Mayor Hynes seconded by Cllr. Curley the following proposal was unanimously passed that the monthly meeting of the Loughrea Town Council be adjourned as a mark of respect to the deceased commissioner. Mayor Hynes extended the sympathy of the Town Council to the Kelly family.

The members and officials paid tributes to Bertie Kelly.

Mayor Hynes said that some members of the Loughrea Fire Brigade were travelling to Boston and New York to take part in the St. Patricks Day parade and he wished them bon voyage.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that Cllr. O. Burke had wedding plans for the end of March in Rome and that Mayor Hynes would make a presentation to her. The Mayor also presented her with a bouquet of flowers. The members and officials extended their good wishes to Orla and Paddy for the future. Cllr. O. Burke thanked the members and officials for the presentation, flowers and good wishes.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 14th day of April, 2003.

PAC Hynes Mayor
M.C.C.T.C.

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 14/4/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

- Mayor** Pat Hynes.
- Members:** Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Jimmy Curley, Maura Kelly Stewart and Matt Loughnane.
- Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.
- Apologies:** Cllr. O. Burke.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

The members requested an amendment in the minutes of the monthly meeting of the 10th February, 2003 as follows - Cllr. G. Burke proposed that the commercial zoning be supported by the Town Council. Cllr. Kelly Stewart seconded this view which was unanimous.

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 10th February, 2003, as amended were adopted.

Cllr. Cronin requested that this matter be brought to the attention of the Planning Authority. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the town clerk would write to Mr. Paul Ridge, Director of Services on it.

On the proposition of Cllr. Curley and seconded by Cllr. G. Burke the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 10th March, 2003, were adopted.

Matters arising from minutes.

Cllr. Curley said that he had tabled a Notice of Motion in relation to the water supply in An Chrannog. Cllr. Curley said that a deputation would be coming in at 8.00 p.m to address the members. Mayor Hynes said that he had met with J. Diskin, S.E.E., E. Gallagher, E.E. K. Shiel, Town Supervisor and residents from the affected areas on the 26th March, 2003 to try and resolve this matter. He also met with Mr. T. Connell, Senior Executive Officer, Galway County Council, Water Services Section, County Hall, on the 8th April, 2003, pertaining to the same matter. He said that funds will have to be found somewhere and he suggested that the % of the planning contributions be diverted to improving the water supply in the different areas of the town that are experiencing lack of water and lack of pressure. Cllr. Regan said he had a notice of motion in on this matter as well and asked if he should wait until it came up on the Agenda or would it be taken now. The Mayor informed him that it would be discussed in the order of business as the deputation was going to be received first.

Deputation

Three members from the Athenry Road Residents Association addressed the meeting namely - Tony Ryan, Philip Greally and Paddy Daniels. They said that there were serious problems for residents living on the Athenry Road area of the town from Michael Burke's factory to beyond Cottage Hill on the Galway side of the town. They said that there were problems for everyday needs such as baths, showers, and

toilets. They said that the hot water was getting into the pipes but the cold water was not and it was very serious matter as people could get burned and scalded. They said that planning permission was currently being sought for a hotel on the Athenry road and it was badly needed in the town but the infrastructure is not there unless a booster pump is installed. They said that planning permission had been granted for another 40 houses on the Athenry Road and this will put further pressure on the area. They said that they were giving no more warnings to the Council that they were taking legal action from now on. They thanked Declan Horgan, Waterworks Caretaker, for his help in trying to alleviate the problem over the years.

Mayor Hynes thanked the deputation for coming. Cllr. G. Burke said that this problem was not confined to Athenry Road but that it exists in Laurencefields and the Hill. He said that the council is continually repairing leaks because the pipes are so old and with heavy traffic on top of that the problem is getting worse. We have to get a proper watermain through the town. Cllr. Cronin said that Galway County Council would have to take a serious look at planning permission in the town until the water supply is upgraded. She said that applications should be frozen until a proper water supply is provided.

Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the pipes were continually being surveyed by Galway County Council to monitor leaks. He said that there is enough water in the town but the difficulty is to get the water into the taps in the houses. He said that 140 metres of pipe would need to be replaced at this location and it is very rocky and would be expensive to replace. Mr. Cullen said that Loughrea Regional Water Supply Scheme is on the Sanitary Services Programme with the Department of Environment and Local Government and that it is a Major Capital Scheme. Cllr. Regan said that the T.D.'s and County Councillors in the area should be invited to the next meeting of the town council in order to progress this scheme. He also said that Ard Breide and Woodville Housing Estates were without water recently and wondered if it was the same problem. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the pumps had tripped and the levels in the reservoir had dropped so it left a number of houses without water for a day and some of the higher points in the estates for three days. Mr. Cullen thanked the deputation and said that they had put their case very well. Considerable time was being spent identifying how the problems could be solved and the matter was due to be considered by the Area Committee in the next few days. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that the locals should get involved to replace the piping and she would act as Ganger herself and forget about reports and get water into the kitchen sinks. Cllr. Loughnane said that the deputation had put their case very forcefully to the meeting. He said that there was enough paper studies done at this stage and that the contract documents should be prepared and that we should insist that Loughrea is placed at the top of the queue. Loughrea Regional Water Supply Scheme is planned for over 30 years and it is time funding was made available to bring this scheme to fruition. Mayor Hynes said that the members of the Town Council were very committed to improving the water supply in the town and every effort would be made to resolve this matter. The deputation then left.

Town Hall.

Cllr. Cronin asked for update on the town hall. She said that the Active Retirement Association and the young people of the town were looking for a premises in which to hold meetings etc. and there was no place for them except a licensed premises. She said that the community in Glenamaddy had used a portion of the town hall as a library. Mr. Cullen said that he had received the report from A&L Goodbodies into the feasibility of a PPP for the Town Hall and it would be considered by the Area Committee in the near future. He said that funding to the tune of €2 million at a minimum would be required for the redevelopment of the building for any purpose and this was not available. Cllr. Cronin said that she had done costings on this project and a sum of £250,000.00 was estimated and the figure thrown out by the Consultants was grossly inflated. She said that a figure of €2 million was frightening.

Mayor Hynes said that Loughrea Town Commissioners had given a sum of £50,000.00, Galway County Council had given a sum of £50,000.00 and the Minister for the Environment had given £250,000.00 to the Heritage & Development Company for a museum and craft shop which was subsequently sold to the private sector. This was taxpayers money for the benefit of the community and should not be in the hands of a private limited company. He said that they were stakeholders in this company. Cllr. Regan rejected the plan and said it was an exorbitant figure to come up with. He said that the Heritage Development Company was a private limited company and had "profit" written all over it and was of no benefit to the community. He said that he was at a meeting recently in Dartfield Museum and enquired of the Heritage Officer who were the Friends of Heritage and she replied she never heard of them. Mr. Cullen said that any contribution or payments made by Loughrea Town Council were used for the particular purpose they were intended. The accounts of the Town Council are subject to independent audit by the Local Government Auditor and have always been placed before the Town Council. He said that the figure of €2 million was the correct information forwarded by the Consultants and it is not an inflated figure.

Duffys Circus – Fairgreen, Loughrea.

The town clerk said that Duffy's circus had applied for permission to use the fairgreen for a circus on the 26th and 27th May, 2003 and she enquired if there was any objection from the town council as they have a lease on it. Cllr. Loughnane enquired if this was going to be brought up each time there is a circus at this location. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that once a decision is taken that it would hold for all future occasions. It was unanimously agreed to allow this event to go ahead and all future events the only stipulation being that a sufficient deposit is lodged with Galway County Council for cleaning up and reinstating the area.

Correspondence.

A resolution from Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council as follows –
 "That in view of the serious environmental problem caused by discarded chewing gum, this Council adopt a policy and local action plan in conjunction with tourism and commercial interests to combat the problem".
 This matter was noted.

A letter from Superintendent Lally, in response to an invitation to address the members on law and order in Loughrea town. He stated that he would meet the members informally at his office at a time suitable to both parties. This was agreed by the members to meet him at his office.

A reply from John Hynes, C.E.O., An Post, in response to concerns which some members had at a previous meeting regarding re-designation of Loughrea Branch Office as a Sub Post Office. The letter read "As part of our response to the increasingly uneconomic nature of the Post Office retail network, we have proposed that number of the least busy Branch Offices should be re-designated as Sub Offices. This programme, the principle of which is supported by the main operational union in the Company, will shortly be rolled out at selected offices. Loughrea is not included in the initial stage of the conversion programme, but there is every likelihood that it will be included at a later date. In this event, I can assure you that the new designation would not, in any way, affect the quality and range of services available to the local community". Cllr. G. Burke said that if there were any change in the status of Loughrea Post Office that he would stage a protest, outside the Post Office, as happened in 1979. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that is further downgrading of the west as it is the closing down of the maternity unit in Portiuncula Hospital. She said once you pass the Shannon that the west is forgotten about, as is the case with the Western Rail Corridor. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she was in the Post Office recently and the collection box was full to the brim and there was a queue of customers and could not understand why there would be a downgrading of this post office. Mayor Hynes said that he would have to agree with Cllr. Stewart Kelly Stewart on the erosion of the West of Ireland which is being further eroded with the

impending closure of the Teagasc offices in Loughrea leaving the rural community without advisors. Cllr. Loughnane said that he was delighted that there was a mention of the Western Rail Corridor and he suggested that Mr. Frank Dawson should be invited to the next Town Council meeting to address the members on this subject. This was agreed by all the members. It was agreed that the Town Council should write back to An Post and seek clarification on what in effect "re-designation" would mean, given the commitment in the letter not to effect the quality or range of service available in Loughrea.

A letter from the Department of Finance acknowledging the Town Council's interest in relocating a government department in Loughrea. This matter was discussed at a previous meeting when it was announced that 50 new positions had been created in Cigna Healthcare. A general discussion took place on unemployment in the town and it was decided that the submission in relation to decentralisation would be updated and sent to the Department of Finance for consideration. Kieran Coyne, Community & Enterprise agreed to do this together with the existing committee. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he would like to thank Kieran Coyne and all involved on updating this document. Cllr. G. Burke said that we had a great town and the members should not be always knocking it. There is an additional 250 jobs in Cigna Healthcare and he understands that a new industry will be coming to Loughrea in the not too distant future.

A report from Cllr. Gunter Nix on the meetings attended by her as the Town Council's representative on the Loughrea Heritage & Development Company Ltd. She said that the money donated to the Company had been invested wisely until a suitable project comes on stream. She said that €15,000.00 had been donated to St. Brendan's Cathedral (Roman) for the completion of the sculptor work on the capitals on either side of the altar to mark the centenary of the official opening of the Cathedral and €5,000.00 donated by the Friends of Loughrea Heritage. She also said that one of the members of the committee had investigated the possibility of having a cinema in Loughrea and was informed that it would not be a viable option because of population/size and the proximity to Galway City. Cllr Cronin said that she had no mandate from the town council to give funding to St. Brendan's Cathedral or to the Friends of Heritage. She said that she had never mentioned a cinema that it was a film club that was proposed for the town.

A letter from the Chamber of Commerce - Festival of Light- 16th March, 2003. The Town Clerk said at the last Town Council meeting that an invitation had been handed to the receptionist inviting members and officials to the reviewing stand on the eve of St. Patrick's day in the fairgreen on the 16th March. She said that subsequent to the meeting she discovered that the festival would be starting at Corry's field and going around the fairgreen. She became concerned about the town council property and requested the Chamber of Commerce to furnish a copy of their insurance policy to clarify that it indemnified Loughrea Town Council and Galway County Council. She forwarded a copy of this policy to the Council's insurance company to see if it met with their requirements. Unfortunately it did not so the members were not covered to be on the viewing stand under the existing cover. She said that enough had been written about this matter recently and it was time to move on. The Chamber of Commerce and any other body organising any event in the future would be aware of the requirements of the Council's insurance company. She said that no obstacles were put in the way of the Chamber of Commerce by her. Mayor Hynes said that he attended the St. Patrick's day parade since he was elected as a commissioner and he felt that he was snubbed by the Chamber of Commerce because of a stand he took on a planning issue recently.

Notice of Motion

Motions submitted by Cllr. Regan.

I propose that Loughrea Town Council write to each of the 7 Area Councillors requesting them to give a donation of their Notice of Motion money to help repair footpaths in our town.

Cllr. Regan proposed that the footpaths around the town were in need of repair and said that a plan should be put in place in order of priority. He suggested that the seven County Councillors should donate a contribution in order that repairs could be carried out. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

I propose that officials would give an update regarding the water supply and water pressure in the town.

Cllr. Regan proposed that officials should take a serious look at the water situation in Loughrea town. He said that the town was experiencing problems with water over the last few weeks and enquired if any solution had been found for the problem. He said that Woodville and Ard Breide were without water for 1 - 3 days without notice and he asked for assurances that this would not happen in the future. This was seconded by Mayor Hynes. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that as stated already the pump tripped at Knockanima which left the residents without water for one day in most areas but that some residents in the higher point of the estate were up to 3 days before the pressure built up. He said that no notice could be given to the residents because it was not planned to cut off the water.

I propose that Jim Cullen, Director of Services would give an update on the Loughrea Swimming Pool.

Cllr. Regan proposed that Mr. Cullen, inform the public what was happening with the swimming pool. He said that this project was on the cards for a number of years and wondered if there was any information available to the community. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Mr. Cullen said that last year the County Council had decided to make available a site for a swimming pool and leisure facility. He said that because of the gap between the grant available and the cost of a project such as this, the only possible way that the facility will ever come to fruition is by a joint venture or partnership with the private sector. An advertisement was published inviting expressions of interest and they would be put through a pre-qualifying process, following which, bidders will be asked to submit more detailed proposals as to how the facility might be brought about and financed. Cllr. Cronin enquired if any Public Private Partnership project had taken place in the Galway. Mr. Cullen said that Kingfisher had provided a swimming pool in Renmore. Cllr. G. Burke, said that at last there was light at the end of the tunnel. He said that all the necessary processes had to be gone through and it all take times. He said as soon as there is definite news that it will be brought out in the public arena. He gave a copy of the audited accounts of the Loughrea Swimming Pool to the Town Clerk for inspection by the members or the public. He said that there would also be a copy in the library for anybody who wished to view them. He said that he would like to pay tribute to all the members of the committee but a special mention to Geraldine Murray and Martin Smith who worked unceasingly to progress this project.

A.O.B.

Cllr. G. Burke said that he would also like to congratulate the engineers and workers of the Loughrea Area for the splendid job that was done on the "Walks". He said that the gates and the walls are a credit to all concerned. He said that people stood up and watched them as they did their work in such a professional way. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, also complimented all staff involved in this project. He said that it was great to see the council staff with such skill and workmanship. Mayor Hynes also congratulated all of the staff involved and said that it would be a wonderful amenity for the community and visitors. Cllr. Cronin enquired on the cost of the project and was informed by Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer €30,000.00. It was unanimously agreed that this was great value for money and the design of the gates was very attractive.

Cllr. G. Burke said a second tender was needed for Loughrea. He said that there is 12 persons employed in Loughrea and if a drill is being carried out the tenders has to make two journeys. He said they have two

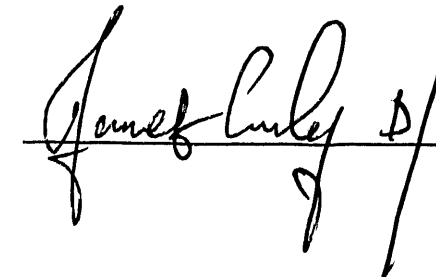
tenders in Portumna and Gort. Cllr. Regan proposed that the Chief Fire Officer should be invited to the September meeting of the Town Council and this was agreed.

Cllr. Regan enquired on the up to date position of the additional car parking. Mr. Cullen said that the lands had been acquired at Main Street and further land acquisition was being finalized at Station Road. He reminded the Councillors also that the Byelaws for carparks and on-street parking were on public display and also that the Part 8 procedure for the Loughrea By-Pass was on display. Any submissions by the Town Council on either must be made before the relevant dates, 30th April and 16th May respectively.

Cllr. Regan suggested that a vote of sympathy be sent to Superintendent Lally on the recent tragic death of one of his colleagues.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 9th day of May, 2003.

 Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 12/5/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Deputy Mayor Jimmy Curley

Members: Mary Gunter Nix, James Regan, Orla Burke, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Maura Kelly Stewart and Matt Loughnane.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies: Cllr. Hynes.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

On the proposition of Cllr. Curley and seconded by Cllr. Regan it was agreed to allow Frank Dawson, Director of Services, Community and Enterprise to address the meeting on the Strategic Rail Review. Mr Dawson thanked the Mayor and councillors for the invitation to address the town council.

STRATEGIC RAIL PLAN.

Mr. Dawson made a presentation to the Members on the Strategic Rail Review that had been recently published. He stated that the recommended allocated investment for the Galway/Mayo/Sligo routes for the next 20 years was as follows:

Radial Route to Galway -

Dublin – Galway	€247m
Dublin – Sligo	€425m
Dublin – Mayo	<u>€287m</u>
Total	€959m

Projected Capital Expenditure per Route

Portarlington – Galway	€171m
Mullingar – Sligo	€104m
Athlone – Westport – Ballina	<u>€145m</u>
Total	€450m (44%)

He explained that the balance of €539m (56%) is attributed to indirect costs such as Plant & Machinery, Design Costs, Safety Case Process, Project Management

Costs, Contingency sum, Dublin Suburban Projects, Renewals and replacement of rolling stock.

Going for Growth

Recommended Allocation per Route

Dublin – Galway	€160m
Dublin – Sligo	€ 15m
Dublin – Mayo	<u>€ 15m</u>
Total	€190m

This projected expenditure will provide for:

Dublin – Galway	€70m for Galway Station development and € 9m on 3 Passing Loops between Portarlington and Galway
Dublin – Mayo	<u>€15m</u> to extend Mini CTC signalling from Manulla to Ballina and Westport
Total	€94m(49%)

The balance of €96m (51%) will go to indirect costs.

He outlined to the Members the overall outcome for the Rail User:

- Faster Trains – a train every two hours, six days a week on each of the three routes serving east of the county.
- No additional Rolling Stock
- No New Stations
- No commitment to trains arriving in County towns before 9 00 am
- No details of €70m Galway Station development
- No commitment to Railfreight
- No commitment to Commuter Trains
- Fewer Intermediate Stops
- No commitment to equity on rural/urban equal distance fares

With regard to rail fares, Mr. Dawson highlighted the fact that at rural stations there is evidence of disturbing contrasts in ticket prices, when compared with equal distance journeys in the Dublin region. He explained that this would account for fewer people using the rural stations, which may lead to fewer intercity trains, needed to serve them.

Mr Dawson stated that the evaluation and justification of transport schemes at local level:

- Is rigorous
- Consistent with national policy

- Evident in County/City Development Plans
- And recently published City/County Development Strategies for Economic Social & Cultural Development

Western Rail Corridor

Mr. Dawson stated that the Department of Transport had decided to look at the findings in more depth. He said there were a lot of questions to be clarified. He said that the Department of Transport has agreed to work with the regional authorities to carry out a regional assessment.

Mr. Dawson stated that neither the Council or the CDB had been given an opportunity to make comments or submit changes to the Draft Review. He said that they made a formal submission at the start of the process to the Consultants that included costings. But they were never asked for any clarification on their submission. Mr. Dawson said that none of the recommendations in the CDB submission were adopted in the final report. He stated that there was no acknowledgement in the report that so many communities live within the catchment of this route. He stated that this report was suggesting that reducing the number of intermediate stops would be one way of accelerating trains. Such a policy would have major implications for rural communities especially Attymon and Woodlawn, and perhaps Athenry and Ballinasloe. Mr. Dawson contended that the data analysis, assessment of needs and financial projections were inaccurate in relation to the Western Rail Corridor and these needed to be corrected. He said he was pleased that the Minister for Transport had acknowledged that there was a need to re-examine some aspects of the report. He said there was also calls for immediate action on an early morning train service into the city and future exploration of the possibility of a park and ride facility at a new train station in Oranmore. Oranmore is just seven minutes from Galway by train and two carriages could carry up to 300 passengers. He said that the final decision rests with the Minister for Transport in implementing the plan.

Cllr. Curley thanked Mr. Dawson for his presentation. He said that the Consultants are ignoring Galway and the West of Ireland. He said that the inequalities of the fares charged for the same distance in the east and west of the country was astonishing. Cllr. Loughnane said that he had asked that this item be placed on the agenda because he felt that the inaccuracies in the report needed to be highlighted. He stated that he wanted to make the members aware of the situation. He said that he was glad to hear from Mr. Dawson that there was consultation with the Department of Transport in relation to the Western Rail Corridor. Cllr. Cronin asked what the town council could do to progress this matter. She said that she commutes to Galway daily and a light train service would help considerably to ease the congestion on that road. Cllr. Gunter Nix asked if a light train service could be provided from Loughrea to Galway. She said the rail corridor and station house is still there and it would not cost very

much. Mr. Dawson said that there were no plans to provide a light rail service from Loughrea at present. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that Mr. Dawson was very passionate about the Western Rail Corridor and she hoped that it would have a successful outcome. All of the councillors thanked Mr. Dawson for his presentation.

Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. G. Burke the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 12th May were adopted. Cllr. Regan asked if there was any response to his notice of motion on the repair to footpaths. The Town Clerk said that she had written to the County Councillors but no response had been received. He asked Mr. Cullen what allocations each of the councillors receive in the year. Mr. Cullen said around €8000.00. The town clerk said that she would send another letter.

Cllr. G. Burke enquired if there was any further correspondence from An Post in relation to the future of the post office. The town clerk said that she had got an acknowledgement to her letter.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the water supply in the town. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that John Diskin and his staff was working on a proposal and would be seeking approval from DOE to carry out part emergency work on the supply. He said that they had identified a stretch of piping, which if repaired, could solve the problem in the short term. He said that representatives from the County Council would be meeting department officials to outline the proposals and he hoped that it would have a successful outcome. Cllr. Cronin asked what time frame did he envisage to rectify this matter. Mr. Cullen said that the council staff has been working constantly to solve this matter. He said that piping would need replacing and it was a complex issue and impossible to put a time frame on.

Cllr. Cronin asked the present position on the town hall and was informed by Mr. Cullen that this item was not reached with the County Councillors at the Area Meeting. Mr. Cullen said that the next area meeting would not be held until the end of May early June. He said that all of the town council members had got a copy of the Goodbody report. Cllr. Cronin proposed that a special meeting be convened to discuss this matter. This was seconded by Cllr. Regan. A general discussion took place and it was unanimously decided to hold a special informal meeting on the 19th May at 7.00 p.m. in O'Deas Hotel. This was agreed.

AOB.

Cllr. G. Burke asked if any progress had been made with the public toilets at the Westbridge. Mr. Cullen said that it was always the intention to replace the toilets but the cost was high. He said they would cost in the region of €120,000.00 with

an added maintenance cost of €20,000 to €30,000 per year. He said that he would discuss this matter with the relevant Director of Services. Cllr. Cronin said that work needed to be carried out at the Long Point to make it safe for the bathing season. She also requested extra litter bins for the walks and the fouling of dogs at Corry's field. Cllr. Regan said that he did not agree with putting extra bins at the walks, as it would only encourage vandalism and drinking. Cllr. G. Burke said that some of the direction signs in the town were in need of repair and requested that this matter be addressed.

It was unanimously agreed to hold the annual meeting and the monthly meeting of the town council on the same night.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 9th day of June, 2003.

 Mayor

Minutes of proceedings at the Annual Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held in O'Deas Hotel, Loughrea on 9th June, 2003.

Chair: Mayor Hynes

Members: Cllrs. Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Anna Cronin, Maura Kelly-Stewart and Matt Loughnane.

Officials: Messrs. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Meeting opened with prayers.

The Mayor said that he was approaching the end of his term as Mayor of Loughrea. He expressed his thanks to the Town Councillors and also to Jim Cullen Director of Services, John Diskin Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely Town Clerk and all the staff of the Council for their assistance during his term of office. He said he was honored to have held the position for the year, which was not long going. He said that it was his second time to hold the office in his twenty four years on the town council. He said that during the year three former members of the town council had passed away namely - Bertie Donohoe, P. J. Duane and Bertie Kelly. He said that he was challenged on a number of occasions during the year in his defence of human rights. He said that he was still proud to say that there were people out there who will stand up for the rights of others.

Election of Mayor.

Mayor Hynes said that he would take nominations for the position of Mayor. Cllr. Cronin was proposed by Cllr. Curley, seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart. Cllr G Burke was proposed by Cllr. Loughnane and seconded by Cllr. O Burke. A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Cllr. Cronin - Cllrs. Hynes, Curley, Kelly-Stewart, Regan and Cronin - 5 Votes.

For Cllr. G. Burke - Cllrs. Loughnane, G. Burke, Gunter Nix, O. Burke - 4 Votes.

The Mayor declared Cllr. Cronin elected. Mayor Cronin then took the chair.

Mayor Cronin thanked her proposer and seconder and the members who had voted for her. She said that it was a privilege and an honour to be the first female Mayor of Loughrea. She said that she would work for the community and in the interest of the community during her term. She said that she looked forward to a progressive year. She said that position was male dominated over the last few years and she was delighted the tradition was broken.

Mayor Hynes was thanked by the officials for his hard work and dedication over the year and wished him well in the future.

Cllr. G. Burke also thanked his proposer and seconder and the members who had voted for him.

Election of Deputy Mayor.

Mayor Cronin said that she would take proposals for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Cllr. J. Regan was proposed by Cllr Hynes, seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. O. Burke was proposed by Cllr G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix.
A vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

For Cllr O. Burke: Cllrs. Loughnane, G. Burke, Gunter Nix and O. Burke - 4 Votes.

For Cllr. Regan: Cllrs. Hynes, Curley, Regan, Kelly Stewart and Cronin - 5 Votes

Mayor Cronin declared Cllr. Regan elected.

Cllr. O. Burke thanked her proposer and seconder and the members who voted for her.


Cllr. Regan thanked his proposer and seconder and the members who voted for him.

Mayor Cronin proposed that Cllr. Regan continue as the Town Council representative on the Loughrea Chamber of Commerce. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Cllr. G. Burke said that Fianna Fail had 5 councillors at the beginning of term but now there were only 4.

Mayor Cronin said that she would like to welcome Oliver Barrett, former colleague, to the meeting. She said that he had nominated her four years ago to go forward for the town commissioners. Cllr. Loughnane said that he was glad to see Norman Morgan, Oliver Barrett, former members of the town commissioners, and Tony Leahy back in attendance and added that any of the public who attend the meetings had shown a keen interest in the business transacted.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 14 day of July, 2003.  Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held in O'Deas Hotel, Loughrea on 9th June, 2003.

Chair: Mayor Cronin.

Members: Cllrs. Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Maura Kelly-Stewart and Matt Loughnane.

Officials: Messrs. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Minutes.

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 12th May, 2003 were adopted.

Matters arising -

Cllr. Regan asked if any response had been received from the area councillors regarding his notice of motion in relation to footpaths in Loughrea. The town clerk said that she had written and telephoned all of the councillors but none of them were in a position to fund this project. She said that funding is allocated at the beginning of the year and all of them had exhausted their budget. He requested that it be placed on the agenda for the December meeting. Mayor Cronin asked if any progress had been made in relation to the diving board at the Long Point. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer said that there were going to put in planks in the diving board down to water level which would make it safe in the short term. He said that at least €1,000.00 to €1,500.00 would be required to replace the existing platform at the Long Point. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that there was no provision made in the 2003 Estimates for this project. He said that funding had been put aside from the town council's fund for Urban and Village Renewal for Loughrea in 2004 and that €1,500.00 would have to be provided from this fund. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Curley to make the funds available for this purpose. Cllr. G. Burke enquired if the directional signs around the town had been repaired. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the damaged signs were taken down and replaced. Cllr. G Burke said that visitors to the town had gone down one way streets because of the misdirection of the sign on the Tynagh Road.

Correspondence:

Cllr. G. Burke enquired if any reply had been received from An Post. The town clerk read out letter from John Hynes, C.E.O, An Post. He said that he

reiterated what he said in his previous letter that the new designation would not affect the quality and range of services available at Loughrea Post Office.

Special Olympics. A note was read out by the town clerk received from Mary Nix, Hon. Secretary, Loughrea Host Town Committee, inviting all of the councillors to a "Welcome Concert" on the 18th June, in the Temperance Hall.

Notice of Motions:

Motion submitted by Cllr. Gunter Nix.

At the next meeting of Loughrea Town Council I will propose a vote of congratulations to Sharon Daly of Loughrea Youth Project on being nominated "National Young Volunteer of the Year" in Tralee, Co. Kerry, recently.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that it was wonderful to see a young person from the town achieve such an honour and she proposed that the congratulations of Loughrea Town Council be extended to her. She said that Sharon had worked unceasingly, over the last four years, with young people on this project. She does most of her work in the background and does not look for recognition. She is a very talented young lady and is very clear on her goals and responsibilities and is a credit to the Youth Federation. This was seconded by Cllr. G. Burke. He said that there is such negativity about young people that it great to see a successful person. Mayor Cronin extended congratulations to St. Brendan's Choral and Dramatic Society who were nominated for four AIMS awards for their production of "Honk". Cllr. G. Burke said that he would like to be associated with praise for the musical society and he would also like to congratulate the Loughrea Senior Hurling team on their success to date and wished them luck in the future.

Motion submitted by Cllr. Regan.

- (i) I propose that Loughrea Town Council give at least €10,000.00 to upgrade the the playground on the Gort Road.

Mr. Gallagher said that he had done a report on this matter and that funding to the tune of €10,00.00 at least would be required to make the playing area safe. He said that swings needed to be replaced and that fencing was badly needed to make it safe for children to play in. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that no provision was made in the Estimates to fund this project and the work would have to be carried out over a two year period.

- (ii) I propose that Galway County Council repair the water tap at Garrybreeda Graveyard.

Repair to this tap was carried out recently.

- (iii) I will propose that Galway County Council would raise all manhole covers in

the town and make them level.

Cllr. Regan said that the manhole covers in the town were subsiding and were in need of urgent repair. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that quotations had been received and the contract was awarded to Farran Construction for €7,700.00. He said that the 30 manhole covers from Saddlers to the Hurling Pitch would be replaced. He said that each one would take at least an hour to do and would have to be done in unsocial hours. He expects that work will be started shortly. Cllr. G. Burke said that surface of the road at Bride Street and Dunkellin Street would need to be attended to. Mr. Gallagher said that contractors had done cross cuttings on the road and it is very difficult to get them back to carry out the necessary repairs.

A.O.B.


Cllr. Loughnane said that proposed Loughrea bypass had been discussed at a recent County Council meeting and some alterations had been made following submissions by the landowners. He said they include implementing the alignment modification in the vicinity of the N. 6 east roundabout and providing a T-junction from the Greenagh/Fairfield road out to the bypass. Provide for pedestrian movement (subject to safety audit) at the Monearmore roundabout. Remove the area of land denoted 'proposed landscaping area' in P. Fnnerty's holding from the CPO area. Provide an access for Mr. Callanan onto the existing N 6. Implementing alignment modification on the N. 66 Gort Link road, which removes it from the rear of Mr. O'Neills property.

Cllr. G. Burke enquired when the paid parking was going to be implemented and if provision was made for residents of the town. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the bye laws had been passed at a recent County Council meeting and he hoped that they would be implemented before the end of the year. He said that residents, would be entitled to permits, which would entitle them to park without using a pay and display disc. Cllr. Regan enquired on the up to date position of the proposed car parks and how many parking spaces will be available when constructed. Mr. Cullen said that the planning process will commence shortly and said that up to 120 additional spaces will be provided when both car parks are completed. There will be provision for long and short term parking at both locations. He also said that parking on the Gort Road should be more widely used, as there is ample space there for parking and this would be free of charge.

Mayor Cronin wished Superintendent Lally a long and happy retirement and also welcomed his successor, Superintendent Mulryan, to Loughrea. All of the councillors wished John Glennon, Supervisor, who had worked for 47 years in Loughrea Area, a long and happy retirement.

Cllr. Regan said that a recent meeting of the Chamber of Commerce funding for the Christmas Lights and the St. Patrick's Day Parade was raised. He said that a sub committee of the Chamber of Commerce had indicated that if funding to the tune of €7,000 or €8,000.00 was not forthcoming that the Chamber could no longer fund or provide them. Cllr. G. Burke said that the lights should be paid for by now as the traders had been giving contributions for them over the years. He said that Cllr. Regan should stay on as an associated member as it is important that the town council has a presence there as well. He said that Loughrea was the first town in the west to turn on the lights last year and he hoped that this practice would continue. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the Town Council had always made provision in the annual budget for funding for the lights and the Christmas tree and had done so again this year. A general discussion took place and it was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart that a few council members meet with the Chamber of Commerce at an informal meeting. This meeting would be arranged by the Town Clerk at a mutually agreed date and venue.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 11th day of July, 2003  Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 14/7/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor Anna Cronin.
 Members: James Regan, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Maura Kelly Stewart and Jimmy Curley
 Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.
 Apologies: Cllrs. Gunter Nix, O. Burke and Matt Loughnane.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the annual meeting held on the 9th June, 2003 were adopted.

On the proposition of Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 9th June, 2003 were adopted.

Matters arising -

Mayor Cronin thanked Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer for the improvements to the diving board at the Long Point. She said that it was a pleasure to swim there now. Cllr. G. Burke said that the wheelchair access area had not been marked out in the car park since it was re-surfaced and requested that this be done.

Mayor Cronin said that she would like to thank the Special Olympics Committee for hosting the Albanian team. She said that she would like to pay special tribute to Cllr. Gunter Nix, who was secretary to the Committee, for her dedication and hard work. Cllr. G. Burke said that he would also like to extend congratulations to St. Brigids Vocational School on winning 4 All Ireland titles in a row and felt that they should get some recognition as well.

Cllr. G. Burke said he would like to compliment Mr. Gallagher, town engineer, for the splendid job done in resurfacing the Hill and he hoped that the money will be found to continue it as far as Dunkellin Street.

Cllr. Regan enquired on an up date on meeting with the Chamber of Commerce regarding Christmas Lighting and St. Patricks Day Parade. Town Clerk said that she had written to the Chamber of Commerce informing them that an informal meeting would be arranged at a mutually agreeable date and time. She said that Mayor Cronin was busy right now and could not arrange a meeting for a while. Cllr. Regan said that this meeting should take place as soon as possible and it should be open to all of the members of the town council.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, presented the annual financial statement, which had been circulated to each member, for approval. He said that the car park, property of town council, had been resurfaced in 2002 and he sought approval to this expenditure in the Revenue Account. He also said that a contribution of €5,000.00 was given for the gates in the Walks which was taken out of the Capital Account. He said there was no over expenditure in the accounts and it was within budget.

Cllr. Hynes proposed that money should be set aside for stationery for the Mayor and requested that funding be made available for this purpose. He said that any one that holds this office would receive a lot of correspondence and should not be out of pocket as a result. He said that the town council should provide headed paper and complimentary slips. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart. Mr. Cullen said that funding for the town council comes by way of rates and a contribution from the County Council and if there were an increase in expenditure it would put extra pressure on the ratepayers. He said that there was no specific allowance made in the annual budget for this purpose. However, he said that the town council should look professional and he agreed to make a small sum of money available this year but said there would have to be savings in other areas.

Cllr. Regan enquired if the railing on the walks could be extended, on the Abbey Street side, to Dr. Moloney's premises on one side of the gates and Mike Dervan's premises on the other side. He requested an estimate be prepared of the cost involved. He said that when the estimate comes to hand that he would be recommending that funding be made available from the town council, if it is within their reach. He said that it would give a good finish to the walks. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the town engineer would try and have an estimate for the next meeting and he would look at it then. It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Regan to approve the accounts submitted and the contents within.

Town Twinning:

Mayor Cronin said that she had requested that this item be placed on the agenda. She said that they would be looking at a town in the EU similar in size, culture and population to Loughrea. She said that the benefits to the town would be enormous. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the I.P.A. was the body co-ordinating town twinning and he said he had a copy of the documentation necessary to progress this matter. He said that the town clerk would circulate a copy to each member as soon as possible so as to give the members an opportunity to have a read for themselves. Mayor Cronin thanked Mr. Cullen for the information and requested the members to have a browse over it during the summer recess and have some positive suggestions for the next meeting. Cllr. G. Burke said that this matter was raised in 1980's and some members of the community became involved but the interest fell apart when funding was required. He said that a video was made of the town and sent to the relevant town in France but that interest had faded. Mayor Cronin requested Cllr. G.

Burke to furnish any information he may have on this matter for the next meeting to try and allay the pitfalls encountered previously. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that there would be some financial commitment for this project but some funding is available under EU grants. Cllr. Hynes said that this would be something exciting for Loughrea and should be reviewed again and progressed. He said that it would put Loughrea on the map in Europe and would be good for tourism and commercial life of the town. On the proposition of Cllr. Hynes seconded by Cllr. Regan it was agreed to support the Mayor on this project.

TOWN HALL:

Mayor Cronin said that the town hall is the finest building in Loughrea and the new owners of the building, Galway County Council, should move quickly and prevent the rapid deterioration of the cut stone building. She said there were broken doors and windows and the council would have to act fast to carry out remedial works. She said there was a need to provide amenities for the young and not so young and it was time to look for funding thus giving the people of Loughrea an opportunity to contribute to the repair of the town hall. She said that she did not expect €2 million overnight but it could be done on a phased basis over a number of years. She said that she had carried out a feasibility study some years ago and the recommendations contained in that report should be taken on board by the County Council. Cllr. Kelly Stewart supported the Mayor on this matter and said that it should be developed into a cultural centre. She said there was no place in the town to hold special functions except the pubs. She said there were numerous organisations in the town and they should come together and solve this matter once and for all. She said that Temperance Hall belonged to the church and not the town. She said that if the town goes with town twinning that it would be an ideal centre for meeting officials from whatever town that it would be twinned with. Cllr. Curley enquired if there is plan in place for this building and if not one should be put in place. There were five years discussing this item without success. Cllr. Regan said that it should be established if there is a plan and if there is it should be brought before the area councillors as soon as possible. He said the gutters had to be replaced recently on the building the doors and windows would need replacement also and there is no point in spending money at random if there is no plan in place. Cllr. G. Burke said that there should be a public meeting and let the town decide what use the town hall should be put to and draw up a plan. He said that they could work with the county council to bring it to fruition or shelf it altogether once and for all. Cllr. Hynes said that he was not aware of any plan from the county council for the building. He said that he went on a visit recently to the Labhras O Murchu culture centre near Cashel and he said that Loughrea had the building to provide a similar centre in the town hall. He said that it would be a very viable proposition with the wealth of culture in Loughrea and the hinterland of Loughrea and it would be self-financing in no time. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said the building was in a bad state of repair at present. He said that when the building was purchased some years ago there were a number of different plans considered. He said there is a plan in place for the town hall but the funding application under the Access Programme was unsuccessful. An application was made to the Department of Environment for funding for the town hall but was unsuccessful and Galway County Council did not have €2 million to

spend on a building in Loughrea. He said that there is a huge amount of goodwill around towards this project but that will not solve the matter. He said that a decision would have to be made by Galway County Council and move forward. He said the next area meeting would not be held until September. He said that the Mayor is an automatic member of that committee so she will be invited to the meeting. Mr. Cullen said that he would like to see the building developed and if any individual or interested bodies come forward with a plan and finance it will be given every consideration. He said that the Council had spent over €4,500 on replacing the gutters because of the danger to the public.

Notice of Motion -

Motions submitted by Cllr. Regan.

i) I propose that the meadow of grass at Corry's field be cut.

Cllr. Regan proposed that the grass at Corry's field needs to be cut and requested approval from the town council. He said that this area is a special area of conservation and the town council should be putting down its mark and have the grass cut annually or otherwise Duchas will not allow it. He said that if there was any farmer in the area interested in the grass he would have no objection giving it to them free of charge, in order to get the place tidied up. Cllr. Curley seconded this proposal. Cllr. G. Burke said that the town council should advertise the grass and seek tenders. He said that if no response is received he would agree that a farmer should be allowed to cut it. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the grass would be advertised but Duchas would not allow to cut it until September. He said that it was advertised some years ago and a local farmer had taken it but he encountered a lot of difficulty trying to cut it.

ii) I propose that the playground at Garrybreeda be upgraded.

Cllr. Regan proposed that this playground be upgraded because of the large population that exists at this end of the town now. He said that some of the equipment is outdated and would need replacement. Cllr. G. Burke seconded this motion. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer said that at least €2,000.00 would be required to do anything with this playground and they have given a commitment to carry out improvements to the one on the Gort Road over two years. Cllr. G. Burke enquired if sponsorship were forthcoming to improve the playground would this be acceptable to the town council. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said they would welcome sponsorship because the town council does not have the funding to provide extra equipment in Garrybreeda playground at present.

iii) I propose to ask Jim Cullen, Director of Services, for an update on Loughrea Swimming Pool.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the closing date for submissions for the proposed swimming pool is the end of August. He said that a panel of seven people had been invited to make submissions and these would be assessed in September 2003. He said that he could not predict the outcome of the interest shown. He said that the local committee are ready to contribute their share after years of hard work fundraising. Cllr. Regan enquired if the information will be

available for the next meeting of the town council. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said he would be happy to advise the Town Council from time to time as developments occur. He said that it was unlikely that the assessment of the bids would be completed before the next Town Council meeting in September and also that a period of time would be required for consultation and negotiation with the successful bidder, if any.

AOB.

Cllr. Curley said that he would like to thank the Chief Fire Officer for providing the most up to date fire tender for Loughrea Station. He said that it is very welcome and will improve the emergency services in the town. If one tender is out at a fire the second will be available if an emergency arises. Cllr. G. Burke also welcomed the second fire tender but he said that the new fire unit was parked outside the fire station at present. He requested the county council to put on an extension to the existing fire station, as they own the property beside it, for the second engine. He said that he would like to thank the fire fighters in Loughrea for their dedication and hard work. Cllr. Hynes welcomed the new fire tender but said that the County Council should finish the job by increasing the water pressure in Athenry Road. All of the other councillors expressed the sentiments of the other speakers in praise for firefighters and new fire engine. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, welcomed extra appliance and said that it would give additional facilities to Loughrea. He paid tribute to the dedication of the fire crews in the County and City Fire Service for their commitment and dedication over the years. He said that he would also like to thank John Diskin, Enda Gallagher and his staff for their achievements in improving the water supply in the town and seeking funding from the Department of the Environment. He said that funding has been sanctioned to upgrade and enhance the supply by provision of a new pipe from the boathouse to Mt. Carmel Crescent, which will provide a better supply and increased pressure to Athenry Road and Old Galway Road. Cllr. G. Burke said this news is welcomed but it is just a temporary measure and we should be still looking for funding from the Department of the Environment to upgrade all of the piping in the town. He also thanked the engineers and their staff but as well Declan Horgan, Caretaker, who has been working tirelessly over the years in trying to keep a supply of water to the town.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that rumours are circulating that one of the wards in Portiuncula Hospital, Ballinasloe, was being closed down. She said that this would have a devastating effect on east and south Galway if this hospital were downgraded. She said that a letter should be sent to C.E.O. Western Health Board to refrain from such a move. Cllr. Hynes said that this was a serious matter and he urged the town council to do everything in their power to keep it open. Cllr. Curley said that a letter should be written to Raymond Sweeney, Hospital Administrator to make the views of the town council known.

Cllr. Regan said that the E.S.B. were closing their shop in Loughrea on the 22nd August and urged Galway County Council to open discussions with them with a view to acquiring the premises for a regional office in Loughrea. He said it would be a nice gesture if they donated the offices to the County Council for a regional office. Mayor Cronin said that it was an ideal site and capable of expansion. She urged that they be written to and enter into negotiations with a view to acquiring

the shop for a regional office. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan, to write to the E.S.B., requesting them to donate the shop to Galway County Council for regional offices. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley, Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that Galway County Council would consider the site in the event that it became available.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that she would like to congratulate Ann Loughnane, (daughter of Matt Loughnane) who is a student in St. Raphaels College on winning a silver medal in the 500m walk in the World Youth Championship in Sherbrooke, Canada.

Mayor Cronin said that the Stoney Brennan Festival was being revived on the 25th July at the Westbridge. She urged all of the councillors to support this project. She said that there is such richness and diversity of talent in the area that it should be aired and she hoped that it would happen at the Stoney Brennan Festival. She said that brochures were available and the members might circulate them around the town. She said that the County Arts Officer was supporting this project. She said that she had plans for a musical recital on the Walks on Lough Mound and a teddy bears picnic at the playground on the fairgreen at the end of August.

This concluded the business.

Signed this day 8 of September, 2003.

Mayor: Anna Cronin

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 8/9/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes Maura Kelly Stewart, Jimmy Curley and Matt Loughnane.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

On the proposition of Cllr. G Burke and seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the annual meeting held on the 14th July 2003 were adopted.

Mayor Cronin said that she wanted an amendment in the minutes as follows in relation to the Town Hall 6th line "giving the people of Loughrea an opportunity to contribute to the repair of the town hall". This was seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Loughnane said that it was the first meeting he had missed since he was elected. He said he was in Canada with his daughter who was competing for the Olympics.

Mayor Cronin said that she had arranged to meet a deputation from the Caheronaun Residents Association and she would take this item first on the agreement of the members. This was unanimously agreed.

Deputation:

Mayor Cronin said that the Loughrea Town Council is not a planning authority so therefore they could not make any decision on this planning application. The deputation consisted of John Diskin, Michael Kelly and James Quinn. All three spoke on the concerns which the residents have as a result of Mermos Development revised plans which changes seven detached houses to 17 apartments and a shop. The changed proposal, which is subject to planning permission, would mean 86 houses in the social and affordable housing scheme instead of 76 private houses originally approved. Mr. Diskin outlined the various stages in the planning application. He said that he did not know of the changes on time and then it was too late to object to the revised planning application. On behalf of the deputation, he circulated correspondence outlining their case and stating their reasons for opposing the proposed development.

Mayor Cronin thanked the deputation for a very comprehensive report and said that they had her support on this matter. She asked the members if they had

any questions to put to the deputation. Cllr. Curley asked what help did the deputation expect from the town council as they have no input in planning decisions. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that the residents had still time to object to this application. She said that she had a similar experience recently and she had a contact who would change the situation. She would give it to the deputation before they left. Cllr. Regan said he fully supported the deputation. He said that there were two members of the town council also members of the county council and he could not understand how they could allow this to happen. He said that the deputation should talk to them. Cllr. Hynes said that he was not aware of this matter until to night and he would do everything in his power to see that justice was done. Cllr. O. Burke said she would lobby the area councillors to investigate this matter further. Cllr. G. Burke said he was totally behind the deputation. Cllr. Loughnane said that he was Chairman of the local area committee and this is where the deputation should air their views. He was not aware of documentation presented by the deputation. He said that there was an area meeting in O'Dea's Hotel the following afternoon and if the deputation wanted to present their case they were free to do so. He said that this application was a current planning file and a decision has not been taken on it. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the deputation had presented their case well. He said that planning permission had not been granted yet for this development. He said that the town council had noted their concerns. Mayor Cronin thanked the deputation, after which they withdrew. Mr. Diskin thanked the town council for receiving them and left.

Matters arising –

Mayor Cronin said that she would like to thank the council staff for the upkeep of the Long Point during the summer and in particular Michael Moloney for his dedication and interest in keeping the place tidy. Cllr. G. Burke said that the Credit Union would sponsor equipment in Garrybreeda playground and he informed Mr. Gallagher, town engineer. Mr. Gallagher, said that he hoped that this equipment would be in place before the end of the year. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she had written to the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs and she had sought funding to the tune of €4,000.00 for Garrybreeda park but she had not got approval yet. If funding comes from this source a more extensive job can be carried out at this playground. Cllr. Regan enquired if an estimate was available yet for the extra railing at the Walks. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that this would be available for the next meeting. Cllr. Regan asked Mayor Cronin if the Arts Grant had been paid to the Stoney Brennan festival committee and if there were any outstanding invoices due for this festival. Mayor Cronin said that the grant of €1,000.00 was being processed and would be paid shortly. She said there was a deficit of €1,900.00 for advertising the closing of the road and this had not been paid yet. She said that the committee was arranging for a concert shortly and the artists were giving their time free so this will bring in funding which will defray the cost. She said that it was a superb night and everybody enjoyed it. She said that there

would be more cultural events organised during the year. She said that she would like to thank Marilyn Gaughan for her help and assistance for this event. She said that there was also a Teddy Bears Picnic held in the fairgreen which was brilliant and she got sponsorship for this event. They had a bouncing castle which she had funded herself. There was face painting done by Gael Scoil personnel.

Town twinning.

Mayor Cronin said that all of the councillors had got a copy of the town twinning documentation, circulated by the Town Clerk, to browse over the summer recess. She enquired on the deadline dates for 2004 and said that we should get moving fast with this project. Cllr. Gunter Nix suggested the town council should start with a town in Northern Ireland as a pilot scheme and it would be less of a burden on the council and the community. She said that Omagh might be one to think of and it would improve cross border relations and help with the peace process. She said that the Chamber of Commerce, Sporting Groups, Cultural Groups could work in tandem with the town council to develop this project. She said that this had been discussed some years ago and it was found to be expensive. Mayor Cronin said that while it would take a great deal of work to get the project up and running grants would be available to assist the committee. She said that the benefits would be enormous to the town i.e. culturally, economically, educationally and socially. She said that Loughrea could be twinned with towns in France, Italy, Germany etc. similar in size and culture. She said that a sub committee would be set up after the meeting for councillors who wished to get involved. Cllr. Loughnane said that the last time that the town council twinned with a town that one person was forced to accommodate six people at considerable cost. He said that Cigna Healthcare could interchange with a similar company in the States. The Credit Union in Loughrea could twin with a Credit Union in another country. The Baffle group in Loughrea could twin with a similar poetry group in Europe or elsewhere. Cllr. Regan said that the pros and cons of twinning should be weighed up and looked at and see what funding would be required if any. He said that Newcastle in Co. Down was twinned with Ballinalsoe and it was working out well. He said that he would have to agree with Cllr. Gunter Nix that Northern Ireland would be an ideal location and help the peace process. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that while grants were available there would be still funding required from the town council and this would have to be included in the annual budget. He said that if the town council is committed to this project, that provision would have to be made in the 2004 budget. He said that the Town Clerk would write to the relevant body on the deadlines for applications for 2004 and would have the information available for the next meeting.

Town Hall.

Councillor Cronin said that rats were running up and down the ivy of Loughrea Town Hall that had now become an urgent health and safety issue. She said that she would be asking the people of Loughrea for their views on what should happen to this dilapidated building. She said that Galway County Council owns it and action is needed urgently before it deteriorates any further. Cllr. Hynes said that everyone in the town would not want to see this building sold into private hands. He said that James Franklin Fuller, who co-designed Kylemore Abbey, Connemara, built the town hall. It was on the site of the old linen hall with a market area downstairs and an assembly hall upstairs. It was converted into a cinema in 1931. He said that he had discussions with Ted Nealon of the local branch of Comhaltas Ceolteoiri Eireann about building a multicultural centre for music dance and theatre and he was hopeful that this would materialise. Mayor Cronin said it was clear from the history of the building that it was never intended as a commercial development and was always meant to be a recreational area. Mayor Cronin said that she would draw up a business plan and would present it to the next area meeting of the County Council.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that while the councilors had very strong, very firm views on what should happen the town hall that the County Council would have to take it on board and decide where to go from here as it can not remain as it is. He said that it is not on the agenda for the area committee meeting as it was called very quickly to deal with Roads and Traffic Management issues. He said that it would be on the next area meeting that will be held within a month.

Regional offices.

Cllr. Regan enquired if any progress had been made with the E.S.B. officials with a view to acquiring the closed offices in Piggott Street. Cllr. Hynes said that when Mary Duffy's house was purchased that he understood that this was sufficient for the regional office requirements and it should be developed. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services warned councilors about getting over enthusiastic about a site in the mart as it would involve the County Council in very significant financial issues. He said whatever assets the council had towards financing new premises they could only go for ones which represented good value for money. He said that overcrowding was a very real problem for staff working in Barrack Street and the council is continuously looking for suitable accommodation.

Correspondence:

The town clerk gave all the members a copy of the letter received from the Chamber of Commerce regarding issues of concern in Loughrea. Cllr. Regan enquired if there was any further progress made with a view to meeting the

Chamber of Commerce informally. Mayor Cronin said that she was very busy and had not time up to now to meet them. Cllr. Regan said that he would be attending the meeting with the Chamber of Commerce the following night and he would like to have a few suitable dates and times so that a meeting can be arranged. The Mayor said that she was available on the 15th and 16th September if that suited the Chamber of Commerce.

Letter from Macroom Town Council as follows:- "That the Minister for Health would consider a compromise on his planned banning of smoking in licensed premises. That a levy be imposed on drink containers to be refunded only when the container is returned to the retailing outlet for proper disposal. All drink containers should bear an identifying mark denoting the place of purchase" This was noted by the members.

The Town Clerk read out extract from letter dated 4th instant received from Superintendent Mulryan, Loughrea Garda Station as follows:- "Due to a prior commitment I will be unable to accept your kind invitation to attend your meeting of September 8th. I would, however, be only too delighted to meet with the town council members at any other time mutually agreed. Perhaps a delegation or the full Council members might like to meet me some time the following week here in my office". Cllr O. Burke said that it was a disgrace that the Superintendent could not attend the meeting. She said that there were a lot of concerns on law and order, among the community, which needs to be addressed. Cllr. Regan said that the Superintendent was invited to attend the town council meeting on our ground and felt that they should not have to meet him on his ground. He said that on other occasions when they met the Superintendent of the day, in his office, that only 2 or 3 members showed up and he felt that if a neutral venue was chosen that more members would attend and it would be a more meaningful meeting. Cllrs. Gunter Nix, G. Burke and J. Curley said that they had no problem meeting him in his office. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that it was an opportunity to take the Superintendent up on his offer and to meet him to discuss concerns they had in the town.

Mayor Cronin said that she wanted an amendment in the minutes in relation to correspondence received from Superintendent Mulryan as follows - "Mayor Cronin said that she would write to the Superintendent and welcome him to Loughrea". This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Letter from Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform enclosing a copy of the Intoxicating Liquor Act, 2003. This was in response to an issue raised by Cllr. Gunter Nix at a previous meeting concerning alcohol consumption and the licensing laws. The town clerk said that a copy of the act would be available at her office if any of the members wished to read it. This was noted.

Person of the Year Award - a copy of letter and nomination paper was circulated to all of the members regarding this item. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that individual members could nominate the person of their choice. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she would like to nominate Jockey Shane Broderick who was coping very well with his injury as a result of a fall from a horse at a race meeting. She said that he had given hours of enjoyment to the public. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart and agreed by all of the members.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Hynes.

- (i) I propose that the Western Health Board intensify its efforts to re-open the Galway Hospice.

Cllr. Hynes said that the Galway Hospice had been closed for a few months and it was causing hardship to the community. He urged the Western Health Board to sit down and try and resolve the problems as soon as possible.

- (ii) I propose that Galway County Council lay a footpath from St. Laurences Fields to the N. 6 Loughrea to Galway road.

This was seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. Hynes said that a lot of people use this shortcut for shops and bus stop and asked that a footpath be constructed to join up with the N.6 road.

A.O.B.

AMAI - Mayor Cronin said that the Annual Conference for the members was coming up during the week and wondered if the two delegates would be attending. Cllr. Loughnane said that he was Honorary Vice President of this association and he would be attending. Cllr. Regan said that he would also be attending.

Mr. Gallagher said that water was seeping into the sewerage system at the Walks and they had employed contractors to excavate the river and seal the pipes at Dolphin Street.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that it was brought to his attention that there was a development taking place at the Westbridge that was not in conformity with the planing permission granted. He said that a warning letter was issued and an enforcement notice served on the person concerned to cease work. The council's Heritage Officer as well as officials from Duchas visited the site and noted some damage to the moat and some material removed. He said that the council's legal team was examining the file and see what action should be taken in this instance. Mayor Cronin said that this was the last remaining moat in Ireland which was built in the mid 13th century. It was

directly outside the mediaeval walls, and its circuit can still be seen. Cllr. Hynes said that this was unauthorised development and he was glad to see the County Council stop work on this site. Cllr. Loughnane said that we should wait the findings of the legal team on this development.

Cllr. Loughnane said that in all his years as a councillor it was the first time that he saw people drinking alcohol at a council meeting. He said that some members of the deputation had brought in their drinks from the bar.

Cllr. G. Burke enquired if there were any plans to upgrade Boreen Com as it is a disgrace. He said that there is no pathway and it is a relief road for Bride Street. He wanted to know if it was taken in charge by Galway County Council. He said that the wall on the opposite side also needs attention. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that he hoped to carry out road works at this location before the end of the year.

Mayor Cronin requested that more litter bins be installed at the Long Point and the Main Street. Cllr. Regan said that the litter bins and glass were flung into the river at The Walks. He said that there is no point in putting extra bins in the town until law and order is restored. He said that the County Council and the Town Council had gone to a lot of expense to carry out works at this location and it was being vandalised every night of the week. Cllr. G. Burke said that there were numerous bags of rubbish, cans etc. removed from The Walks and it has made no difference. He said that the Chamber of Commerce had plans to provide 5 litter bins and put their own logo on them and erect them in the town. Cllr. Loughnane said that there is a proposal to extend this amenity area onto the railway line and to the river which will cater for the needs of 430 residents in the Caheronaun area. He requested an enlarged map be provided showing the amenity areas in Loughrea for the next meeting. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that the town council had brought in bye-laws to protect the amenity areas and it was up to the Garda Authority to implement them. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that a letter should be written to the Minister for Justice informing him of the situation in Loughrea and asking him to take action on the matter.

Cllr. Hynes said that Maura Kelly Stewart had retired from her position in the E.S.B. and he wished her well. He said that she was like a citizen's advisor and gave a great service to the people and was very courteous and helpful. Cllr. Loughnane said that he know Maura's family very well as both families originated from the west end of the town. He said that Pigott Street wouldn't be the same without her. Cllr. Cronin said that Maura was a member of the Fine Gael party for 37 years and like a good wine she was improving with age. She thanked her for her service over the years.

Mayor Cronin said that the centenary celebrations were taken place in the Cathedral on the 19th October, 2003 and outlined the various events. She suggested that the town council should make a presentation to the Bishop of

Clonfert to mark the occasion. A general discussion took place and it was felt that with the splendour and architecture of the cathedral that it would be very difficult to find a suitable gift in keeping with the surroundings. In the end it was decided that a scroll would be presented in line with that given to the Mercy Order for their centenary. Mayor Cronin said that she would arrange to procure this and present it to the clergy.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed this the 18th day of October, 2003.  Mayor

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 13/10/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes and Maura Kelly Stewart.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Minutes:

On the proposition of Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. G. Burke the minutes of the meeting held on the 8th September, 2003 were adopted.

Mayor Cronin said that she wanted an amendment in the minutes in relation to correspondence received from Superintendent Mulryan as follows – "Mayor Cronin said that she would write to the Superintendent and welcome him to Loughrea". This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Matters arising –

Cllr. Regan said that the Standing Orders adopted last year, in relation to deputations, were not adhered to at the last meeting. He said that the deputation was permitted to talk for an hour on the planning issues at Caheronaun and alcohol was consumed at the meeting. He said that the normal practise is that one person makes their case and the councillors question the deputation afterwards. He said that this practise would create a precedent if future deputations were received. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that there was a breach of Health and Safety Regulations with the number of people converging in a small area. Cllr. G. Burke asked if this was an item on the Agenda for the meeting and if the statutory 10 working days had been given to the town clerk. The town clerk said that it was an item on the agenda for the September meeting. She said that she had not got sufficient notice of the deputation but the Mayor had agreed to meet them. Mayor Cronin said in response to Cllr. Regan's queries that the number of people permitted into the room is limitless and that she was well aware of Standing Orders. She said that it gave himself and other councillors an opportunity to address the issues. In response to Cllr. Gunter Nix she said that she would have three times the number of people in the same room for the upcoming Edward Martyn Weekend sessions. She did not think that any Health and Safety Regulations were breached.

Cllr. Hynes said that he had two motions at the last meeting and wondered if there was any reply from either of them. In relation to the closure of the Hospice the Town Clerk said that she had written to the Western Health Board but had not got a reply. In regard to the footpath from Laurencefields to the N.6 near Wards filling station Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that John Diskin and Enda Gallagher were extremely busy trying to get the watermains at the Westbridge complete and had not a chance to investigate it further. A report will be available for the next meeting. Cllr. Hynes said he would like to compliment the council staff for this work, which has improved the water supply on Old Galway Road and Athenry Road. This was supported by all of the councillors.

Cllr. G. Burke, said that he would like to thank Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, for works carried out on Bohercom. He asked if any progress had been made in relation to the equipment, which is being sponsored by the Credit Union, for Garrybreeda playground. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that it is proposed to have this in place before the end of the year.

Cllr. Regan enquired if any progress had been made with regard to the extra railings on the Walks on Abbey Street side. The Town Clerk said that an estimate had been received and it would cost €1,555.00 for the extra railings. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he is framing the estimates at the moment and we will have to look at the full picture and see if this is a desirable project or not.

Cllr. Hynes, enquired if any progress had been made in relation to Civic offices for Loughrea and if the Mart committee had been approached with a view to acquiring a site on their premises. He said that the Station Masters house was a central venue close to O'Deas car park, which would have parking for 80 cars. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that Galway County Council had made no commitment to the mart but would consider all options available with a view to progressing this matter.

Mayor Cronin said that an informal meeting had taken place with the Chamber of Commerce and themselves in regard to Christmas Lighting and St. Patrick's Day Parade. She said that it was very productive and they would continue with this arrangement for the future. She said that during the meeting the Chamber of Commerce announced that they were at an advanced stage of twinning with another European town similar in size to Loughrea. She said that the town council would work in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and advance this project together. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that recent revelations suggested it could become an expensive matter and to tread carefully. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, complemented the Town Council and the Chamber of Commerce on their objective and he said that town twinning should be community driven. He said that the town council would look at the estimates and see if funding can be made available for this project.

Traffic Management Plan.

Cllr. Hynes said that the traffic management plan needed to be discussed in detail as it would have serious implications for residents of the town. Mayor Cronin said that she had not attended the last area meeting as the timing was inconvenient for her. However, she said a resolution was passed at the last meeting and the meeting will be held on days which suit her. Cllr. Regan said that town council had no input into the traffic management plan that it would be councillors in Clifden or such like place that would be making the final decision. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that the personnel involved in drawing up the plan should talk them through the plan. She suggested that the members meet informally to discuss this plan and then forward a submission to the relevant body. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the draft plans will be discussed first at the area meeting and they will consider any submissions received and it will go on display again with whatever amendments are made. It will then be brought forward to the full council meeting for adoption. He said that John Morgan, Director of Services, Roads and Transportation will be making the final decision, as it is an executive function. He said that Cllr. Hynes and Loughnane had a copy of the draft plans and also Mayor Cronin, as she is automatically an ex officio member under recent legislation. He said that the Town Clerk would forward a copy of the plan to the other councillors to browse over before they meet informally. Cllr. Regan said that the town council could not make any decision on the matter only send a submission, like any member of the public, to Galway County Council. Mayor Cronin said that she would let the town clerk know when she was available to take the meeting and she would then inform the councillors. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the meeting should take place before the November meeting as he was under pressure to have the plans in place before the end of the year. It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart to hold an informal meeting before the next meeting.

Fixing date for Annual Budget Meeting.

Town Clerk read out letter from the Department of the Environment and Local Government giving the prescribed periods for the holding of the Annual Budget Meetings. This runs from the 15th November 2003 to 15th January, 2004. It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix to hold the annual budget meeting on the 8th December, 2003. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that it would be the only item on the agenda for that meeting.

Correspondence

Town Clerk read out letter from the General Manager, Portiuncula Hospital, Ballinasloe, in reply to a query raised by Cllr. Kelly Stewart, at a previous

meeting, regarding the downgrading of the hospital. It stated that one ward closed for four weeks due to season/budgetary reasons. It was reopened in the month of August and is working to full capacity since.

Town Clerk read extract from letter received from Perlie Fullard, Secretary of local Baffle group seeking funding for the forthcoming festival and also inviting all of the councillors to a cheese and wine reception on the opening night. Cllr. Regan said that the Loughrea hurling club had qualified for the county senior hurling final on the 26th October and requested the town council to make a donation towards this fund. Mr. Cullen said that there is a huge demand on the town council for contributions to local clubs and organisations. He said that they were all worthy causes but some arrangements would have to be made at the start of the year as to the extent of the donation and what organisation would benefit from it. Cllrs. Gunter Nix suggested that each member donate €5.00 to the Baffle Group if the town council could not afford it. She said that it is light entertainment, which was started by 3 local people, and it was now an international festival. A general discussion took place and it was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart to donate €40.00 to Baffle Group and €150.00 to local hurling club. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, agreed to both.

A letter from St. Brendans Cathedral Centenary Committee was handed to all of the council members. The town clerk said that there was a reserved seat for the council members at the mass at 3.00 p.m on Sunday 12th October and that they were all invited to the reception in the Temperance Hall afterwards. Cllr. Regan asked the Mayor if the framed scroll would be presented during the mass to Bishop Kirby from the town council. Mayor Cronin replied that she did not think it appropriate to present it during the mass that she intends to invite him to the Christmas Dinner and present it then. A general discussion took place and the general consensus was that the presentation be made at the mass or the reception afterwards in the Temperance Hall. It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Regan that the framed scroll be presented to Bishop Kirby on the 12th October, 2003.

A letter from the local Comhaltas Ceolteoiri Eireann branch inviting the members to attend a reception in O'Deas Hotel on Saturday 11th October at 3.00 p.m. together with a concert in the Temperance Hall on Saturday night at 8.00p.m. with artists from all over Ireland performing.

AOB

Mayor Cronin outlined the various events she had attended on behalf of the town council namely - The Annual Road Race, The All Ireland Camogie champions Galway (some of whom went to school in Loughrea) and the 25th anniversary of the local tennis club. She also invited all of the councillors to the Edward Martyn weekend which was being run in conjunction with the centenary

celebrations of the cathedral. She said that it was running from Friday 10th October to Sunday 12th October, 2003 and she had various guest speakers lined up for the event.

Cllr. Regan referred to the recent closure by the Western Health Board of the residential alcoholic and addiction unit in St. Brigids Hospital, Ballinasloe. He said that the unit had served many Loughrea people over the years and its closure could effect many homes and many lives. He requested that a letter be written to the Western Health Board outlining their concerns at the closing of this unit and ask them to have it reopened immediately. Most of the other councillors supported this matter.

This concluded the business.

Signed this the 28th day of November, 2003  Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 10/11/2003, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin .

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Maura Kelly Stewart, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Matt Loughnane, Jimmy Curley and Orla Burke.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Minutes: It was proposed by Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. G. Burke the minutes of the meeting held on the 13th October, 2003 be adopted.

Mayor Cronin said that she wanted to raise an issue about the minute in relation to the presentation of the scroll to mark St. Brendan's Cathedral centenary. She said, "Fr. Cathal Geraghty expressed the view that he did not want any presentation from the public at the centenary mass". She wants this sentence incorporated into the minutes. Cllr. Regan said that a resolution had been passed that the scroll be presented and there was no countermand from the Mayor in relation to it. (Cllr. G. Burke said that he had proposed that the framed scroll be presented to Bishop Kirby on 12th October 2003 and it was seconded by Cllr Regan.) Cllr. G. Burke said that a decision had been taken.

Cllr. Hynes said that the scroll was not ready so there could not be a presentation. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she did not hear any remark after the resolution was passed. She understood that the presentation was to be made at the mass or reception afterwards. Cllr. Kelly Stewart supported Mayor Cronin. Mayor Cronin said that there was no specific date to mark the centenary just the year 1903. Cllr. Hynes said that an amendment should be made to the minute as proposed by Mayor Cronin. Cllr. Regan said that he could not agree to this request and said that the minute was accurate and he proposed the adoption of the minutes. This was seconded by Cllr. G. Burke.

Cllr. Loughnane said that this was a gesture from the town council and there should be no more discussion on it. Cllr. Curley said that he was not at the meeting on 13th October, as he was out of the country, but there was a full discussion at the previous meeting pertaining to this matter. He said that the details were outlined as to what should happen.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that it was exasperating that the Town Council again found itself having a debate on the minutes of a meeting and this could only portray the Council in a bad light. There were issues of substance on the agenda on which the Council should be focusing rather than an argument about the minutes. They are initiated to be a record of decisions taken and not what everyone

had to say on a particular matter. In fact, he said that the minutes are far too detailed and only give rise to the type of unnecessary discussion that was now taking place.

Mayor Cronin said that she wanted the following amendment to the minutes - "Fr. Cathal Geraghty expressed the view that he did not want any presentation at the centenary mass". It was proposed by Cllr. Hynes and seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart that this be included in the minutes.

Cllr. Regan said that he had proposed that the minutes be adopted as they were and this was seconded by Cllr. G. Burke.

Matters arising -

Cllr. Loughnane said that he wanted to raise an issue about the zoning of amenity lands in Loughrea. Mayor Cronin said this matter could be dealt with under any other business.

He said that he wished to refer to the deputation received from the Caheronaun Residents recently and the standing orders had not been followed with regard to the number of people permitted to attend. He said that it was not acceptable that the deputation would be allowed consume alcohol or smoke at a meeting. It was agreed that standing orders would be placed on the agenda for the January meeting.

Cllr. Hynes enquired if any report was received from the Western Health Board regarding the closure of the Hospice in Renmore. The town clerk said that she had got a second acknowledgement but no report. He proposed that the town clerk write to the Western Health Board on this matter. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Mayor Cronin said that Cllr. Hynes wished to pay tribute to the late John Howlett, former Assistant County Manager of Galway County Council. Cllr. Hynes read a tribute as follows: "I wish to pay tribute to the late John Howlett of Renmore, Galway who went to his eternal reward last month. A native of Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, John started his career in 1946 as Clerical Officer with Cork County Council and subsequently served as Town Clerk in Youghal, Ballinasloe, Dungarvan and Tralee. In 1970 he became Secretary of Galway County Council and five years later he took up the post of Assistant County Manager with Mayo County Council. In 1977 he was appointed Assistant County Manager with Galway County Council and continued in that position until his retirement in 1990. For thirteen years John Howlett attended and presided over the meetings of Loughrea Town Commissioners. A true gentleman of gentle disposition, he always had a calming effect when the cut and thrust of political debate became overheated at our meetings. A multi linguist and champion of Human Rights, he was renowned for his sense of justice and compassion. In April 1994 he went to South Africa as part of a monitoring body, which oversaw the first free election for a multi-racial South African Government to be headed by former political prisoner Nelson Mandela.

John Howlett told me that Mandela's victory was the greatest day of his life. To all his family and friends I extend my sincere sympathy. Go ndéana Dia trocaire ar a anam uasal. Cllr. Loughnane also extended sympathy to John Howlett's family. He said that he was coming to Loughrea since 1974 and that he was a man of few words but had a great knowledge of local government. He had responsibility for Housing and Fire Services. His policy was that every private house should have a front and a back garden. He will be missed. Cllr. Hynes requested that a mass card should be sent from the Town Council to the Howlett Family.

Town Hall

Mayor Cronin said that all of the members had been circulated with the advertisement inviting expressions of interest with regard to the Town Hall. She enquired if the 20/11/2003 was the absolute deadline or if this could be extended. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he would look into the matter and if at all possible the closing date would be extended by 2 or 3 weeks. He said that they had invited expressions of interest for the purchase and redevelopment of the Town Hall with a qualification that bids which are for community/cultural use, or the incorporation of those uses, will be preferred above straight commercial use proposals. In all cases there would be a requirement to submit a detailed Business Plan including evidence of capital and operational funding capacity and a timeframe for development. It is envisaged that the development will be designed, financed and operated by the selected bidder. Cllr. Gunter Nix asked Mayor Cronin if she had attended the area meeting about this matter. Mayor Cronin said that she had not attended the meeting, as it was not held at a convenient time.

Litter Bins

Mayor Cronin said that a local business person gave an interview recently on the condition of the Litter bins in Loughrea. He said that the bins are constantly overflowing with rubbish and are not emptied on a regular basis. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that people are using the bins for domestic rubbish, which leaves no room for street litter. Cllr. Regan said that at a Chamber of Commerce meeting he suggested that the Chamber of Commerce and Galway County Council would go 50/50 to provide bins and the proposal was turned down. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he would not like negative publicity to go out about Loughrea. It was a beautiful town environmentally and scenically. He said that there may be litter from time to time but litter bins in the town are emptied regularly and systematically.

Christmas Lighting.

Mayor Cronin said that the Chamber of Commerce would not be in a position to provide Christmas lighting this year in Loughrea because of prohibitive costs. She said the Town Clerk had communicated with them on the matter. The Town Clerk read out a letter to the members, which outlined the requirements of the Town

Councils insurance company for the Christmas Lighting. Cllr. G. Burke said that the Chamber of Commerce had purchased the lights but with the ever-increasing regulations with electricians and insurances they were finding it very difficult to continue with the street lighting. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the town council would continue the practise of giving funds towards the lighting in the same way as before. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that we are increasing the funding this year and the town council will consider increasing it when the annual budget is being discussed. She hoped that the business people would provide the lights this year as it got special mention last year in the media. Cllr. Curley said that he hopes that the message does not go out that it is the town council that is stopping the Christmas Lighting. Cllr. Regan said that he brought the issue of Christmas Lighting to the board in May but he was accused of scaremongering.

Correspondence.

Town Clerk read letter from the Department of the Environment and Local Government inviting the town councillors (formerly town commissioners) to a half-day seminar on Local Government Policy and Practice. She said that it was being co-ordinated by the I.P.A. on behalf of the Department of the Environment. The venue and dates were as follows - Institute of Public Administration, 57 - 61 Lansdowne Road, on Saturday 22nd November, 2003 and Tullamore Court Hotel on Friday 28th November, 2003. The fee for attendance is €90.00 per person plus travel expenses. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that what ever councillors were interested in going to leave their names with the Town Clerk and she would fill up the registration form.

Reply from Noel Brett, Western Health Board in relation to the closure of the Detoxification Unit in St. Bridgets Hospital, Ballinasloe as follows:- "There appears to be some mis-information about the provision of alcohol services by the Western Health Board in the area. There has been an attempt in recent years to bring additional services closer to the client and their families. This is in keeping with best clinical practice and has been national policy for some time. This has been achieved in most other areas of the country. In the East Galway area the Western Health Board has increased the number of Addiction Councillors from three to nine in recent years. Rather than be based in one location in Ballinasloe these councillors are now based throughout East Galway so that services are available in the individuals own town approximate to their place of work and their family. For example, in Loughrea we now have in place two Addiction Councillors who are available on a full time basis. In the event that there is a client who requires detoxification or impatient treatment this is provided either at St. Bridgets Hospital or in Portiuncula Hospital. For clients who require residential services this can be provided either within St. Bridgets Hospital Services or in special services such as Cuan Mhuire in Coolarne, Tuam.

There has been no diminution in the services provided in East Galway, in fact, the contrary is the case. It is important to view this from the client's perspective and I

wish to reassure you that any client who requires hospitalisation, inpatient treatment and community follow up will receive this promptly and to the highest possible standard. Due to the way our services have developed in local areas e.g. Loughrea, Tuam, Headford, Mountbellew, Ballinasloe, Portumna, Gort and Athenry in the recent past there has been a decline in the number of people who are being referred for the traditional type service which was provided in Ballinasloe. Indeed we have not had a referral to the Ballinasloe Unit for over seven months. It is important to maintain the localised Counselling service, as that is where we are now providing services to clients and their families in the local area. I do hope this helps to clarify the issue for you and if you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me". A general discussion took place on this item and it was proposed by Cllr. Curley that Noel Brett be invited to address the meeting on concerns they have in relation to the closing of this unit. This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Kilrush Town Council "To ask the Minister for the Environment and Local Government to introduce the necessary legislation to address serious concerns at local authority level regarding ever-growing deficits in local government funding requirements". This was noted.

AOB

Amenity Area.

Cllr. Loughnane said that he had raised this matter at the September meeting. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he had a large size map showing the different planning zones including the amenity areas proposed in Loughrea. He said that the Loughrea Town Plan will be reviewed within the next three months and the Town Council would be commenting on it as a body. He said that a plan would have to be drawn up to see what is the most suitable amenity for the area. He said that the lands are in private ownership and would have to be acquired by the County Council. The councillors said that this matter should be put on a future agenda for discussion.

Traffic Management Plan

Mayor Cronin said that they had an informal meeting to discuss this matter and a number of amendments were considered. It was agreed by the Town Council to recommend to the County Council Area Committee that the Draft Traffic Management Plan be put on public display.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said she would like to congratulate Detective Kieran McNamara on winning the Scots Bravery award.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that she would like to congratulate the Loughrea Senior Hurling Team on reaching the final and giving a good sporting game.

Annual Christmas Dinner - It was decided to invite the partners of the members to this event this year. It was also decided to invite two priests i.e. one from the Cathedral and one from the Abbey together with Lexie Marmion. A guest list to be drawn up by the councillors and the invitations to be sent out by the Town Clerk. Former town commissioners could attend the Christmas Dinner if they wished this year. Mayor Cronin said she would need an RSVP by 28/11/2003 so as to inform the hotel.

It was unanimously agreed that the starting time for the meeting is 7.00p.m on the 8th December. The monthly meeting will be followed by the Budget meeting. No business other than Confirmation of Minutes and Annual Budget will be considered.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 8th day of December, 2003

Mayor *Jan Cronin*

Minutes of proceedings of Special Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 28/11/2003 in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin.

Members: Cllrs. James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Maura Kelly Stewart, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Matt Loughnane, Jimmy Curley and Orla Burke.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Consider minutes of meeting held on the 13th October, 2003.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. G. Burke that the minutes of meeting held on the 13th October, 2003 as circulated be adopted.

Mayor Cronin said that she wished to have an amendment to the minutes in relation to the presentation of the scroll to mark St. Brendans Cathedral centenary. She said that at the meeting on 13th October, she had said that "Fr. Cathal Geraghty had expressed the view that he did not want any presentation at the mass" and this had not been recorded in the minutes. At the Town Council meeting in November she had asked that the minutes be amended to reflect this but the discussion on the minutes that night was not resolved. She said she still wished to have this recorded in the minutes.

Cllr. Hynes proposed that the minutes as circulated be amended to include that "Fr. Cathal Geraghty had expressed the view that he did not want any presentation at the mass". This was seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

After a discussion on the matter during which opposing views were expressed the Mayor said that a vote would be taken. Cllrs. Loughnane and Curley said that they would not be voting on this issue, as they were not at the meeting on the 13th October, 2003. Mr. Cullen confirmed that only those who were present at the meeting in question were entitled to vote on a question of the accuracy of the minutes. A vote was taken in relation to the amendment proposed by Cllr. Hynes and the result was as follows;

For the amendment - Cllrs. Hynes, Kelly Stewart, Mayor Cronin. - 3.

Against the amendment - Cllrs. Regan, O. Burke, Gunter Nix and G. Burke. - 4.

The amendment was lost.

The minutes of the 13th October, 2003, as circulated, were then signed by the Mayor.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 28th day of December, 2003.

Mayor:

Anna Cronin

Minutes of proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 8th December, 2003, in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Maura Kelly Stewart and Matt Loughnane.

Officials: Donal O'Donoghue, County Manager, Jim Cullen, Director of Services, John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllr. Curley.

Minutes:

Mayor Cronin welcomed Donal O'Donoghue, County Manager and John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer to the meeting.

Minutes of Meeting held on 10th November, 2003:

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th November, 2003 be adopted.

Matters arising -

Cllr. G. Burke said he would like to congratulate the Chamber of Commerce on the Christmas lighting in the town. He said the town got together and worked as a community to bring this about. He said that it is something positive for the town.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said she attended the conference in Tullamore on the 28th November on Local Government Policy and she found it very informative. Cllr. G. Burke said that he agreed with Cllr. Gunter Nix that it was well worth while going to. Mayor Cronin said that she had also attended the conference in Dublin and found it interesting but unfortunately it came at the wrong time with only six months left in her term of office. She said that all councillors should be briefed on local government policy within six months of their commencement and it would be more beneficial.

Minutes of Meeting held on 28th November, 2003:

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter Nix seconded by Cllr. G. Burke that the minutes of the Special Meeting held on the 28th November, 2003 be adopted.

Cllr. Hynes said that he would like to compliment the County Council staff on the splendid job in the car park. Cllr. G. Burke said he would also like to congratulate all the council staff on the car park and asked what name it would be called. He said that the community should be given an opportunity to name this car park and the title could be forwarded to the Town Clerk. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that Main Street car park would be sufficient. Cllr. Kelly Stewart suggested that it should be called Gallagher car park. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, complimented all the

Staff involved in the construction of the car park. He said that no decision had been taken as to whether to put a name on it, but if people wished to make suggestions to the County Council, then it would be considered. Cllr. Loughnane said when the disc parking is introduced that the public should be allowed 15 or 20 minutes stay without paying if they are just buying a paper or doing business in the Bank or Post Office. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that it was standard procedure in most towns, that had paid parking, to allow a few minutes for people to source the tickets. Also the machine would be set up to allow people to pay only the length of time they would be parking.

Mr. D.O'Donoghue, County Manager, said he was delighted to attend the town council meeting. He also complimented the Council Staff in the Regional Office and the Local Area Office on providing a service to the public and on the development of the car park. He said Loughrea is a growing town. He said that he was delighted to see that the Department of Transport had confidence in it with the decision to decentralise there. He said that Ballinasloe, Clifden and Furbo would also benefit from the relocation of departments. He said that the Town Council should work in partnership with other organisations such as Chamber of Commerce, Tidy Towns etc and show unity for the progression of the town.

Mayor Cronin thanked the Manager for attending the meeting. She also thanked Jim Cullen all the staff in the Regional and Local Area Office for their assistance over the year. Cllr. G. Burke said that the Town Council should write to the Department of Transport welcoming it to Loughrea and pointing out all the advantages in relocating to it. He would also like to congratulate Ballinasloe for being successful. Cllr. Hynes said he welcomed the proposal to relocate the department to Loughrea. Cllr. Gunter Nix said a letter should be written to Kieran Coyne, Community and Enterprise, thanking him for his assistance on updating and progressing the decentralisation submission for the Department of Finance. Mayor Cronin said Jim Murrin, I.D.A. should be thanked also for helping out with the submission.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed this 12th day of January, 2004.  Mayor.

Minutes of proceedings at the Annual Budget Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 8th December, 2003 in O'Deas' Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Gabriel Burke, Orla Burke, Pat Hynes, Matt Loughnane and Maura Kelly Stewart.

Officials: Donal O'Donoghue, County Manager, Jim Cullen, Director of Services, John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllr. Curley.

Mr. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, presented the Annual Budget for the year 2004. Mr. Cullen stated that the expenditure for 2004 is estimated at €74,595.00 with receipts of €9,773.00. The rate proposed for 2004 is €2.59 i.e. an increase of 6%.


Mr. Cullen said that it was very difficult budget to frame. However, he said that he has made provision for the upcoming local elections and has also increased the contribution to the Chamber of Commerce by 50% this year while keeping the rates increase at a modest level. He said that provision was made in last year's budget for the repair of a rented house and further maintenance work is required next year, while he has not allowed for the total cost in the budget, he said that he would have to undertake whatever repairs were necessary. This was agreed by the Council.

Cllr. Loughnane said that he was delighted with the extra funding to the Chamber of Commerce and complimented the Chamber on the Christmas lighting, which made the town very attractive. Mr. Cullen said that the town council facilitated most of the organisations requesting funding this year but it would have to be more selective when considering allocations next year. He recommended that the budget proposed be adopted.

On the proposition of Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix and resolved that the Budget of the Loughrea Town Council for the Financial Year ending 31st December, 2004, as set forth at A, B, C. on the Form of Budget be adopted and the Form of Annual Budget be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

It was also resolved that the Demand be made on Galway County Council by the Loughrea Town Council for the sum of €64,822.00, for the Financial Year ending on the 31st December, 2004, and that the Form of Demand be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

This concluded the business of the Annual Budget Meeting.

Signed this 12th day of January, 2004.  Mayor.

Minutes of Proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 12th January, 2004, in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

- Mayor: Anna Cronin.
- Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Matt Loughnane, Jimmy Curley.
- Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.
- Apologies: Cllr. M. Kelly Stewart.

Minutes of Monthly Meeting:

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 8th December, 2003 be adopted.

Matters arising:

Cllr. Gunter Nix asked if there was any submissions received from the community regarding the naming of the new car park opened in December, 2003. Mayor Cronin said that she had approached Baffle for a name but they had not come back to her. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that it should be left as Main Street car park.

Minutes of Annual Budget Meeting:

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter Nix seconded by Cllr. G. Burke the minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting held on the 8th December, 2003 be adopted.

Standing Orders:

Cllr. Loughnane raised a question on Standing Orders in November 2003 and had requested that this item be put on the agenda in January, 2004 for review. It was unanimously agreed that the Standing Orders adopted by Loughrea Town Council be retained. A copy of the adopted Standing Orders was circulated to each member.

Declaration of Donations received during 2003.

The Town Clerk circulated all of the members with the necessary documentation in relation to this procedure. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, gave a synopsis of the requirement under the Act.

Under the Act, not later than the 31st January each year, a donation statement must be furnished to the local authority by each person, who in the preceding year was a member of the local authority.

The donations statement must show whether, in the preceeding calendar year, the member received from the same person, a donation exceeding in value of €634.87. If a person makes

more than one donation to the same member in the same year, the values of the donations must be aggregated and the donations treated as a single donation.

For each donation over €634.87, the value of the donation must be stated together with the name, address and a description of the person by, or on whose behalf, the donation was made. The donation statement must be accompanied by a statutory declaration that, to the best of the members knowledge and belief, the donation statement is correct in every material respect and that he or she has taken all reasonable action in order to be satisfied as to its accuracy.

A member of a local authority who received in 2003 a political donation of more than €126.97 must open and maintain an account in a financial institution in the State and must lodge that donation and any further monetary donations received of whatever value, to that account and call it "Political Donations Account".

The Town Clerk will, within 14 days after the latest date for receipt of the various statements, publish a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area the time and place where the statement can be inspected and the names of members who have not furnished statements. The Town Council is required to consider every donation statement furnished to it by members of that authority.

Correspondence:

The Town Clerk read out correspondence received from Minister Treacy dated 8th January, 2004 from the Minister for the Environment and Local Government regarding approval of Contract Documents for the Advanced Section of the Loughrea Regional Water Supply scheme.

Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer said once the 3 kms of watermains were replaced water pressure in the system would improve. He said the pipelaying from the Boathouse to Mount Carmel Crescent was nearly complete and this would be linked into the new scheme proposed from Loughrea to Craughwell.

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that it was very positive news from Minister Treacy and enquired if all of the necessary underground cables could be done at the one time and it would avoid duplication of work by E.S.B., Eircom etc. subsequently. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that this might be considered as a project under the Urban & Village Renewal Scheme for Loughrea when it comes on stream.

Cllr. Curley said that he had arranged a deputation at a previous meeting for residents in the town experiencing difficulties with poor water pressure in the town. He said that it is good news and the scheme will continue the improved water pressure in the town and hinterland of Loughrea.

Cllr. Loughnane said that Loughrea was the biggest gap in the county without water and Minister Cullen's announcement was very welcome. He said that the Tuam Regional Water Supply Scheme was pumping water to Carrabane at the moment. He said that he was delighted with the news from the Minister that he had approved the Loughrea to Craughwell scheme and that it was now ready to go to tender.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that this scheme would have to follow the Public Procurement process, which would necessitate advertising in the European Journal and the scheme would be advanced as quickly as possible.

A.O.B.

Cllr. Loughnane enquired to what extent is Broadband being used in the area and suggested that Frank Dawson, be invited to a town council meeting to discuss this and other issues under this department.

Mayor Cronin said that she would be interested in finding out about Natural Gas and if it will be available in Loughrea area. She also enquired if a light rail system could be made available to reduce the traffic on the roads.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he would talk to Frank Dawson, Director of Community and Enterprise, to see if he would be available to address the meeting on the question of Light Rail System, Broadband and Gas pipeline. He said that it could be put on the Agenda for the next meeting if he is available.

Cllr. G. Burke said that Hanley's Cross turning for Athenry town is very difficult to see at night, as there was no hatching put inside the island since it was resurfaced. He said that there is also a mound of clay for some time blocking the vision at this junction.

Cllr. Loughnane said it is proposed to extend the public lighting in this area and other areas along the proposed Bypass and also to install crash barriers. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that he would bring it to the attention of Road Design Section.

Cllr. G. Burke said that a new fast food outlet had opened in Brogans on the Main Street and the ramp provided at the entrance is very dangerous. He requested that this matter be investigated as soon as possible. Mayor Cronin said two cut stone steps had been removed from these premises, which added character to the building. Cllr. Regan said that the removal of the steps was a stipulation by the planning authority. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the owners of the premises had been requested to remove this ramp.

Cllr. Regan said that he had tabled a Notice of Motion at the April meeting last year for donations from each of the 7 Area Councillors to help repair footpaths in the town. He said that a plan should be put in place in order of priority. He said that the councillors had committed their funds at the time and could not accede to his request. He is again putting this request before the 7 Area Councillors and he would hope that they would look at it favourably. Cllr. Hynes asked the Town Engineer what budget was assigned for repair of footpaths. He was informed that it was in the region of €30,000 and paths would be repaired in order of priority.

Cllr. Gunter Nix requested extra public lighting on the Bohercom/Bride Grove Road. She said that it is very dark for the public and people use it as a short cut.

Cllr. Curley enquired if a skip will be provided this year for fridges and washing machines in Loughrea. He said that they are being dumped all over the county because the cost of refuse collection is exorbitant. Mr. Gallagher said a skip was provided in the past but it was very costly and it was used for domestic rubbish as opposed to cleaning up areas. It also had to be emptied 3 times a day and it was abused. Cllr. Curley said that the white goods

could be collected in the Pound in the fairgreen and the skip could be supervised. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the matter would be taken up with the Environment Department of Galway County Council.

Cllr. Hynes asked for an update on the Swimming Pool. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that they were following up on the bids received for this project and it would be a few weeks before any decision will be made.

Mayor Cronin said that she wished to extend the sympathy of the Town Council to the Courtney family and Bishop Kirby on the tragic death of Dr. Michael Courtney. This was unanimously supported.

Cllr. G. Burke asked Mayor Cronin if the scroll, to mark the centenary of St. Brendans Cathedral had been presented to the Bishop or the clergy of the parish. Mayor Cronin replied that it was not and she had no idea when it would be presented.

Mayor Cronin said she sent a note to Kieran Coyne and Jim Murrin for their contribution to upgrading the decentralisation submission. In this context she said that the Town Council should be carrying out an audit of the Derelict Buildings in the area and put the onus on the owners to carry out the necessary repairs. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the statutory obligation rests with the County Council and not the Town Council.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the Caheronaun Road was in a terrible condition and asked the Town Engineer if any improvements could be carried out on it. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the Builders were still working there and the Council had not taken the services in charge in this area and it was not their responsibility to maintain the road. Cllr. G Burke asked if half the existing road could be surfaced dressed. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that he would investigate this matter and see what can be done.

Cllr. Regan asked if any progress was being made on the Car Park at Station Road and also on paid parking. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the Bye-laws for paid parking had been adopted. He said that the Traffic Management Plan would be advertised and going on display within the next two weeks.

Cllr. Loughnane said that the Minister for Transport had announced that the Dublin to Cork and Dublin to Galway Motorways would be coming on stream shortly. He said that there would be two seminars coming up in March organised by BMW region on Transport. Mayor Cronin asked if the Loughrea Bypass was moving along. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the Oral Hearing for the CPO would be heard on the 27/1/2004.

This concluded the business.

Signed this  day of February, 2004

Mayor: 

Minutes of Proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held on the 9th February, 2004, in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Maura Kelly Stewart, Matt Loughnane.

Apologies: Cllr. Jimmy Curley.

Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Hynes the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 12th January, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising:

Mayor Cronin said that she had contacted Baffle and there are holding a competition with a view to naming the new Car Park opened in December, 2003. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that it should be left Main Street, Car Park. Mayor Cronin said that she would like to leave it to the community to decide. She said that the town council does not have to go along with the name. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the Area Committee will be making the final decision.

Cllr. G. Burke, said he would like to thank the Town Engineer for replacing the hatching on the road at Hanley's Cross so promptly. He enquired if any progress could be made with the Caheronaun Road as it is in a very bad state. Mayor Cronin said that there is a telephone pole protruding on this road since the builders moved back the wall and is very dangerous and needs attention. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the Council had not taken the estate in charge and nothing could be done until such time as this happens.

Cllr. G. Burke said that he was delighted to announce, as Chairman of Loughrea Swimming Pool Committee, that the pool for Loughrea is now a reality. He said that Galway County Council has accepted the proposal from the consortium, led by Brian Shaughnessy, to build a swimming pool and leisure facilities in Loughrea. This is a joint venture involving Galway County Council who provided the site, Loughrea Swimming Pool Committee and the consortium. The value of the project is in excess of €6 million with a capital investment of €4 million by the consortium, which will substantially reduce the necessary grant required from the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism. He said that he was confident that the necessary funding will be forthcoming from the Department. He said once the planning process is complete that work will be ready to start and it is hoped that it will be open to the public in 2005. He said that he would like to thank the swimming pool

committee, who had worked tirelessly to reach this goal since 1995. He said that they had been fund raising for years and now they have reached their reward. He would also like to express his sincere thanks to Jim Cullen and Galway County Council for all the help and assistance in bringing this to fruition.

The building will incorporate the following –

1. Reception, incorporating a Café.
2. Changing rooms, with accessible changing cubicles for family and individual use.
3. 9m x 25m swimming pool.
4. 3.6m x 9m learning pool.
5. Sauna and Steam room.
6. State of the art health/and fitness/gym area that will incorporate the most up to date evaluation and training programmes.
7. The building can accommodate a child-minding service, which will allow greater flexibility.

The Design Team involved includes the following –

Architect: Edward McCarthy: Structural Engineer: Coyle Kennedy:
Quantity Surveyor: Peter Costello Architectural Technician: Ciaran Hogan.

Cllr. Loughnane commended the Swimming Pool Committee and all involved in progressing this matter and it is a great boost for Loughrea and Tourism in general.

Mayor Cronin said that this was excellent news for Loughrea and the public who had supported the committee by purchasing tickets. She recalls Cllr. Hynes being involved in 1994 in trying to get a swimming pool up and running for Loughrea.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that it is an achievement to have come this far but it is not set in stone yet, as the project is dependent on receiving the necessary funds from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism for this project. He said that for a project of this magnitude would require substantially larger amount of funding were it not for the fundraising by the Committee, the fact that the Local Authority had made the site available and the significant private investment. He said that other locations would also be seeking funding and Loughrea would be competing with them. He said that the fact that Loughrea are looking for significantly less funding would be a strong selling point as a typical grant for a development of this size would be €3.8 million. He said that there will also be Private Investment in this venture.

Cllr. Hynes said he has been there since its inception and he is delighted that the scheme is approved in principle. He said that it had the backing of the town commissioners. It will be a great benefit to the town and upgrade the status of the town. He is glad to see that a decision was made at last. He would like to thank Jim Cullen, Director of Services, for undertaken this project with great vigour and heart. He welcomes Brian Shaughnessy's investment who is a well known business man and one of the highest integrity.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on funding under Notice of Motion monies for footpaths and was informed that no reply had been received by the Town Clerk from the Councillors. Mayor Cronin said that Cllr. McClearn had given her a commitment. Cllr. Hynes said he was going to undertake some projects and asked Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer for estimates.

Cllr. Regan asked if the County Council had finalised the land deal for the car park at Station Road. He also enquired when the Traffic Management Plans were going on display. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the legal documents were being finalised. He said that the Traffic Management Plans would have to go on public display for a month and then it would be on the agenda for the full County Council meeting.

Cllr. G. Burke asked Mayor Cronin when the scroll to mark the centenary of St. Brendans Cathedral would be presented. Mayor Cronin said that it would be presented to the Bishop on the 17/3/2004. Cllr. Gunter Nix asked if the councillors would see the scroll before the presentation. She said that she would take it along to the next Town Council meeting. She said that it was hand done by a local artist and was a work of art and she was very proud of it.

Cllr. Cronin asked if Frank Dawson was requested to address the meeting on the various issues raised at the previous meeting. The Town Clerk said that he had been requested to attend but was not available until the next meeting. Cllr. Cronin said that she would be interested in a light rail system from Loughrea to Galway, which would help to alleviate the traffic jams on the roads. Cllr. Loughnane said that there is a two tier system with the provision of the rail system. He said that the rail fare from Bray to Dublin is €4.80 and a similar journey Athenry to Galway is €11.00. He said that it was well time the West of Ireland got equality with the East Coast as they have been taking the back seat for far too long. Cllr. Hynes said that it was a wrong decision to close the branch line from Loughrea to Attymon. He supported Mayor Cronin and said that we should campaign for a light rail system. Cllr. Loughnane said that he had discussions with the Chief Executive Officer of the National Roads Authority and he said that the C.P.O. for the Motorway from Oranmore to Ballinasloe will be advertised this year. He said soil tests were carried out on the lands in question by M.C. O'Sullivan. He said that this Motorway will improve the traffic congestion.

Annual Declaration - Part 15.

The Town Clerk said that she had circulated the members with the necessary forms under Part 15 of the Local Government Act, 2001. She said that it was imperative that they complete this form and return it to her before the end of February, 2004.

Fix Date for April monthly meeting:

The Town Clerk said that the due date for the April monthly meeting was falling on Easter Monday which is a Bank Holiday and the meeting could not be held on that date. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. G. Burke to hold the monthly meeting on the 5th April, 2004.

Correspondence:

The Town Clerk said that the AMAI Spring Conference will be held in Letterkenny on the 13 & 14 February, 2004. Two delegates will be attending.

An acknowledgement from the Department of Transport dated 13th January, 2004 regarding decentralisation of the Road Haulage Division and National Safety Council to Loughrea.

A letter from Galway Hospice Foundation in relation to closure of the Galway Hospice for several months. Cllr. Hynes said that it was a disgrace and a terrible hardship to the public. He said that a letter should be written to the CEO Western Health Board. Mayor Cronin said she was amazed to read on a Sunday paper that the Western Health Board had €15 million unspent at the end of last year. She said that wards had to be closed down in the Hospitals because of the lack of funding including the Alcohol centre in St. Bridgets Hospital. Cllr. Kelly Stewart said the Health Services in the West are inferior compared to the Eastern side of the country. She said that the public can walk in off the streets and have breast screening and smear tests carried out in the East Coast where as people living in the West Coast have to travel long distances to hospitals to have the same tests done. She said that the Health Centre in Loughrea no longer carries out those tests and the Health Services is being downgraded all the time. Cllr. Loughnane said that there is no point in writing to the CEO Western Health Board as the Health Boards were being disbanded. He said that a deputation should be arranged by the Town Clerk with the Minister for Health to outline their concerns and bring equality to the West of Ireland. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that the Health Board should restore the services that existed in the town as soon as possible.

A letter from the Western Health Board dated 28th January, 2004 in relation to reduction of Alcohol Services in East Galway. Town Clerk to arrange an informal meeting to discuss this subject and get back to members with date and time.

A letter from the Department of the Environment outlining the requirements in relation to Photographs on Ballot Papers for the upcoming Local Elections. This was circulated to all the members.

A letter from the Chamber of Commerce outlining agenda for monthly meeting to be held on the 10/2/2004. Cllr. Regan said that he had not attended any meeting

recently, as he was not notified. Cllr. G. Burke said that he got notification through the Town Clerk now. He said he was an associated member of the Chamber of Commerce and he should attend. Mayor Cronin asked for an up date on Insurance in relation to St. Patrick Day Parade. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that he was speaking to a senior person in the Insurance Company this evening and he outlined the situation to him. He said that it is not the only county applying pressure that it seems to be a national problem. He said that the person he was dealing with was away and he would not have any news for a few days. Cllr. G. Burke said he attended a conference in the Meadowcourt Hotel recently and one of the speakers said that FBD Insurances would do a deal with an area and this would reduce the cost of insurance for such events. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that if there is a problem with insurance perhaps the event could be held in the Temperance Hall.

AOB:

Cllr. G. Burke said that the grounds of the ESB office has got very dilapidated since the shop closed down last year and requested that it be brought to their attention. He also said that there is Mud Racing taking place at the Long Point and he has asked the Gardai to investigate it. He said cars are driving on the grass and it is very dangerous.

Cllr. Gunter Nix asked if any progress was made with the provision of toilets in Loughrea. She said that the toilets were unsightly. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the Council intends to provide toilets in Loughrea and Tuam but it would have to be advertised in the European Journal and that was delaying matters.

Mayor Cronin said that St. Bridgets well was restored and blessed and opened on the 1/2/2004. She thanked all of the Council Staff, St. Bridgets Vocational School CSPE (Civic, Social and Political Education Group) for their assistance in progressing this project. She also thanked Martin Flynn who had presented a small statue, for the opening, while they were awaiting a larger one to arrive. She said that she had sponsored and assisted this project. She said that the Students had made St. Bridgets Crosses specially for the day.

Mayor Cronin announced that there would be a Mayoral Ball on the 17/4/2004 in O'Deas Hotel and the proceeds would go to the local St. Vincent De Paul. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that this was not discussed with the members and asked when it was arranged. She said that there were nine members on the Town Council and it should be left to them to decide. Cllr. Hynes said he thought it was a great idea.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 8 day of March, 2004

Mayor: Anna Cronin

Minutes of Proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town held on the 8th March, 2004, in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Orla Burke, Pat Hynes, Gabriel Burke, Maura Kelly Stewart, Matt Loughnane.

Apologies: Cllr. James Curley.

Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 9th February, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising:

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that at the March meeting it had been decided to make a presentation to the County Manager to mark his retirement. Cllr. Gunter Nix said she had suggested this at the February meeting and Cllr. Regan proposed that the Town Clerk would organise this presentation. Mr. Cullen said that the manager was retiring on the 4th April, 2004. It was agreed that the manager be asked when it might suit him to receive a presentation.

Cllr. Regan enquired about the proposed carpark at station road. Mr. Cullen said that legalities for the Transfer of lands were being processed at the moment. Cllr. Regan enquired if this car park would be for long stay car parking or would there be a mixture. Mr. Cullen said that it hadn't finally been determined and would depend on the parking patterns that emerge in the town following the introduction of the paid parking later in the year. Cllr. Regan asked if a residential permit would be granted to people living in the town. He said that he had received representations from a premises running a bed and breakfast business on Barrack Street and he wondered if guests would have to move their vehicles before 9.00 a.m in the morning to avoid penalty. Cllr. G. Burke asked if the Revenue generated from disc parking in the town would be spent in the town. Mayor Cronin asked would there be facilities for persons on wheelchairs or elderly people and if they would be allowed special permits. Mr. Gallagher said that the byelaws provided for the issue of residents permits and the traffic management plan on display at present included provision for disabled parking. Mr. Cullen stated that the

revenue from paid parking would be required for many years to pay off the costs of the new car parks, administration and enforcement of the scheme and the implementation of the traffic management plan. He said the County Council will monitor the actual operation of disc parking and with experience might alter certain aspects of it. Cllr. G. Burke asked if the area of the Fairgreen beside the Boathouse was earmarked for parking. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said it was planned to use a strip the width of a car opposite the Courthouse for parking. He said that it would facilitate the Courts and parents with small children playing in the playground or shopping.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on Notice of Motion money for improving the footpaths in Loughrea. The Town Clerk said that Cllrs. Cunningham and Regan had given a commitment towards providing funding for the footpaths. Mayor Cronin said she had received a commitment from Cllr. McClearn. Cllr. Hynes said that he had asked Mr. Gallagher for an estimate for a specific area and he would provide some funding. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that whatever funding is received from Notice of Motion money that it would be spent on a specific area and not on small sections all over the town.

Cllr. G. Burke asked if the scroll would be presented to the Cathedral on the 17/3/2004. Mayor Cronin said that Fr. Geraghty does not wish to have it presented at mass. She had it on display at the meeting so as the members could see it before it is presented to the clergy. She said that it would have to be framed in Michael O'Briens and asked the members consent. The members approved and it was proposed that the Mayor arrange to present the scroll herself to the clergy as soon as possible. Cllr. Regan said that it has become an embarrassment for the town council at this stage.

Fairgreen:

Mayor Cronin said that she requested that this item be put on the agenda. She said that she had attended a public meeting concerning the playgrounds in Loughrea. She said that the consensus of the meeting was that equipment in the playgrounds were outdated. ~~She said that the Town Council has recommended that a car park is provided near the Boathouse and she said it is a great idea.~~ Cllr. G. Burke said that he was not aware of this and wondered what would happen to the trees growing there. He requested those traffic-calming measures be put in place as children are always playing games in this area and are running between cars from one side to the other side. Cllr. Gunter Nix requested that Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, investigate this matter. Mayor Cronin said that the Fairgreen is such an important issue that an informal meeting should take place with the members to discuss this

matter further. She suggested that this meeting would take place on the 16th March, 2004 in O'Dea's Hotel at 7.30 p.m. This was supported by the members.

Regional Office:

Mayor Cronin said that she also requested that this item be put on the agenda. She wondered if Galway County Council was still pursuing this matter and if any progress had been made in providing them. She said that the old Station House was still available and she considered it very suitable for regional offices. She said that there is also sites available on the mart near the proposed car park and this property should be investigated. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said the Council was actively pursuing this matter and is trying to find a site that is good value for money and in a suitable location. Cllr. Hynes said that the Council should look for a site or property for a new Fire Station, which could incorporate public offices. Cllr. G. Burke said that it would make sense to have County Council, Western Health Board and Government Departments under the one roof and would be more convenient for the public. In reply to a query from Cllr. Loughnane Mr. Cullen confirmed that Council officials had met with the OPW so that both parties were aware of each other's interests in the area of office accommodation.

Correspondence:

Town Clerk read out correspondence from the Department of Health dated 19th February, 2004 stating that the request of the town council was noted. The Department is aware of their concerns and will contact the Town Council as soon as possible with regard to receiving the deputation.

A letter from Noel Brett, Western Health Board, was read stating that he would meet the town council informally to discuss the Alcohol Services in East Galway. He said that he was being seconded to Dublin on a temporary basis and he would arrange this meeting on his return.

A letter dated 5/3/2004 had been received from the Chamber of Commerce inviting the members to the Reviewing Stand for the St. Patrick's Day Parade on the 17/3/2004. The parade commences at 2.00 p.m. from the fairgreen and the reviewing stand will be located on Barrack Street.

See minute
of 5/4/2004
20.

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NOTICE OF MOTION:

Cllr. G. Burke

- (i) I propose that Galway County Council return the second Fire Engine to Loughrea.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix that the second fire engine be returned to Loughrea. Cllr. G. Burke said the Town Council was delighted with the announcement that a second fire tender was being provided for Loughrea. He said unfortunately that it was short-lived as Galway County Council has recalled the tender. He said that the town council had campaigned for years for the second tender and has requested that the appliance be returned to Loughrea. He said when the engine is gone out to a fire that a standby facility is needed in an emergency. He said there is two crews at the moment but only one fire engine. He said that the second engine was parked outside the Fire Station awaiting a new building to house it in but they were happy to have it as a back up service. It is vital that the engine be returned immediately as it also covers Athenry and the environs of Loughrea. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that the fire crew assists at accidents and it is important to the town that it be reinstated. Cllr. Regan said that he proposed that the Chief Fire Officer is invited to address the meeting formally or informally at a previous meeting and this invitation should be rekindled. This was agreed.

- (ii) That Galway County Council provides playing pitches in Loughrea for Juvenile Players.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke seconded by Cllr. Loughnane. Cllr. G. Burke said that about 2 acres of land was required in the town to provide an all weather pitch for juvenile players. He said that it is not acceptable in this day and age to have young people toting out under the wall. He said that modern dressing rooms should be provided for people partaking in sports. He said that it is generally accepted that this facility should be provided in the Fairgreen as playing of games at this location is the norm over the years. He said the community wanted it and requested the Town Engineer investigate the matter. Cllr. Loughnane said that the Galway County Council had zoned several acres of land around the town as amenity and Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, had shown them a map outlining the different areas. He said with the new development charges implemented by Galway County Council recently that in future those contributions would go towards providing recreational/amenity facilities, water and sewerage as well as roads and

footpaths. He said that one very important change in the regulations is that in future at least 50% of the contributions raised in each electoral area would be retained in the area. He said that there was an area of land north of the walks zoned amenity and felt it would meet the needs of the town. Cllr. Regan said that this was all private property with no access and it would depend on the goodwill of the owners. He said if land had to be acquired by CPO that the players would not have a pitch tomorrow. Cllr. Gunter Nix asked if the large map, showing the areas zoned amenity could be shown at another meeting. Cllr. Hynes said that a certain portion of the fairgreen was always used for hurling and football. Mayor Cronin said seating should be made available at the fairgreen. She said that the community is expanding all the time and the fairgreen should be upgraded to cater for toddlers and babies.

AOB

Cllr. Gunter Nix said that this is tree week and suggested that 9 trees be planted in the town to mark the change over of the century and the end of term of the present town council. She said that it is also the centenary of forestry in Ireland. This was supported by all the members. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, to discuss suitable trees and suitable location with Ms. Jane Baker of the Loughrea office.

Town Clerk informed the meeting that there would be a tree planting ceremony on the 24th March, 2004 at 3.00 p.m. to commemorate Loughrea's involvement in the Special Olympics. County Councillors, Town Councils and Special Olympics Committee were invited to attend. Location of tree to be decided by the members and relayed to the Environment Section.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart requested that congratulations be extended to Ferdie Whelan for boxing. He was the only judge representing Ireland at the Olympics pre qualifying championships.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the bottle banks in Barrack Street are full from time to time and bottles are left strewn on the roadway, which is a danger to children. He said that they should be monitored and emptied more regularly.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 5th day of April, 2004.

Mayor: 

Minutes of Proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 5th April, 2004, in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter Nix, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Gabriel Burke, Maura Kelly Stewart, Matt Loughnane.

Apologies: Cllr. Orla Burke.

Mayor Cronin said that Cllr. Hynes mother had passed away since the last meeting and she extended the sympathy of the Town Council to Pat and the rest of the family. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, also extended sympathy on his own behalf and all of the staff. Cllr. Hynes thanked Mayor Cronin and the staff of the County Council for their condolences, mass cards, telephone messages and for attending the funeral. Mayor Cronin also extended the sympathy of the Town Council to the Sisters of Mercy on the death of Sr. Phillipa Broderick.

Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 8th March, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Mayor Cronin requested that a sentence be deleted from the minutes as follows – "She said that the Town Council has recommended that a car park is provided near the Boathouse and she said it is a great idea." She said that the Town Council were not creating a car park at the Fairgreen but providing a single line of car spaces opposite the Courthouse. This was agreed.

With regard to this matter, Cllr. G. Burke said that he did not agree with parking spaces at this location. He said that children are always playing games in this area and running in between cars if a ball goes out on the road and it is very dangerous. Mayor Cronin suggested that speed ramps should be provided at this location and this might reduce the speed of the traffic. She also said that "Children at play" signs should be erected so as motorists would be aware of the danger. Cllr. Regan said that if the stone wall is continued up to the Courthouse that it will make it less dangerous for children as motorist will have a better view. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that the boundary wall similar to the other side of the courthouse should be provided to replace the chain link fence as a safety measure. It would make this area visually more attractive. She said that she had sent an application to the Minister for Community and Family affairs for substantial funding and is awaiting approval.

Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that an expert from Coillte has examined some of the trees in the green area opposite the Courthouse and he said some of the trees would have to be removed by the Council staff as they are dead. Some of the other trees will need crowning and trimming to remove the dead wood. This will cost in the region of €9,000.00. He gave the members a copy of photographs and details of the work to be carried out. It will provide space for about 20 cars when this work is complete.

Cllr. Regan said that he had previously proposed that funding be made available to improve the playground at the Fairgreen. He said that some of the equipment had been removed from Garrybreeda and the Fairgreen playgrounds. He said he is calling on Galway County Council for a major investment in playgrounds in Loughrea as a public representative. Cllr. G. Burke said that the Credit Union had donated funding to provide equipment in Garrybreeda but this had not been installed yet. He said that both playgrounds should be upgraded as soon as possible. Mayor Cronin said that a playground committee had been set up and Cllr. Gunter Nix and herself were members of it. She said that they had a few meetings and had set up a task force to deal with different aspects of it.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said he supported the idea very much and the new Government initiative under the Department of Rural Affairs. He said that it might be possible to source some funding towards this project. He said that the County Council would also be providing funding and he will be asking the Town Council to come on board and provide its share as well. He said that under Health and Safety that some of the equipment had been removed but if new funding becomes available that it will be replaced. He said that he had requested Ann Mallagan from Community and Enterprise to meet the playground committee.

Cllr. Curley said he was not at the previous meeting but he called on the Council to provide a new Fire Station. He said that while it is important to have a second tender the provision of a new fire station was more important. He said that thousand of euro could be saved annually by the Council if they provided a training centre in Loughrea in the new facility. The Town Clerk said that she had written to the Chief Fire Officer but he was not available to attend this meeting but would attend a subsequent one.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the Chief Fire Officer was investigating possible sites for a new fire station. He said that Loughrea and every other town in the area was well covered in case of fire or any other emergency and complimented the work of the fire service personnel.

Cllr. Regan asked for an up to date report on car park at Station Road. Mr. Cullen said there were still some legal matters to be finalised and that the hold up was not due to Galway County Council.

Correspondence:

Town Clerk read out letter from Michael Shied, Managing Director of Beattys, Church Street, Loughrea, dated 5/4/2004 addressed to the Town Council. It read – I am writing to you to express my objections to the proposed Loughrea Traffic Flow Plan. As you know the Loughrea Traffic Flow Plan includes a proposal to designate Church Street as a one-way street. I am wholeheartedly objecting to this proposal. I have sent a letter to the Town Engineer, Mr. Enda Gallagher, expressing my objections and my reason for objecting to the proposed Loughrea Traffic Flow Plan. I would appreciate if you could support my objection to this proposal as I feel that, not alone would it be detrimental to our business but that any perceived improvement following the implementation of such a proposal would be minimal, and would not justify this course of action.”

The Councilors supported the points made in the submission. Mr. Gallagher confirmed that the same points had been made directly to the council and would be examined together with all other submissions received during the display period for the draft traffic management plan.

A letter from AMAI was circulated to all the members in relation to the Garda Siochana Bill 2004. A request for Notice of Motions for the upcoming Annual Conference in September. It was unanimously decided to defer this proposal until the new members were elected. Cllr. Loughnane requested that congratulations be extended to Bertie Whyte who is retiring as Hon. Secretary of AMAI. He also said that he would like to welcome Tom Ryan to this position.

Presentation to Donal O'Donoghue to mark his retirement from Galway County Council to be held in the Library on the 10th May, 2004 after the monthly meeting.

AOB.

Mayor Cronin said that 9 trees would be planted at the Long Point before the term of the town Council expires in June. The cost of providing the trees is €360.00 and a fee of €40.00 euro would be collected from each councillor towards the cost. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would talk to the town Gardener to arrange a date and time for planting the trees. A number of councillors expressed concern at this location as they feel that they will be vandalised. Cllr. Regan suggested that a note be written to Gardai to have more surveillance in this area.

Mayor Cronin said that she had planted a rowan tree on behalf of Loughrea Town Council in the children's playground, Gort Road, on the 25th March, 2004. This was in response to a request from the Special Olympics Ireland to commemorate the historic event, which took place in June, 2003. She thanked all concerned with the hosting of the athletes from Albania. She also thanked Galway County Council staff who coordinated this project and all present at the ceremony. She said that the first club for people with learning disabilities had been set up in the Haverty Education

centre and she would like to thank the VEC for providing the facility. She said that the club meets every Saturday morning and a donation of €100 had been received from the Lions Club to help run it.

Referring to a recent report on a fatal accident on Main Street, the Mayor said that the question of crossing facilities had been discussed several times by the Town Council. Mr. Gallagher stated that as explained previously the criteria for installing additional lights on Main Street was not met but the case would continue to be made to the NRA. Cllr. Regan said that all the members sympathise with the bereaved and hoped the traffic will be reduced considerably when the By pass is constructed. Cllr. Regan proposed that a letter be written to the Gardai Authority requesting them to assign personnel to help elderly people across the Main Street on a Friday morning to do their business. This was seconded by Cllr. G. Burke. Mr. Cullen said that his and the staff's sympathies were with the families of persons involved in accidents. He said also that the manner in which people go about crossing the street was a relevant factor in this discussion.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the buses are not using the bus bay provided and park out on the street, which blocks up the traffic. He said if this practise continues that cars or commercial vehicles should be allocated the space. Mayor Cronin said that the bus bay in Ballinasloe is painted in red and is very effective.

Mayor Cronin enquired if any response had been received from Frank Dawson in relation to Broadband and the other issues raised at a previous meeting. The Town Clerk said that he was not available to attend this meeting but would attend a later meeting.

Mayor Cronin said that a course in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation will be organised shortly by the Chamber of Commerce. Cllr. Curley said that the Fire Personnel also do this course.

Mayor Cronin said that the circus was coming to the fairgreen in April and enquired what stipulation or insurance cover did they need. Mr. Gallagher said that they pay a deposit in advance for reinstatement of the area after they leave. They also take out their own insurance and indemnify Galway County Council.

Cllr. Kelly Stewart said that she would like to congratulate Jim Broderick and the Seamus O'Kelly Players on receiving an Arts Award in the Loughrea Electoral Area.

Mayor Cronin announced that first Mayoral Ball was taking place in O'Deas Hotel on the 17th April, 2004 and tickets were available from her for the event. She said that she was donating the proceeds to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 10 day of May, 2004.

Mayor: Anna Cronin

Minutes of Proceedings at the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 10th May, 2004, in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Anna Cronin.

Members: James Regan, Mary Gunter-Nix, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes
Gabriel Burke, Maura Kelly Stewart, Orla Burke.

Apologies: Cllr. Loughnane.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Kelly Stewart the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 5th April, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes:

Mayor Cronin requested evidence of deletion of sentence in the Minute Book at March meeting which read "She said that the Town Council has recommended that a car park is provided near the Boathouse and she said it was a great idea". The correction was noted. She said what was proposed in relation to parking at the fairgreen was a single line of car spaces to replace trees in the green area opposite the Courthouse which had to be removed because they were dead. Cars already parked along this line and the new arrangement would only regularise the parking.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said the County Council would be making an application for funding with the Department of Health and Family Affairs to upgrade the Fairgreen playground and he hoped it would be successful. He said that this funding would have to be matched by the County Council and the Town Council. He said that Ann Mallaghan from Community and Enterprise had met with the Playground Committee to progress this matter.

Cllr. Regan called on the County Council to inject some funding for recreational facilities from the planning levies imposed on developers in the Loughrea area. He said that the Town Council should not be asked to contribute monies for this purpose. He said that the Town Council had already committed €10,000.00 to the fairgreen area.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she had applied for substantial funding from the Dormant Account Funds and also under the Amenity Grant Scheme for equipment for Garrybreeda playground. She said that she was awaiting approval from the relevant departments. She said that swings and other equipment had been removed from this area for safety reasons and it very bare looking at the moment.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the Credit Union in Loughrea had purchased two swings for Garrybreeda playground but they had not been erected yet. He said that the facilities at the fairgreen also needed to be upgraded and requested that this be undertaken as soon as possible. He said the proposal to provide 25 car spaces opposite the Courthouse would impinge on the space and would endanger children playing at this area.

Mayor Cronin accused Cllr. G. Burke of electioneering and trying to confuse the issue of parking and preserving the fairgreen in the lead up to the election.

Cllr. Hynes said that he was a member of the Corporate SPC and he had been working with the playgroup committee set up with a view to improving the playing facilities. He said that a number of the councillors were part of this committee.

Cllr. Regan asked the present position regarding the proposed car park at Station Road and if the legal matters were finalised. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the legal matters pertaining to this site was nearly complete and he assured the councillors that a huge effort was underway to build the new car park.

Cllr. G. Burke said he welcomed back the second fire engine again and he hoped that it would be staying this time. Cllr. Curley asked if any progress had been made in regard to a new Fire Station. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that the Chief Fire Officer was in the process of trying to find a site in the area for this purpose.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the buses are not using the facilities provided for them and he said that he understood that the Chamber of Commerce had proposals to shift the buses off the Main Street to another area.

Annual Financial Statement for the year ended 2003.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services presented the Annual Financial Statement, which had been circulated to each member, for approval. He said that monies had to be provided for Urban and Village Renewal and he expects that Loughrea area will be the designated town next year. He said that he may need a supplementary budget later on in the year as the Local Elections were coming up and extra expenditure will be incurred with the manual voting, as extra staff and stationery will be required. He said that when the accounts were prepared that we had budgeted for electronic voting. He said the Town Council had held on the Voting Boxes so there would be a saving there. He said that Expenditure came in on target and Receipts as well.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Curley to approve the accounts submitted.

Statutory Audit Report for year ended 2002.

This was noted.

Fix date for Annual Meeting in June.

Town Clerk said that this meeting would be held 10 days after the elections, which is the 21st June, 2004.

Correspondence.

Letter dated 15th April, 2004 from the Chamber of Commerce regarding the running of the Annual Road Race in October and the selection of a Loughrea Rose on the 6th June, in O'Deas Hotel.

Letter dated 4th May from Deputy P. McHugh stating that he had tabled a Parliamentary Question to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, to amend the Garda Siochana Bill 2004 to allow Town Councils the right to representation on Joint Policing Committees.

Town Clerk said that she had got a note from the Donal O'Donoghue, retired County Manager, stating that he regretted that he was unavoidably absent and would not be attending the meeting. Councillors requested the Town Clerk to contact Donal O'Donoghue and arrange for the presentation at a future date. This was agreed.

AOB.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the Council were resurfacing the N. 6 at Cottage Hill and the level of the road was much higher than the verge and would lead to flooding of the houses along this area. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that this work was being done by Road Design Section.

Cllr. Hynes complimented the Mayor on a very successful first Mayor Ball on the 17th April, 2004. This was also supported by Cllr. Kelly Stewart.

Mayor Cronin thanked Cllr. Hynes for his compliments. She said that she had presented the scroll from the Town Council to mark the centenary of St. Brendan's Cathedral to Bishop Kirby at the Mayoral Ball. She said that she presented a personal gift of the History of Loughrea - Volume 1 and 2 to Donal O'Donoghue as well.

She wished all the candidates seeking re-election luck and a happy retirement to those not going for election. She also thanked the officials for their assistance during the year. She said that she enjoyed the year and one of the highlights was receiving the torch to mark the Special Olympics in Ireland a few days after receiving the chain.

The officials wished all the councillors luck in the forthcoming elections and a happy retirement to those not going to the polls.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 12th day of July, 2004.

Mayor: PAT Hynes

Minutes of Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 21st June, 2004 in O'Deas Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Return of persons elected at Local Elections 2004.

The Town Clerk read out the list of people returned at the Local Elections 2004 as follows;

- Geraldine Bane
- Gabriel Burke
- Jimmy Curley
- Mary Gunter-Nix
- Pat Hynes
- Michael Maher
- Norman Morgan
- James Regan
- Sheamie Tully

Cllr. Regan proposed that the position of Mayor should be rotated. Cllr. Morgan agreed with rotating the Mayor and said it should be in the order of elections with the position of Deputy Mayor to be filled similarly. This would ensure that the Chair is rotated. Cllr. Burke said that all nine candidates had equal rights. Cllr. Regan's proposal was seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

A vote was taken on this proposal which resulted as follows –

For the proposal	: Cllrs. Regan, Morgan, Bane.	- 3
Against the proposal	: Cllrs Hynes, Tully, Burke, Gunter-Nix, Curley, Maher.	- 6

This proposal was defeated.

Election of Mayor:

Cllr.Hynes was proposed by Cllr. Curley and seconded by Cllr. Burke.

As there was no other proposals Cllr Hynes was declared elected.

Cllr. Hynes thanked the councillors for unanimously electing him to be Mayor.

Election of Deputy Mayor:

Cllr. Gunter -Nix was proposed by Cllr. Burke and seconded by Cllr.Morgan.

As there was no other proposals Cllr. Gunter-Nix was declared elected.

Cllr. Gunter Nix thanked her proposer and seconder.

Election of Delegates to the A.M.A.I - 2 delegates.

Cllr. Regan was proposed by Mayor Hynes and seconded by Cllr. Morgan
Cllr. Burke was proposed by Cllr. Curley and seconded by Cllr. Gunter Nix.
Cllr. Maher was proposed by Cllr. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Tully.

As there were 3 proposals it was decided to take a vote and elect the person with the highest vote first.

First Delegate

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

For Cllr. Regan	- Cllrs. Regan, Morgan, Bane	- 3
For Cllr. Burke	- Cllrs. Burke, Tully, Hynes, Gunter -Nix, Curley.	- 5
For Cllr. Maher	- Cllr. Maher	- 1

Cllr. Burke was declared elected as the First Delegate.

Second Delegate

For Cllr. Regan	- Cllrs. Regan, Hynes, Bane	- 3
For Cllr. Maher	- Cllrs. Maher, Morgan, Curley, Burke, Gunter-Nix, Tully.	- 6

Cllr.Maher got the highest vote and was declared elected as the Second Delegate.

Delegate to Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances.

Cllr. Regan was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Bane.
Cllr. Curley was proposed by Cllr. Maher and seconded by Cllr. Burke.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

For Cllr. Regan	- Cllrs. Regan, Bane, Morgan, Hynes.	- 4
For Cllr. Curley	- Cllrs. Curley, Maher, Burke, Gunter-Nix, Tully	- 5.

Cllr. Curley was declared to be the representative to I.P.B. Insurances Ltd.

Associated Member to the Chamber of Commerce.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

As there was no other proposal Cllr. Gunter-Nix was declared to be the representative on the Chamber of Commerce.

Cllr. Morgan said that there was one more committee, which had not been filled that is the Loughrea Heritage Group and wondered when it would be filled. It was agreed to fill this vacancy at the next meeting in July.

Cllr. Curley requested that the doors in the Town Hall be repaired as children are going in and out through them. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that a Film Company were working there from today and he would ensure that it is made safe.

Cllr. Morgan said that he did not want to see car parking facilities on the lake side of the fairgreen and requested that no decision be made on this matter by the Electoral Area Committee until the views of the Town Council were made known. He said that a one way traffic system could be used in this area. Cllr. Regan said that money has been allocated for this development and it is only single line of traffic. Mayor Hynes said that during the canvass the message the candidates were getting on the doorsteps was hands off any kind of development in the fairgreen. Cllr. Morgan requested that the minutes of the Area meeting be made available to the Town Council members. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Town Council members should have a joint meeting with the County Councillors a few times a year so as they could brief them on their concerns.

Cllr. Burke said that the N. 6 Athenry Road outside Sadleirs has been resurfaced recently and the residents in the area are concerned that this might result in flooding their premises as the road is at a higher level. He mentioned this at the May meeting as well.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that he was hopeful and actually encouraged that meetings of the Town Council will be characterised by a positive attitude. He said all that was needed was respect for each others opinion and work in harmony for the betterment of Loughrea.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 12th day of July, 2004.

Mayor: PAT HYNES

Minutes of Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 12th July, 2004 in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Jim Cullen, Director of Services.

Minutes - Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on the 10th May, 2004.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 10th May, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes:

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the playgrounds and if any funding was forthcoming. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer said the County Council had got nothing back on it. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Loughrea Environmental Group would be giving €2,000.00 to each playground. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, asked Cllr. Gunter-Nix if the Loughrea Environmental Group would have any objection to the €4,000.00 being spent in Garrybreeda playground which would help to put some equipment there. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she could see no objection to that.

Cllr. Regan enquired if any progress had been made with O'Dea's car park. Mr. Diskin, said that the land deal was completed in the last 10 days and the planning process had started. He said that the Part 8 planning notice for the construction of the car park was advertised on the local paper last week. The planning notice would remain in place for six weeks and a further 2 weeks would be allowed to adjudicate on submissions received. Cllr. Regan enquired what time frame would be needed to have this car park up and running. Mr. Diskin, said that this matter would be brought before Galway County Council at their meeting in September, 2004. It is hoped to have the car park open for the 8th December, 2004, provided there are no planning objections. This car park will provide 100 spaces.

A number of councillors enquired what fee would be charged when the new Traffic Management Plan comes on stream. Mr. Diskin, said it would be 70 cent per hour or €3.00 per day for the car park on Main Street and Barrack Street. Cllr. Regan enquired if O'Dea's car park is a long stay or short stay car park and what fee would be in place for parking there. Mr. Diskin, said that the Galway County Council Councillors for Loughrea Electoral Area had not made a decision yet on the tariff for Eddie O'Dea's car park. Several councillors had concerns for people working in the town, as parking will be expensive when the new Traffic Management Plan is implemented. Mr. Diskin, said that there would be free parking at the Long Point and the Tennis Court should people not wish to use the more conveniently located car parks in the town centre. Cllr. Burke suggested that the Chamber of Commerce do a survey among the businesses in the town to ascertain how

many persons use their cars for work. Mayor Hynes said that the Area Councillors had a meeting last week and the Traffic Management Plan was discussed and he requested John Diskin and Enda Gallagher to brief the councillors on the decisions taken at that meeting.

Mr. Diskin, said that the main concerns that the Loughrea Town Councillors had was a two way system for Church Street and no parking at Courthouse Road on the Fairgreen. He said that there will be no change in the two way traffic flow on Church Street except that there will be no right hand turn at junction from Main Street (the N. 6) onto Church Street and no right hand turn from Church Street onto the Main Street (N. 6), except for a funeral, which will allow traffic, turn right at this junction.

Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that submissions were received from various members of the public stating that parking should not be allowed on the Lakeside of the Courthouse Road at the Fairgreen. He said the Area Councillors made a decision to abandon parking at this area. Cllr. Regan enquired if the trees would still be removed from this area. Mr. Gallagher said that the trees would have to be removed, in the interest of safety, and he hopes that this will happen shortly. He said there would be no parking during business hours i.e. between 9.00 a.m and 6.00 p.m Monday to Saturday at the Lakeside of the Courthouse Road at the Fairgreen. Cllr. Burke asked if heavy lorries could be banned from using Moore Street, as it is too narrow for turning at O'Deas Hotel. Mr. Diskin said that an appropriate sign would be put in place at the southern end of Moore Street, diverting heavy goods vehicles away from Moore Street.

In relation to Abbey Street/Dolphin Street Mr. Diskin, said that it was recommended to leave the two roads as they are i.e. road from the Westbridge Junction to Graces car park and the road in by Garretts Pub to Graces car park. In regard to parking on the north side of Dolphin Street the Galway County Council Area Councillors rejected this proposal as the street is too narrow to allow two way traffic and also to allow residential parking on one side. It was decided that Dolphin Street would be made one way to allow for kerbside parking at the northern side of Dolphin Street. In order to prevent this parking area being taken over by vehicle owners in search of free parking it would be necessary to make it a disc parking area. As each dwelling unit on this road would be entitled to a maximum of two parking permits this should not inconvenience the residents of this road. Mr. Diskin stated that the Loughrea Electoral Area Councillors had requested Galway County Council to meet the residents of Dolphin Street and agree with them whether Dolphin Street should be one way West to East or one way East to West.

Mr. Diskin stated that "box junction" yellow road markings would be provided at junction of Mount Carmel Crescent and the N. 6. to facilitate right turning movements in and out of Mount Carmel Crescent to the N.6.

Cllr. Burke enquired about the number of resident's permits that would be issued when this plan is implemented. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that each household would be allowed a maximum of two parking permits subject to meeting certain criteria regarding proof of residency. Cllr. Bane asked if there would be a reserved parking outside the Doctor's surgery or facilities for persons with disability. Mr. Diskin, said that no special arrangement would be put in place at these locations. He said that the Community Warden or whoever will be implementing the plan would exercise common sense and discretion in these instances. Cllr. Gunter-Nix requested that extra spaces be provided for persons with disability, as there were only two available in the town at the

moment. Cllr. Burke asked if it would be pay and display parking like Galway City. Mr. Gallagher, said that it would be. Cllr. Tully asked if people in rented accommodation would be facilitated in the same way as permanent residents. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that same criteria covered all permits. A copy of the criteria used in Tuam is to be circulated to the members. Cllr. Burke asked if the Town Council members could receive a copy of the minutes of the Area Committee meeting held on the 7/7/2004. Mr. Diskin, said that they could when they are adopted by the Area Committee.

Cllr. Burke asked for an update on the New Fire Station premises and if any progress was made with a view to getting a site. He requested that the Chief Fire Officer be invited to address the meeting on concerns about the Fire Services formally or informally. Mr. Diskin, said that the Chief Fire Officer was looking for a site that would incorporate a number of facilities i.e. Housing of fire engines, Training Rooms and a Civic Amenity site. It was agreed that a request be sent to the Chief Fire Officer to address the meeting as soon as possible.

Cllr. Burke enquired what is going to be done to alleviate the flooding of dwelling houses on the N 6 opposite Saddlers since the road was resurfaced. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the Road Design Section of Galway County Council had been contacted after the previous meeting and is presently in talks with the owners in question. Piped drainage may be required at this location. He said that the NRA would be funding it.

Mayor Hynes said that there was an announcement on local radio today saying that Loughrea was the third most popular town for a Government Department to relocate to. He said not only will we be looking for a site for the Fire Station but also Civic Offices and Government Offices.

Confirmation of minutes of Annual Meeting held on the 21st June, 2004.

Matters arising -

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Burke the minutes of the Annual meeting held on the 21st June, 2004 be adopted.

Cllr. Morgan said the nominee for Loughrea Heritage group was not on the agenda and requested that it be decided at the meeting. Mr. Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, said that it would be taken under A.O.B.

Cllr. Burke enquired if the chain presented to the Mayor of the Town Council at the Special Olympics last year was returned yet to the Town Clerk. Cllr. Bane also supported this request. The Town Clerk said she had not seen the box but would investigate the matter.

Correspondence.

The Town Clerk said that she had circulated Code of Conduct to all Councillors for their attention. She also said that the Declaration of Donations issued to all Councillors had to be returned within 90 days of the Election which would be before the next meeting.

The Town Clerk said that she had circulated application forms for the Person of the Year award for the member's attention. She said that the nominee would have to be returned before the 27th August, 2004. Cllr. Gunter-Nix suggested Olive Loughnane who is a native of Loughrea and is one of our athletes going to Athens to compete in the Olympics in August. She also represented Ireland in Atlanta at the last Olympics. She says she deserves recognition as a young Loughrea Athlete who has achieved so much to date. This was unanimously supported.

A letter from Michael Healy, Secretary, Loughrea Branch Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann inviting the Mayor and members of Loughrea Town Council to the opening of the Second Annual Broderick-Carty Summer School at Turoe Pet Farm Bullaun on the 18th July, 2004.

The Town Clerk said that there would be no meeting of the Chamber of Commerce for the month of July or August.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

(a) "A recommendation be sent to the Garda Superintendent, Loughrea, that the illegal practice of children hanging out of cars being driven on public roads after sporting and other events be stopped: because of the great danger of serious injury and even death to those children."

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Cllr. Morgan said that this practise is getting very common now a days whether it is soccer, hurling, rugby or any sport that drivers of cars go through all the streets in town and they are a danger to themselves and the public. Children are allowed stand on the seats putting their heads out the windows or through the sunroof. He said with the new legislation introduced last year that the drivers of the vehicles could have serious questions to answer. Cllr. Curley agreed with Cllr. Morgan who said that the owners of the cars are responsible and any claims made would be coming from their insurance. Cllr. Bane asked if it was intended to meet the Superintendent of the Garda Siochana at any stage to highlight this matter. Cllr. Gunter-Nix agreed with Cllr. Morgan and said that the cars are driven in convoy and at terrible speed and in breach of all laws. She said that the Old Board had met the Superintendent a few times and perhaps it is something to keep in mind in the future. She said that a letter should be sent to the Superintendent on this matter as soon as possible before lives are lost.

(b) "That the grass in the western portion of Corry's Field be cut, so that said area be made available as additional amenity space for the general public."

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that 10.73 acres of land at Corry's Field is neglected and gone into a wild state. He said that if Ballinasloe or Tuam had such an amenity so close to the town that it would be looked after. He said the members had great vision and should be congratulated on acquiring such an amenity at the time. He said that he saw Corry's making hay and feeding stock on those lands. He said that the Council was in breach of the Noxious Weeds Act with thistles, dock leaves and scrub around it. Cllr. Curley said that a meeting should be called with the clubs around the town to draw up a plan for this area. Cllr. Regan said that this ground was advertised last year in

the local paper and notice was put up on the Town Clerk's office inviting people to cut the grass even free of charge and there were no takers. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that a local man cut it four years ago and he did awful damage to his tractor and equipment, as the ground is very uneven. Mr. Diskin, stated that Loughrea Lake is a Special Area of Conservation that may have an impact on how Corry's Field which abuts the Lake can be further developed. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that John Diskin had drawn up a plan a few years ago for this area and that we should review it. Mr. Diskin, said a meeting should be arranged to get the community involved in developing this area. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Bane to arrange an informal meeting with a view to drawing up a plan for Corry's field. Cllr. Burke said that a plan to cater for all the community should also be drawn up for the Fairgreen.

(c) "That the seats in the Long Point, Children's Playground area and Corry's Field be painted without delay: that should Council personnel not be available to carry out this work, that tenders be sought from the painting trade"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Cllr. Morgan said that this property was a gift to the town and Galway County Council is not maintaining it. He said that the seats needed painting immediately. Cllr. Bane said the seat opposite St. Brendan's Home is broken and needs repair. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the outdoor staff was involved in road grant jobs up to now but some of the staff would be staggering their annual leave and it is hoped to do it then.

AOB.

Cllr. Regan asked if any special concession could be afforded to a private individual who collects, fridges, carpets, furniture etc. and takes them to Ballinasloe Landfill. He is giving a great service to the town, as people have not the facility to take large items like this to the recycling centre. He said that he has been requested to pay between €1,100.00 to €1,200.00 by Galway County Council for disposing of the refuse. He said that he could not pay this amount, as he is a small operator with a tractor and trailer. Cllr. Curley supported this request as well. Cllr. Tully said that this fee was not excessive as the operator charges the consumers for the service. Mr. Diskin, said that the Environment Section deals with permits and that we would have the matter investigated by that section. He said that there has to be a tracking system on all waste in the County in case it ends up in the wrong place. Cllr. Burke said that there is a lot of illegal dumping at the Bottle Banks and it should be monitored. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the banks are emptied every week and unless somebody sits there all the time we have no way of finding the culprits. The Environment Section of Galway County Council has been informed of the situation and is monitoring it at present.

Cllr. Burke said that there are a lot of footpaths around the town needing repair especially on the Main Street and the Hill. Mr. Diskin, said that the NRA is responsible for funding the repair of footpaths along the N. 6 and N. 66. He said that the County Council does the work but the NRA make the decision on what carriageways will be repaired. He said the County Council also provides their own disretionay funds, which comes from the planning contributions in the County. Cllr. Tully requested that the footpath in Moore Street be repaired while the children are on holidays. He also said that the Bohercom/Moore Street road needs repair after all the

development in this area. Other councillors mentioned flooding at Bride Street near Maggie Mays, Bohercom and Main Street outside Oasis. Mr. Gallagher said that the Main Street needs piping but it would be a difficult job to do with all the traffic. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked what status would the Main Street be when the new Bypass is constructed. Mr. Diskin, said that we did not know yet but it will depend on the volume of traffic but it probably will be downgraded to a Regional Road.

Mayor Hynes said that he would take the election of a delegate for the Loughrea Heritage Group. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she would be interested in the job as she was the delegate for the last five years and had a project to finish. Cllr. Morgan said that he was also interested in the job. Cllr. Regan asked if Cllr. Morgan would have a conflict of interest if he was nominated. Cllr. Morgan replied No.

Cllr. Curley proposed Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Burke.
Cllr. Regan proposed Cllr. Morgan

As there was no seconder to Cllr. Regan's proposal Cllr. Gunter-Nix was elected to be the delegate on Loughrea Heritage Group.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix thanked her proposer and seconder and said that she looked forward to working with Mayor Hynes who was the County Council nominee.

Cllr. Curley asked if it is intended to repair the doors of the Town Hall as nothing has been done since he last mentioned it. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the Film Company had rented this premises for a few months to make a film on the Dance Halls of the 60's. He said that they had offered to make the doors more secure. The doors will be reviewed after the repairs to see if further works are required on them. Cllr. Burke asked if the seats would be going back when the Film Company is finished. Mr. Gallagher, said that the seats will be going back in and all works by the Film Company are of an enhancement or reversible nature.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she was reading the AMAI leaflet and it has suggested that there be training for new candidates. She said that some of the councillors had training at the end of the last term and found it beneficial. She suggested that the new members be afforded this opportunity. She said that this should take place within the first 6 months so, as members would know procedures. Cllr. Burke supported this suggestion.

Cllr. Bane said that Lions Club were holding an "International Day" in the fairgreen on the 2/8/2004 and invited all the members to attend. She said that there are about 20 Nationalities in the town at the moment. She said that there would be a public meeting in O'Deas Hotel on the 15/7/2004 to meet the non-nationals and discuss the event. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she had suggested this to the last Board but there were no takers.

Cllr. Tully enquired about the Casual Trading area in Barrack Street and he said that he had got complaints from residents that they were blocking their front doors. Mr. Diskin, said the permits for Casual Trading Bays are issued by Galway County Council. He says that each Bay is very well defined in the designated Casual Trading area and he had no complaints that there are not being adhered to. He would investigate the matter.

Cllr. Tully asked if a skip could be provided in the cemeteries as there is a lot of wreaths and debris dumped near the wall. Cllr. Regan said if a skip is provided that household rubbish would also be dumped there. Cllr. Burke said that it would be difficult to dump household rubbish unless the gates were left open. Mr. Gallagher said he would investigate this matter.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 13th day of September, 2004. Mayor: P. C. Hynes

Minute of proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13th September, 2004 in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Minutes - Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on the 12th July, 2004.

Cllr. Regan said that he had requested an amendment in the Minutes of the Annual Meeting in relation to vote taken on nominee for the AMAI position and that this matter had been raised at the previous meeting. He wanted it on record that Mayor Hynes proposed him for the position and it was his recollection that the Mayor had supported him when the vote was taken. The Town Clerk said that this matter was brought up at the meeting in July and Mayor Hynes said he apologised to Cllr. Regan if he had made a mistake. Cllr. Burke said that the minutes were adopted at the last meeting and Mayor Hynes had made a statement. Mr. Cullen said that Cllr's Regan statement could now be noted as part of the minutes of this meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 12th July, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the Minutes.

Mr. Cullen said that a grant of €100,000.00 or 50% of the final cost, whichever is the lesser, has been awarded for the Playground at the Fairgreen. He said that it was the third biggest grant allocation in the country. Cllr. Regan said that the Town Council had already subscribed €10,000.00 to the Fairgreen previously and wondered what contribution was required from the Town Council now. Mr. Cullen said that the Town Council would be expected to give a contribution of €20,000; Galway County Council €60,000 to €80,000 and the community would be expected to fund raise for the balance. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the Loughrea Environmental Group would be given a contribution of €4,000.00 towards improvements in Garrybreeda. She also said that she secured funding to the tune of €6,000.00 under Amenity grants and the Credit Union are willing to give a contribution of €1,000.00. This would give a total of €11,000.00 which would help to purchase some equipment for Garrybreeda playground. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that the plans were on display in the Library. Cllr. Maher said that the committee were very active and he is confident that they would be able to raise the necessary €20,000.00. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that they had some fund raising projects in train and she hoped it will be supported by all. Cllr. Burke asked if the plans could be displayed at the next Town Council meeting. Mr. Cullen said that the plans would be shown to the members on the next night but they can not be altered at this stage as there was a very short time frame for completion of the work. He said that there was wide spread consultation on this matter. He said that the Town Engineer would circulate the plans and any comments should be made directly to him.

Nominee for Strategic Policy Committee.

Housing SPC: 1 nominee

Cllr. Regan was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Bane.
Cllr. Maher was proposed by Cllr. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Tully

For Cllr. Regan - Cllrs. Regan, Bane, Morgan - 3
For Cllr. Maher - Cllrs. Curley, Maher, Burke, Tully, Gunter-Nix - 5

Mayor Hynes abstained.

Cllr. Maher got the highest vote and was declared to be the nominee for the Housing SPC.

Planning and Economic Development: 1 nominee.

Cllr. Bane was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Regan.
Cllr. Burke was proposed by Cllr. Maher and seconded by Cllr. Tully.

For Cllr. Bane - Cllrs. Regan, Bane, Morgan. - 3
For Cllr. Burke - Cllrs. Curley, Maher, Burke, Tully, Gunter-Nix - 5

Mayor Hynes abstained.

Cllr. Burke got the highest vote and was declared to be the nominee for the Planning and Economic Development SPC.

Mr. Cullen said that they would be the nominees for the next 5 years.

Correspondence:

Town Clerk read out letter dated the 3rd September, 2004 received from John Diskin, S.E.E. setting out two amendments that had been made to the Traffic Management Plan as follows -

1. The location of the loading bay on the Old Galway Road is moved to a new location on the other side of the street almost opposite the The original agreed location (outside Western Print and Packaging Co.).
2. By omission, no loading bay had been shown on Barrack Street (outside Kelleher's pub). This loading bay had been requested by the The Gardai and was recommended by Galway County Council and is now included in the new Plan.

Letter from I.P.A regarding seminar for new town councillors and stating the various venues. Town Clerk to circulate members and nominations to be returned to her.

Invitation from REART to an exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture in Teagasc, Barrack Street, Loughrea on Tuesday 14/9/2004 at 8.00 p.m. followed by a wine reception.

Agenda from Chamber of Commerce for meeting on 14/9/2004 which will be held at 6.30 p.m.

Letter from Loughrea Playground Association fund raising event – “Want to be a thousandaire”. This will be held in the Temperance Hall on 16th October, 2004. Launch of event in O’Deas Hotel on 17/9/2004.

Letter from Anna Cronin, former Mayor of Loughrea Town Council regarding medallion presented to her to mark the torch run to Loughrea for the Special Olympics. She said that the medallion presented to her is in our Civic Building, i.e. Loughrea Town Library since May, 2004. She received a presentation form Carabane Foroige Club and it is also in the Town Library.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Norman Morgan.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

I will propose -

- a. That, as the Grant available for Loughrea Children’s Public Playgrounds is based on 50% of the cost up to a maximum of €100,000.00, that Loughrea Town Council contribute €20,000.00 towards Loughrea Children’s Playgrounds at The Green and Garrybreeda, which would result in €40,000.00 for the project.
This matter was discussed earlier and was noted.
- b. That, as the Grant available for Loughrea Children’s Public Playgrounds is based on 50% of the cost up to a maximum of €100,000.00 that the nine Loughrea Town Councillors consider making a personal contribution. If agreed, I will make a contribution of one ninth of the amount up to a maximum of €223.00. If councillors agreed to the maximum amount suggested, the €2,007.00 matched by the €2,007.00 from the Grant, would make €4,014.00 available. This I feel would show leadership and be a positive incentive and encouragement to the general public to make a special effort to support the proposal to provide urgently needed up-to-date playground facilities for the children of Loughrea and district.
This was noted. Previous discussion refers.
- c. That a recommendation be made to Galway County Council to re-consider the present position of the School Bus Stop which extends eastwards to the pillar of the entrance gate to St. Raphael’s College, Cross Street, Loughrea. While a bus is parked in this position, no car can get in to the college without first going to the extreme southern side of the road before turning into the college entrance. Cars and other vehicles coming out from the College (and National School staff who also park on college grounds) can not turn right for Loughrea town, without having a second person to stop traffic coming from the town. I believe that even a few yards would give some relief.

Cllr. Morgan requested his colleagues to make a recommendation to Galway County Council to reconsider the present position of the school bus stop at Cross Street, Loughrea. He complained that cars exiting the college were hampered when buses were parked so near the entrance gate.

Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer, to investigate this matter further and have a report for the next meeting.

AOB.

Mr. Cullen said that this was a historic day for Loughrea with the turning of the sod for Loughrea By Pass by Minister Seamus Brennan. He said that it was the biggest single event to happen in Loughrea in the last 30 years. He said that it would be very beneficial for the town and the hinterland of the town. He said that it had a shaky start but this €17 million project will help the town to flourish and expand. It will be good for the town and it will help it to grow economically and socially. Mayor Hynes praised all concerned in bringing the project this far and was confident that it would be completed by the end of 2005. He said that he spoke to the Minister and officials of the NRA regarding the construction of the link road from Hanley’s Cross (N. 6) to the Gort Road (N66) which is about 2 kilometres and also a link road from Kilmeen Cross to Masonbrook which would give a ring road around the town. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that it was a great day for the town and it was a tribute to former town councillors, county councillors and deputies who had worked so hard over the years to progress this matter. All of the other councillors supported the sentiments expressed and look forward to its completion.

Mayor Hynes enquired on the up to date position of the swimming pool. Mr. Cullen said that submissions had been sent to the Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism some ago and we are awaiting a reply from him.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the Bottle Banks will have to be moved as it is a disgrace the state of the place with bottles and broken glass strewn around the banks. It is not fair to the residents. He said that the banks are emptied regularly but the public abuse them. It is not acceptable that the public drop bottles at the banks and clear off. He said that the day has come when this facility will have to be supervised and prosecutions taken against the culprits. He said that sites should be provided in the surrounding areas of Loughrea and it might reduce the demand. Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that a recycling centre is proposed for the Rathruddy area of Loughrea and this should improve the situation.

Cllr. Regan said that an alternative venue for meetings should be looked at to see if we could find a permanent place. He said that the management were informed of the dates of the Town Council Meetings and they should not double book the front room. Cllr. Curley said that the Credit Union had very good facilities and we should look at it on a trial basis to see if it would meet our needs. Cllr. Burke said that he was Chairman of the Credit Union and the room would be available for the next Town Council meeting if it was agreeable to the members. It was unanimously agreed to hold the next meeting in the Credit Union and we would review the situation again.

Cllr. Bane enquired if any progress was made with a view to getting a plan together for Corry’s Field. It was agreed that the councillors would agree a date and get together informally to discuss this matter.

Mayor Hynes said that since the last meeting Paul Healy had died in a tragic freak accident. He said that he met him on many occasions during the election campaign and was shocked by his sudden death. He described him as a friendly and courteous gentleman who had come to Loughrea many years ago and had been part of the

commercial life since. Cllr. Curley said that the town was shocked when the news came through of the death of Paul Healy. He said that he will be sadly missed by his family and friends. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she would like to pay tribute to Paul on behalf of the Fianna Fail party. She said that he was very witty, a great family man, a great business man and always had a very pleasant disposition. The testimony of his popularity was evidenced by the huge numbers who attended the removal of his remains. She requested that a letter be sent to Maureen and family conveying the Town Council's sympathy. Cllr. Burke said that Paul was held in very esteem and he had not an enemy in the world. Cllr. Morgan requested that a minutes silence be observed as a mark of respect to him.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 11th day of October, 2004.

Mayor: Pat Hynes

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 11th October, 2004, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer.

Cllr. Burke, President of Loughrea Credit Union, welcomed his fellow councillors and officials to the Credit Union offices for the monthly Town Council meeting. He said that the Credit Union was set up since 1968 and that it has grown from strength to strength since then. He said the first loan which they gave out in 1968 was £5.00 and to day they are lending millions. He said that they had a membership of 10,000 people. Mayor Hynes said he would like to thank the Directors of the Company for making the facilities available for the meeting. He said that it is a great success story and he is delighted to see the membership increase all the time. Cllr. Morgan said that he was the 98th customer out of the 10,000 so he helped to bring it to fruition. Cllr. Curley said that he proposed that the town council hold their meetings at this location as the facilities are second to none. Mayor Hynes enquired from Cllr. Burke if the board room was available should the town council decide to use it. Cllr. Burke said that the facilities will be available for meetings for a nominal fee. A general discussion took place and it was unanimously decided to hold the town council meetings to the end of the year in the Credit Union offices. The members said they would review it at that stage and see if they will book it for a further period. Town Clerk to inform O'Deas Hotel of the decision.

Minutes -

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke seconded by Cllr. Curley, the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 13th September, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the Minutes.

Cllr. Maher asked for an update on the Playground. He said the fundraiser project "Who wants to be a Thousandaire" was taking place in the Temperance Hall on the 16th October, 2004 and the tickets were going very well. He said the Committee hoped to reach their target of €20,000.00 and encouraged the members to support it. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she was on the Committee also and she urged the members to get involved with the fund raising. Cllr. Bane said that she saw the plans for the playground and it looks fantastic.

Cllr. Burke said the Planning Notice for the construction of the swimming pool was advertised in the local paper recently. He said the committee had amended the original plans to cater for people with disability. He said the final plans have been submitted to the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism for consideration. Mayor Hynes enquired if the grant had been sanctioned yet. Mr. Cullen, Director of

Services, said that no decision had been made yet. He said the committee has put a lot of pressure on the Minister and he is hopeful that the money will be forthcoming. Cllr. Burke also said that the committee had been lobbying the relevant people and he is optimistic that this long awaited swimming pool for Loughrea will soon be a reality.

Cllr. Burke asked if there was any development in the relocation of the bottle banks to the proposed recycling centre on the Rathruddy Road. He wondered if there was a time frame to have this implemented.

Cllr. Bane enquired if any progress had been made in relation to the plan for developing Corry's Field and the Fairgreen area. She said that this has been mentioned at previous meetings but nothing has happened since. Mayor Hynes said that he had not got around to arranging a meeting and suggested that it be put on the agenda for the next meeting and it would be discussed for about 30 minutes. He said that the members could send in submissions to the Town Clerk prior to the next meeting on their plans for Corry's Field. All the submissions could then be discussed at the meeting with a view to bringing it to a favourable conclusion.

Cllr. Morgan said that he had tabled a notice of motion at a previous meeting to have the seats painted at the Long Point and the Fairgreen but to date only some of the work had been done. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said the staff was very busy with road works at the moment. He said that he would talk to Enda Gallagher and see what could be done before the end of the year. He said that a plan for Corry's Field and Fairgreen will be on the agenda for the next meeting and we will await the outcome of that discussion.

Correspondence -

A letter from Baffle requesting funding for their festival running from the 22nd to the 25th October, 2004. It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that a contribution of €50.00 be given to the Baffle Group.

A letter from Clonmel Borough Council requesting support for a motion they had tabled for their September meeting as follows
 "That all Elected Local Govt. Members be provided with equal status to each other, to include equivalent treatment and privilege in all and every assistance available to them from either Central or Local Government.
 Further that the Motion be circulated to all Local Authorities and to the Department of the Environment and Local Government"
 I would respectfully request that you present it to your next Council meeting, where it's endorsement by the Elected Members would be greatly appreciated.

This was supported by the members.

Letter from the Chamber of Commerce setting out agenda for their monthly meeting as follows – Traffic Management Plan: Report on Defibrillator Launch: Loughrea Chamber of Commerce .org Web Site: Loughrea Road Race: Loughrea Christmas Lights and Christmas Parade.

All of the Councillors congratulated the Chamber of Commerce on the launch of the Defibrillator which got great publicity and was very positive for the town. They requested that a note be sent to Joe Fahy, Bride Street, as he was the instigator of this project and he had trained fire staff and other members of the community on its use. He devovoted a lot of time and effort to this matter.

Notice from Carrick -on-Suir about a Conference/Seminar on Policy Making in Local Government – Responsibilities and Implications for Councillors which takes place on the 29th and 30th October, 2004. This was noted.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

I will propose –

a. That appropriate school signs be erected on the west and east approaches to Gaelscoil Riabhach, Old Galway Road, Loughrea.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that there were no directional signs erected at this location and that something would have to be done about it. He requested that a bi-lingual sign be erected informing people of the schools existence which caters for all age groups. He said that this is a built up area in the middle of Housing Estates.

Cllr. Burke complimented Cllr. Morgan for bringing this matter to the attention of the County Council. He said that the roadway (T. Kennedy's boreen) which is off the N. 6 at Caherlavine has become very busy with traffic from Galway diverting onto it. He said that it is very narrow and not suitable as a relief road in its present state. He said with the onset of the dark evenings it will become more dangerous. He said that it is almost impossible for cars to pass each other and there is an accident waiting to happen at this location. He said that the signs should be erected immediately at Gaelscoil Riabhach. He said that traffic coming from Dublin is also diverting onto the Racecourse Road and this matter would also need to be addressed.

Cllr. Regan said that this roadway at Caherlavine is very dangerous and when the traffic leaves this roadway it has then to proceed through Housing Estates to escape the traffic jams. He requested that "Children at Play" signs be erected in the Housing Estates to alert the motorists..

Mayor Hynes said that this roadway was part of the link road proposed with the Loughrea By Pass but was abandoned because of insufficient funding. He said that he handed a letter to Minister Brennan at the turning of the sod for the Loughrea By Pass emphasising how important it was to include this 2 km of roadway from the N.6 (Galway -Dublin) to the N 66. (Gort Road). He also said that he tabled a notice of motion for the September meeting of the County Council to put pressure on the Minister to rescind the decision. His colleagues in the County Council had supported this move because of the urgency of the situation. A general discussion took place and it was proposed by Cllr. Burke seconded by Cllr. Curley to write to the new Minister for Transport Martin Cullen with a view to highlighting this matter and in support of Mayor Hynes representations. The members requested that a letter be written to the Minister to seek an appointment for a deputation from the Town Council to meet him as soon as possible.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said the County Road Maintenance Programme for 2005 had been submitted to the Department of the Environment for approval. He said that we will not know until early next year what funding, if any, will be allocated for those projects.

b. That double-arrow signs be erected by the footpath opposite the exit from St. Brendan's Home, Loughrea, as visibility, even with street lighting, is greatly reduced on dark nights with heavy rain.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that two directional signs were required at the exit from St. Brendan's Home as it is very dangerous. He said that visitors to the hospital would not be aware of the danger and it could lead to accidents as the turn is very blind. He said that two signs were required one pointing to Loughrea town and the other to the Lake/Woodford Road. He said that the open lake is very close and it is difficult, on a wet night, to differentiate between the road and the water and people could go straight across and into the lake.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the Town Engineer would investigate this matter and report to him at the next meeting.

c. That the cause of the extensive flooding on the public road adjacent to Paddy Tully's home, Bohercom, off Moore St., Loughrea, be removed as pedestrians can not use this public road, when flooded, and are forced to enter on to private property so as to avoid said flooding.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said that the flooding at this area is terrible and people need to wear wellington boots or else walk on private property to avoid the floods. He said that the County Council put down a pipe at this location but did not sink it deep enough and it is not effective. He said that the pipe will have to be sunk deeper or else the road raised to alleviate this problem. Cllr. Tully said that this road is used by children going to school and they need to be long jumpers or else wear wellingtons so as to avoid the floods. He said he agreed with Cllr. Morgan that the drainage system is faulty and some corrective measures need to be put in place to rectify it. Mayor Hynes said that he had got complaints of flooding on the Main Street outside Oasis/Joe Greens premises and this has mentioned by several councillors over the last year. Cllr. Burke said that he had mentioned this several times but he understands that it is very difficult to work on the Main Street. He wondered if the work could be done over a week end or if the Main Street could be closed off for a day to enable this work to be undertaken. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that there is no drainage system on the Main Street and the water has to run somewhere, consequentially leading to flooding of some premises in bad weather. He said that the work would have to be done in unsocial hours as it is a major job and can not be done during working hours. He said that the Town Engineer will investigate it to see if any remedial measures can be taken in both instances.

AOB.

Cllr. Burke enquired if Galway County Council Area Meeting minutes were available yet for circulation as requested previously. Mr. Cullen, said the area meeting minutes had been confirmed and he expected that they would be available for circulation within a week or two.

Cllr. Burke congratulated the Galway Minor Hurling Team on winning the All Ireland Final. He suggested that the Town Council give them a reception to acknowledge their win. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she would like to congratulate the Ladies football team on their great achievement on winning the first All Ireland for Galway. Cllr. Curley said that he would also like to congratulate the Galway minor camogie team on their success. A general discussion took place and it was agreed that they would honour all three teams with a reception. It was decided that the Town Council would look for sponsors to host this reception as it would not be in a position to fund this type of reception itself. It was proposed by Cllr. Burke seconded by Cllr. Curley that the Mayor approach the Bank of Ireland to see if they would sponsor this type of reception and this to be followed up by a letter from the Town Clerk. It was decided that the Captain of each team together with two members of the team and their families be invited to this reception if funding were forthcoming. Cllr. Morgan said that he would do the work on the scrolls, free of charge, and they could be presented to them on the night.

Cllr. Maher said that he had concerns about the Walks and late night parties at this location. Cllr. Burke said that another area of concern was the Long Point on a Saturday night where the offenders enjoy tearing up the surface with their hand brake turns which is spreading now to other areas around the town. Saturday night seems to be race night at the Long Point and around other housing estates. He said that it is like Mondello Park racing track. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that speeding cars with blacked out windows to prevent identification was causing concern for families around the town and the environs of the town. She said that there is a fatality waiting to happen. She said that they should be named "death riders" and not "joyriders". It was unanimously agreed to write to the Superintendent with a view to having a meeting with him formally or informally to discuss those matters and others arising in the town.

Cllr. Tully said that there is a lot of litter around the closed E.S.B offices and requested that this matter be addressed. He was wondering if the Wardens could issue a notice to the culprits to clean up the area.

Cllr. Bane suggested that the Town Council should produce a "Newsletter" informing the community as to what is going on in their area. She said that a lot of people do not buy the local paper or listen to local radio. She said that this could be circulated quarterly or whenever there was a big news item. Cllr. Gunter-Nix agreed with this and said that it would be a way of informing the electorate of the work that is going on. She said that the councillors would compile it, edit it and circulate it to the public. Cllr. Maher said that Cllr. Ciaran Cannon and he have just circulated a "Newsletter", as it was mentioned on the doorsteps during the canvass that people were not informed of what was going on around them.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 8th day of November, 2004.

Mayor: 

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 8th November, 2004, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 11th October, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Curley, enquired if any progress had been made in relation to another pedestrian crossing for Loughrea. He said that two lives had been lost and he wondered if the NRA had any plans to provide this in the near future. Cllr. Curley proposed that a letter be written to the NRA pointing out the urgency of the situation. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Regan enquired about the issue of residential permits and said that he had been informed that residents with a garage/store with no driveway would not be eligible for a permit. He said that some of the gateways are turf sheds without parking facilities. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that each case would be taking individually and residential permits will be issued if they have not a driveway.

Mayor Hynes said that he would like to congratulate the Chamber of Commerce on the launch of the defibrillator and taking the initiative in introducing life saving equipment. In this context he said that there is another health matter which he is concerned about and that is St. Brendan's Hospital. He said that there is a growing concern that the local hospital run by the Western Health Board has reduced its beds from 200 to 160. He said that they got assurances that an application was with the Department of Health for an 80 bed extension at the hospital. Cllr. Curley said this is very serious matter and urged the town council to make representations to the Minister for Health to secure this facility. Cllr. Regan said that St. Brendan's should be upgraded and not downgraded. He requested Cllr. Maher to urge Minister Harney to progress this matter and provide this much needed facility at St. Brendan's. Cllr. Maher said that he had been in contact with Minister Harney recently and she had requested a full list of facilities at the hospital. He said that she was left in no doubt about the urgency of this matter. He said that she had promised to visit Loughrea to see the facility for herself. Cllr. Gunter-Nix supported the other speakers and said that this was a wonderful facility in the town for an ageing population. She said that she was also at the meeting with the Health Board officials and they said that they were going ahead with the 80 bed extension. She said that they pointed out that they would

be transferring some of the patients from St. Brendans Hospital nearer to their homes (in Clifden and elsewhere) in order to facilitate visits from their families. She said that under Health and Safety Regulations that they would no longer be occupying the top floor of some of the wards as the stairs were very narrow and a lift could not be provided in an old building. She agreed that the town council should write a letter to Minister Harney to upgrade this hospital. Cllr. Morgan said that if he needed such care that he could not afford a private Nursing Home and he would not like to see St. Brendan's Home being downgraded. It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Morgan that a letter be written to Minister Harney and the Western Health Board asking them to refrain from reducing beds in St. Brendan's Hospital.

Cllr. Morgan enquired if any progress had been made with the relief road from Hanley's Cross (N. 6) to the Gort Road (N.66). Mayor Hynes said that a deputation from the County Council was arranged with Michael Tobin, NRA but due to family reasons Mayor Burke had to cancel it. He said that he spoken to the County Manager and he is 100% behind it. The Town Clerk said that she had written to Minister Cullen as directed by the members seeking a deputation from the town council but to date she had got no reply.

Consideration of Corry's Field.

The Town Clerk said that she had received one submission from Cllr. Morgan as follows:-

"Corry's Field, containing approximately 14.5 acres, was purchased as additional land for public amenity. It would, in my opinion, have been illegal for Loughrea Town Commissioners to have purchased it for any other purpose. It is our duty, in as far as possible, to maintain and further develop this very valuable piece of ground, for the benefit of the community.

This area may be suitable, to an extent, for sports, outdoor volleyball, pitch-and-putt, etc. In consultation with Loughrea Anglers' Association, perhaps on shore fishing and some lakeside berths for boats may be provided.

Persons, mostly visitors, have remarked to me how fortunate we are to have such a beautiful lakeside park; they have asked why it is neglected and covered with nettles, thistles, dock and other obnoxious weeds.

Taking into account the high cost of maintenance, and the amount of funds available for such a purpose, it is most important that we provide facilities that the public will use, and not what we think they use.

I therefore recommend:

- a. that the grass be cut down, and maintained in that condition, in the western portion of the field; that is the area in which hay was cut annually by the previous owner.
- b. that we then invite the public to come and use the field.
- c. that we then look at what use the public make of that field;
- d. that we then provide whatever equipment we can afford for those who use the field"

Mayor Hynes complimented Cllr. Morgan for his good valid recommendations for Corry's Field. Cllr. Maher said that he had spent 20 to 30 hours there in the last week discussing with the community what use they would like to make of Corry's Field. He said that most people would like to see a Wild Life Park and the area tidied up and litter bins provided at this location. Cllr. Regan said that it is a recreation area and requested that the grass be cut. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that an elaborate plan was drawn up a few years ago by John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer and the Tree Council of Ireland

Mr. Cullen said that this was a plan drawn up by John Tierney and it should be looked at. He said that the original plan would be circulated to the members.

Road Traffic (Speed Limit) Co. Galway Bye-Laws 2004.

Town Clerk said that she had circulated the members with the Speed Limit Bye-Laws 2004. She said that the only change in the Schedule is proposed 30mph Limit on Danesfort Road LP 3204 for a distance of 823m from its junction with the Galway-Ballinasloe Road (N 6). She said if the members have any concerns about the draft Bye-Laws they should send their submissions in writing to Galway County Council, Roads and Transportation Unit, before the 7/12/2004. Cllr. Burke said that the speed limits on the Danesfort Road at present is at John Quinn's house and would need to be extended as far as the By Pass Road. He said there are large housing estates with young families beyond the existing speed limit and they would need to be considered as it is very dangerous. Mr. Gallagher said that 823 metres would take it as far as the By-Pass Road. Cllr. Burke proposed that the speed limit be extended to the By Pass road on the Danesfort Road. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Set date for Annual Budget Meeting.

The Town Clerk said that the statutory time for holding the Annual Budget meeting for Town Councils was from the 15th November 2004 to the 16th December, 2004. It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Burke that the Annual Budget meeting and the monthly meeting be held on the same night. The annual budget meeting could be held first followed by the monthly meeting.

Correspondence:

Letter from the Chamber of Commerce setting out agenda for their meeting on Tuesday 9th November at 9.00 p.m in O'Deas Hotel.

In this context Cllr. Burke said the members had been circulated with a letter from the AMAI regarding commercial rates and the view of the Chamber of Commerce of Ireland on it. The letter said that the recommendation of the CCI was that 80 Local Authorities that have served the urban population of Ireland for over a century should be scrapped. This devastation of local democracy would "contribute" to an "estimated" saving of 20% on commercial rates. He wondered if this was the view of the local Chamber of Commerce or did it just refer to the CCI at national level. He said that the town council had always worked with the Chamber of Commerce and other communities for the betterment of the town. A general discussion took place

and it was agreed that the Town Clerk should write to the local Chamber of Commerce to seek their view on this issue.

A letter from Superintendent Michael Mulryan stating that he would meet the members informally on Monday 15th November, 2004, in the Credit Union Office at 7.30p.m. This was in response to a letter written by the Town Clerk as directed at the last meeting.

A note from the Manager, Bank of Ireland, stating that they could not accommodate a reception for the various teams who had won All Ireland medals. Cllr. Curley suggested that an approach be made to the Manager, Allied Irish Banks, with a view to hosting this reception. Cllr. Burke said that the Credit Union had facilities to receive the teams and he could not envisage any problems with the Credit Union Manager. He said that the Managers, Captains and two players should be invited together with their families. Cllr. Tully said that there would be no drink involved in hosting this reception for the players.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Curley.

I would like to ask Galway County Council if they would consider providing toilets and changing rooms between the Boathouse and the end of Corry's Field as there will be a large volume of people, children and families in this area in the coming years.

It was proposed by Cllr. Curley and seconded by Cllr. Hynes.

Cllr. Curley said when the new Playground area is complete it will attract a huge number of people to the town and he felt that the toilet facilities and changing rooms at that end of town was not adequate. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said there is a half million facility proposed at the Westbridge but felt that this would not meet the needs for Corry's Field and the Playground area. She said that it would be too far to walk with toddlers and felt that there was toilet facilities needed near the Tennis Court. Cllr. Maher said that there were toilet facilities at the Tennis Court and suggested that another block be put back to back with the existing set and this would meet the needs of the public. Cllr. Curley asked why the toilets at the Westbridge was costing half million. Mr. Gallagher said the toilets at the Westbridge are very close to the town and because of vandalism, security and maintenance that a half million is the funding required providing them. He said he would do an estimate on the cost of providing toilets at the Tennis Court and would inform them at the next meeting.

A.O.B.

Cllr. Morgan said that two trees on the lakeside of the fairgreen were cut down on Saturday 23rd October, 2004, a day the Council Offices were closed to the public. He said that he wanted them replaced immediately by two mature trees the size of the trees cut down. Cllr. Regan said the Council had sought expert advice on those trees. The experts said that the trees were dangerous and would have to be cut down. Cllr. Maher said that Health and Safety comes first and insurance would be a big issue. He said that the trees can be replaced. He would like to compliment Galway County Council Staff for working on a Saturday to remove the dangerous trees. Mr. Gallagher said that he or the members were under no illusion as to the danger of the

trees. He said that the tree surgeon crowned the trees but unfortunately crowned the dangerous trees as well. He said that the trees will grow to maturity. Cllr. Burke asked if the trees in Garrybreeda Wood were dangerous. Mr. Gallagher said that Jane Baker would do a survey and he would await her advice.

Cllr. Curley said that the Contract for the Community Wardens would soon be terminated. He wondered if it would be renewed as they are doing a fine job. Mr. Cullen, said that the decision rested with the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government as this was a pilot scheme under his department. He said that the Council had made a strong case to hold on to them and he was glad to see the support from the Town Council. A general discussion took place and it was agreed to write a letter to Minister Roche in support of the Community Wardens.

Cllr. Burke requested that a bus shelter be placed on the Main Street to facilitate passengers.

Mayor Hynes said that he would like to pay tribute to Phelim Murphy who was stepping down as County Secretary of the Hurling Board and to wish him well in his retirement.

Cllr. Tully enquired if the Council had any plans for the Town Hall. He proposed that a public meeting be called to find a solution for this premises. This was seconded by Cllr. Burke. Cllr. Morgan said that he was one of 30 people who had formed a committee and contributed to the Town Hall fund. He said that there was €200,000.00 collected and it was invested awaiting a project to come on stream. Mayor Hynes said that there were new members now in the town council and they should have a say in the matter. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said each member contact a member of a club in the town to see what interest is in the town for the Town Hall and if funding is forthcoming. Cllr. Bane supported Cllr. Gunter-Nix and said that it should be for community use. She said that they should try and get a project together. She said that Cllr. Gunter-Nix and herself were on a committee and they might have an interest in the lower portion of the hall. Mr. Cullen said that he was glad to see the attitude of the members and it was very positive but stressed that whatever proposal might come forward must be fully financed.

Cllr. Tully said that the road at Cross Street is left in a terrible condition. He said that people are in danger of an accident. Mr. Gallagher said that Ward and Burke were the contractors for this job and any queries should be directed to them.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 13th day of December, 2004.

Mayor:



Minutes of proceedings at the Annual Budget Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13th December, 2004, in O'Deas' Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllr. Burke.

Mr. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, presented the Annual Budget for the year 2005. Mr. Cullen stated that the expenditure for 2005 is estimated at €78,147.91 with receipts of €9,957.00. The rate proposed for 2005 is €2.72 i.e. an increase of 5%.

Mr. Cullen said that it was very difficult budget to frame. However, he said that he had managed to overcome the increased expenditure in the local elections without a supplementary budget. He also has made provision to increase the contribution to the Chamber of Commerce in 2005 to €2,000.00. He said that we have increased the contribution to the Chamber of Commerce from €635.00 to €2,000.00 in three years.

Cllr. Morgan enquired if there is still a cap on the town rate. Mr. Cullen said that it no longer exists. Cllr. Regan asked if the funding from the paid parking will be spent in the town. Mr. Cullen said that the takings from the paid parking will be going back to central funding to pay off loans taken out to purchase land and develop parking areas in the town and the ongoing cost of operating the system.

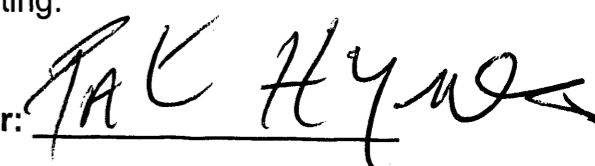
On the proposition of Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix and resolved that the Budget of the Loughrea Town Council for the Financial Year ending 31st December, 2005, as set forth at A, B, C. on the Form of Budget be adopted and the Form of Annual Budget be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

It was also resolved that the Demand be made on Galway County Council by the Loughrea Town Council for the sum of €68,190.91 for the Financial Year ending on the 31st December, 2005, and that the Form of Demand be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

This concluded the business of the Annual Budget Meeting.

Signed this 10th day of January, 2005.

Mayor:



Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13th December, 2004, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer
Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cll. Burke.

Confirmation of Minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 8th November, 2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Curley said that businesses had reported a 40 to 50% drop in their income since the introduction of paid parking in the last week. He said that it is going to be a black Christmas for them.

Mayor Hynes said that he had got the same complaints. He said he had got telephone calls and representations from business people and clergy about the plan. He requested that free parking spaces be allowed outside doctors' surgeries, business premises, children's playgrounds, private and rented accommodation. He said that double yellow lines recently painted in the town should be removed. He said that people had to pay heavy development levies before they received planning permission in the town yet they could not park outside their premises. He said that he had tabled a motion for the Area County Council meeting on Wednesday 15th December to review these plans immediately. He said they are elected by the people and they would have to answer to them.

Cllr. Morgan said he had only heard praise for the new plan from people in the town. He said that heretofore that people parked on the street and took a bus to Galway and elsewhere and left their cars parked outside premises for the day. Now street parking is available which enables the public to park their cars and do their business around the town. He said that Galway County Council did not put in place the present regulations until the car park was available which gives 100 additional spaces in the town.

Cllr. Regan said that it was the newly elected County Councillors who had adopted these plans. He said that the town council had no power over traffic management. He said

plans were changed by council members in relation to no parking at the lakeside of the fairgreen on Courthouse Road. This is now posing a threat to safety.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if the other towns had encountered any difficulty when paid parking was implemented. Mr. Cullen said that the other towns became more attractive to do business in with metered parking.

Cllr. Maher said it was a trial period for the plan and everything needs a chance to settle down.

Cllr. Curley asked if the council's officials had received any complaints from the public in relation to paid parking. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that he had got one about an hour after it came into being and that was all.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the adoption of the bye-laws was a reserved function of the County Councillors. He said that he was very disappointed with the comments in relation to the traffic management plan which had just been implemented. He said that Loughrea would be unique if it did not benefit from paid parking. It has worked well in other towns where it was introduced. He said that any one who has purchased a ticket for street parking can move around and park on any street within the permitted time. He said that the Council had honoured its commitments in providing additional parking facilities to coincide with the metered street parking. He said there were now approximately 390 car spaces available in Loughrea which is at least 25% more than a year ago.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

(a). That the new Car Park on Railway Road be named the "Eddie O'Dea Car Park" in light of the total co-operation of the land owner, who was not prepared to sell to an individual, but made it available for the benefit of the Loughrea Community.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Regan.
Mr. Cullen said that this matter will have to be brought before the Area County Councillors and the decision rests with them.

(b). That all Gulley Pits in Loughrea town be regularly cleared of sand and other rubbish, so as to eliminate instances such as the flooding across the whole width of the road at Bride St., Loughrea during the last heavy rainfall.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Curley.

(c). That the present electric light at the junction of Main Street and Piggot Street be repositioned or an extra lamp be erected on same pole; so as to eliminate the Black Spot, especially coming off the footpath at Cunnane's shop.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Regan.

AOB.

Mayor Hynes welcomed Tom Kavanagh, Director of Services, to the meeting. He said that Tom was retiring at the end of the month and he would like to make a presentation to him to mark his service to Loughrea Town Commissioners and Galway County Council. He said that Tom was an excellent official and very efficient at his job. He was a very decent and honest man. He wished him well in his retirement and also his wife and family. He also welcomed former town commissioners and former town clerk to the meeting. Other members and officials joined in paying glowing tributes to him. A Galway Crystal lamp was then presented to Tom from the Town Council.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 10th day of January, 2005.

Mayor: PAC Hynes

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 10th January, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, Enda Gallagher, Executive, Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Cllr. Willie Burke, Mayor of the County also attended.
Apologies for Jim Cullen, Director of Services, due to family reasons.

Confirmation of Minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr.Morgan seconded by Cllr.Maher the minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting held on the 13/12/2004 be adopted.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr.Maher the minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on the 13/12/2004 be adopted.

Matters arising from the Minutes.

Cllr. Regan enquired if motorists are entitled to move around and park on any street in the town within the permitted time of the ticket. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer, confirmed that this is correct. However, Mr. Gallagher, advised that kerbside parking and parking in the car park are not interchangeable due to different rates of charge. Cllr. Bane said that parking has increased on the Old Galway Road since street parking was introduced. Mr. Gallagher, said that Housing Estates and other areas will be looked at when the time comes to review the traffic management plan. Cllr. Maher said the owner of a vehicle was not allowed a residential permit because the van was taxed commercial class and not "private". He said that the same owner got a ticket while delivering supplies from a loading bay which was within the permitted time. Mr. Gallagher, said that a half hour is the permitted time in the loading bay and he would check out this matter. Cllr. G. Burke said that cars are constantly parked in the Library grounds. He said that there were a number of cars parked outside the library today even though it was closed to the public. He said that it should be marked out for staff and people with disability. Mr. Diskin said he would convey their comments to the County Librarian. Cllr. Curley said that people are parking in private property like the Abbey and Cathedral car parks and at the back of the Temperance Hall and this should be addressed.

Cllr. G. Burke asked if Directional signs could be placed nearer to Church Street so as motorists will be aware that there is no right hand turn onto Church Street from the Main Street. He said that this could be painted on the street as well for visitors to the town. Mr. Gallagher, said that the road markings are not complete yet around the town. He said that it is proposed to do this area and other areas around the town

when the weather improves. Cllr. Regan asked what emergency plans are in operation to deal with weather conditions like last weekend. He said that Council workmen were trying to get a hole open in the wall, with a crow bar, to alleviate flooding at the Lake Road. He said he would not like to see a major disaster if Council staff is not better equipped with implements. Mr. Diskin said that the council has an "On Call" system in place for emergencies. He said the mobile phone numbers for the relevant County Council staff are left with the Gardai and Fire Services. If the emergency service feel the County Council can help in a particular situation they will call out the relevant personnel who are now guaranteed to be available. There are no restrictions on taking on whatever plant is required for the emergency. Cllr. Curley said he had been working in Craughwell where there was serious flooding and the major services moved in and dealt with it. Cllr. Morgan said that there is serious flooding problem in Bohercom and he requested that this be attended to as soon as possible. He had tabled a Notice of Motion on this matter on a previous occasion. Cllr. Tully said that the council had undertaken some work at this location and the flooding was not as bad. Mr. Diskin, said that they would examine the situation and see what could be done.

Cllr. Maher, referred to a Notice of Motion tabled by Cllr. Morgan in relation to clearing the gullies around the town and he said that we paid the price over the weekend with the damage to houses and paint work in Dunkellin Street. Mr. Gallagher, said the street sweeper is employed on a regular basis but due to financial constraints this service is restricted to once per month. He said that it is difficult to work at this location until the construction of the By-pass is complete. However, temporary repairs will be carried out as soon as possible. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked what road status the Main Street will be when the By-pass is operational. Mr. Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, said that it would probably revert to a Regional road but nothing has been finalised yet. He said that the NRA give funding by way of a grant for improvements on National Roads but he does not know when this will cease. Cllr. Tully asked if funding is made available in 2005 does the work have to be completed in 2005. Mr. Diskin said that it could roll over one or two years. Cllr. Morgan, said that a request should be sent to the NRA to bring the Main Street up to an acceptable standard before handing it over to the County Council so as there will be minimum maintenance when they take it in charge. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Mayor of the County and the Mayor of the Town should use their influence so that Loughrea gets the necessary funding from the NRA to upgrade the town. She said that the Town Councillors and the Area County Councillors should meet on a regular basis to progress mutual interests in the town. Cllr. Tully said that the NRA should be asked for funding to repair the footpaths in Bride Street as they are very dangerous. Cllr. Maher said that the manhole cover between Raftery's house and Garretts pub at the Westbridge is very loose and needs urgent attention.

Correspondence.

Letter from County Development Board seeking agreement on a nomination to the Board from 1/1/2007 to 30/5/2007.

Cllr. G. Burke said that he was a representative on this board previously and he felt that the town council representative should be on the Board for the 5 year duration. He said that there is no continuity as the member is not circulated with minutes and

does not attend meetings. He felt that it should not be shared by Tuam and Loughrea. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the other town councils should have parity with Ballinasloe Town Council. Cllr. G. Burke proposed that the nominee from Loughrea Town Council and Tuam Town Council be appointed for the 5 years. This was seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix. Town Clerk instructed to write to the County Development Board and have this matter investigated. Mayor Hynes said that this matter would be on the Agenda for the next meeting.

Letter from Department of Transport in response to representations made by Loughrea Town Council regarding continuation of the Loughrea By-pass. It said "While the Minister for Transport has responsibility for overall policy and funding in relation to the national roads programme, the implementation of individual projects is a matter for the NRA in conjunction with the relevant authority". Mayor Hynes and Mayor Burke said that they would keep on the pressure until this happens.

An acknowledgement from the Department of Health and Children concerning St. Brendan's Home, Loughrea.

Cllr. Hynes said that he understands that there has been a further reduction of beds in St. Brendan's Home and wants a deputation to meet Minister Harney. Cllr. Maher said that Minister Harney is scheduled to come to Loughrea before the end of January. Mayor Hynes said that he would like to meet her to impress on her the concerns in the town over this matter. Cllr. Maher said that he would circulate the members when the final arrangements are made. County Mayor Willie Burke said that he would like to meet Minister Harney when she comes to Loughrea.

Letter from the Chamber of Commerce dated 6th January, 2005.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

a). To reduce the width of the footpath, on the north side of the street, from the junction of Castle Street and Barrack Street to the junction at the Boathouse, to allow a free-flow of cars, etc. in that area.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that he had measured this footpath and it is more than the required area for a footpath. Cllr. Regan said that there was ESB poles along this route which would prohibit reducing this path. Mr. Diskin said that while the proposal was desirable there are no funds, as of now, to do this work in 2005. If funds become available it would be given favourable consideration.

b). To provide No Parking boxes at the entrance to houses outside the new parking regulations area, where occupants find their entrances blocked by those who now park their cars outside the restricted areas.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Hynes.

Cllr. Morgan said that some members of the public are parking in front of private property and asked that yellow boxes be provided to discontinue this practise. Mr. Gallagher, said that if cars are being parked illegally that it is a public order offence and should be referred to the Gardai.

c). that Galway County Council be requested to give Loughrea Town Council, an account of their plans for Loughrea Town Hall, in the light of a planning application, by a private company, for permission to convert said Town Hall into a commercial, non-community enterprise.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that Galway County Council drew up plans in 1999 for the development of the Town Hall for Craft Shop/Heritage display and offices for both Galway County Council and Loughrea Town Commissioners. The Town Commissioners opposed the proposals put forward by 7 votes to 2 that they did not wish to participate and the plan was shelved. Subsequently discussions took place with various interested groups regarding the use of the building. Funding was secured from the Private Sector, Galway County Council, Loughrea Town Council and the Department of the Environment and the building was purchased. Plans were prepared for the use of the Town Hall as a multi-purpose culture centre and application was made to the Department of the Environment for a grant of €1.9 million. The application was unsuccessful and as a result it was not possible to progress the redevelopment. He said that an advertisement was placed in the papers recently to convert the Town Hall into a commercial, non- community enterprise.

Mayor Hynes said that he wanted to respond to the motion. He said on the 21/12/2004 an advertisement for planning was placed on the paper by McCarthy, Shaughnessy and Associates, Architects, Abbey Street, Loughrea, for alterations and refurbishment of an existing protected structure (Ref. 315 Record of Protected Structures) known as the cinema/town hall, Barrack St., Loughrea to include construction of a new mezzanine floor and new internal layout to provide cafe/wine bar retail and office units (gross floor area 959 m. square. Mayor Hynes said that the Area County Councillors had a meeting on the 15/12/2004 and this matter was on the Agenda. He said there was no mention of the imminent development by the officials. He said that Brian Shaughnessy had got a letter from John Diskin dated the 17/12/2004 as follows:- "I wish to refer to your pending planning application for improvements to the town hall in Loughrea. I wish to confirm that Galway County Council, as owners of the building, has no objection to you applying for planning permission for the aforementioned improvements. This permission relates solely to your planning application and should not be construed by you as assigning any other rights whatsoever". He wanted to know how this matter progressed so quickly in two days. He said that other developers had not got an opportunity to bid for it. He said that he tried to contact Mr. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, before Christmas but to no avail. He said on the 24/12/2004 he rang Mayor Burke and made an appointment to meet him on the same day to discuss this matter. He looked for a draft of the minutes of meeting held on the 15/12/2004 but they were not available. Cllr. Morgan said that there were no conditions attached to the sale of the town hall by the Directors of Loughrea Town Hall Limited to say that it was for community use. He said that the council did the right thing in allowing the application to go forward. Cllr. Maher said when he was canvassing earlier this year that the town hall was mentioned at every door they went to. He said that he would not like to see it a derelict building and the Council was going in the right direction. Cllr. Regan said officials are telling lies about this matter as discussions are ongoing for a number of months and it was not just two days. He said there was no openness or transparency and officials went behind their backs. He said when the plan was presented by John Tierney in 1999 he

wanted some amendments made to the plan and he was informed it could not happen. He said that the next thing that will happen is that the commercial owner will be applying for a licence for a night club. Cllr. Bane asked if this planning permission had to be submitted in order to avail of tax incentive scheme before a certain date. She said that it should be community based but she would not rule out a commercial interest in the town hall as well. She said it is leading to somewhere and it is progressing the matter. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the town council should put the past behind them and work together for the betterment of the town and do something positive about the town hall. Cllr. G Burke said if it is zoned commercial that the site will be more valuable and it will also keep the Council's option open. There is nothing underhanded as far as I am aware in this transaction. It is costing 2 million to get it back together and it would take a million a year to run it after that. He said that it would take a central body to pay for running costs like that and he was not aware of anybody who could come up with the funds.

County Mayor Willie Burke said that he was requested by Mayor Hynes Loughrea Town to attend the meeting to outline the background to the town hall saga, He said that he would like to confirm to the meeting that no mention had been made at the Area Council Meeting that negotiations were taken place with a developer. He read out a letter dated the 6/1/2005 which he had received from Frank Dawson, who is deputising for the Manager, regarding the town hall. He said that this was of grave concern to the members. He said that we will all have to sing from the same hymn sheet. He said he would welcome a meeting with the town councillors to discuss matters of mutual interest. He said that is what we are mandated by the people and we are answerable to them. It is important to get our game plan together.

Mr. Diskin stated that whatever use the Town Hall was put to was indeed a very serious matter and warranted much debate and consideration by the Loughrea Electoral Area County Councillors. It was only right that the Electoral Area Councillors would like to have the views of the Loughrea Town Councillors on what use the Town Hall was put to. However, the response of the elected members about the present planning application by Shaughnessy/ McCarthy and Associates was "a storm in a tea cup". Much debate has taken place since 1999 on what to do with the Town Hall. All that debate has yielded nothing up to October, 2003. In October, 2003, with the approval of the Loughrea Electoral Area Councillors, expressions of interest on the redevelopment and running of the Town Hall were sought from any interested party be it a private citizen, private company or community group so as to ensure that the exercise was carried out in a professional manner. Galway County Council engaged A & L Goodbody Limited to supervise the whole procedure. Unfortunately no visible submission was received. Mr. Shaughnessy approached me on the 15/12/2004 enquiring about the Town Hall and the details of the Tax Designation for the site. I advised him to contact the Forward Planning Section of Galway County Council at County Hall. On the 17/12/2004 Mr. McCarthy called to my office to say that he wished to apply for planning permission for the Town Hall and could he have a letter from me to say that it was O.K. The tax designation for the site would expire on the 31/12./2004 unless a valid application was made. He needed to move quickly. Bearing in mind the instructions given by the Loughrea Electoral Area Councillors in October, 2003 to seek expression of interest I felt that Shaughnessy/McCarthy proposal was similar and as such I had no difficulty with it. I gave the letter already referred to by Mayor Hynes to Mr. Shaughnessy. It was an

oversight on my part not to have informed Mayor Hynes and County Mayor Willie Burke for which I now apologise. He said that there was nothing underhanded done and officials were not telling lies. Mr. Diskin reminded the members, that the Town Hall can not be leased or sold without the approval of the Loughrea Electoral Area Councillors and then the consent of the full council of Galway County Council. Shaughnessy/McCarthy had only the consent to apply for planning permission and nothing else.

AOB.

Cllr. Maher requested that a two way mirror be put at Mount Pleasant to improve visibility. Mr. Gallagher said that Galway County Council will not erect mirrors at any location. He said that the mirror could be a fraction out of line and the driver would think it was safe to move and could cause an accident. He said that such mirrors were prone to vandalism.

Cllr. Tully asked if anything can be done about the bottle banks as there are bag loads of refuse left around them. Mr. Gallagher said that the bottle banks will be relocated to the Rathready Road eventually when the civic amenity site is up and running. In the meantime the County Council will monitor its present location.

Cllr. G. Burke said the end of the laneway near the bottle banks is like a derelict site with an abandoned car and domestic waste. He said that the County Council own some of the property. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked that a small recycling centre should be retained for older people who have no cars. Mr. Diskin said that this request would be sent to the Environment Section for attention. Unfortunately, though, people will use the nearest bank available.

Cllr. Bane said that planning applications had been submitted for out of town developments. She said that the decision on one of the developments was at Christmas and the other one is due at the end of January. She said that she was not opposed to the developments but to the size of them. She said that it was the size of Super Value and Londis Supermarkets together. She was wondering if it was within the guidelines permitted.

Cllr. G. Burke asked for an up date on the Public Toilets at the Westbridge and when it is hoped to have them in place. Mr. Diskin, said there should be a decision within two weeks. He asked about the proposal at a previous meeting regarding extending the toilets at the Tennis Court to facilitate the play ground area. Mr. Gallagher, said that they are at present investigating this matter.

Cllr. G. Burke said that he had requested previously that a copy of the minutes of the Area Councillors Meetings be circulated to the town council members once they are adopted. He said that they had just got one set of minutes.

Cllr. G. Burke said that the old ESB offices are very dilapidated since they became vacant and was wondering if anything could be done to improve the area. He said that they are being vandalised and the grounds are full of litter. He said that bushes have got so high that youngsters are able to stand in the middle of them. He said there are a lot of elderly people living around this area and they are living in fear.

Cllr. Tully said that the footpath at Cross Street is a disgrace and something will have to be done about it. Mr. Gallagher said that Ward and Burke applied for a road opening licence to lay services from Barrack Street to the site. He said that the duration of this licence is now near an end. He will talk to the Contractors about reinstating the paths

Cllr. G. Burke said that the public lights are gone on the Tynagh Road. He also said that there are 200 trucks a day travelling out to the new development in Tynagh. He said that there are walls knocked and the road is very dangerous. Mr. Gallagher said that the lorries were using this road while the Gurtymadden to Tynagh road was being constructed. He said that this job is now complete and the trucks will be using this road. Mr. Diskin said that the Tynagh Road is on the 5 Year Roads Programme Plan which is awaiting approval.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 14th day of February, 2005. Mayor: P. K. Hynes

Minutes of proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14th February, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Pat Gallagher, County Manager, Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that the minutes of the 10th January, 2005 be adopted.

Mayor Hynes proposed that the deputation from the Chamber of Commerce would be taken next and the minutes discussed subsequently. This was seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Presentation by Chamber of Commerce.

Jarlath O'Connor and Tom Fahy from the Chamber of Commerce made their presentation. Jarlath O'Connor highlighted the lessons learned when Athlone was by-passed and also some towns in Britain. He said that Loughrea should plan in time and be prepared for it. He said that surveys carried out over the past 20 years in Britain showed that the small corner shop and the one-stop supermarket could be swallowed up by competition by nearby centres. The Chamber said that the all services needed by the community are within a four minute walk of the Post Office but post the by-pass this could change. He said that the Chamber are committed to supporting the commercial development of Loughrea town and now have a suggested programme to rejuvenate the town. He said they have appointed a retail committee and have approached some architectural colleges to offer prizes for the best designs which will help to make it a model town. They suggested a few ideas to rejuvenate the centre of the town i.e. planting trees and shrubs, put in seating, put E.S.B. and Eircom cables underground, and put a permanent bandstand near AIB bank which could be used for civic receptions and parades. They have invited submissions from the community on this project - "we have got something good here ourselves and we want to keep it". They have requested support from the Town Council to bring this plan to fruition or for any ideas which they might have to keep the town viable.

Mayor Hynes and the members complimented the Chamber of Commerce on their research and foresight and hoped the commercial life of the town would not be damaged in the years to come.

He also extended the sympathy of the Town Council to Paddy Cleary on the recent death of his father.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Maher said that he had referred to the condition of Dunkellin Street at the last meeting but nothing has been done about the huge potholes. He also mentioned that the loose manhole cover between Raftery's dwelling house and Garretts had not been attended to. Mr. Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that they were seeking funding from the NRA and could not repair the potholes until they had inspected the area. It is hoped to do this work this week. He said that a firm from Cork would be repairing this manhole cover and the others awaiting repair around the town.

Cllr. Burke said there is a huge pothole outside Shalvey's Butcher shop and requested that this area be repaired when Dunkellin Street is being done. He asked if anything is being done about reserving an area for library personnel and people with disability. Mr. Gallagher said that the County Librarian had agreed to this and the necessary markings will be carried out soon. He also asked if an owner had been found for the abandoned car on the laneway near the Bottle Banks. Mr. Gallagher said that we are trying to trace the owner and when this information comes to hand a notice will be served on them. Cllr. Burke said that the bottle banks are still very untidy with bottles and rubbish continuously around them. He asked if a camera could be installed at this location to see if it would improve matters. He said that it is very dangerous at weekends and there is a serious accident waiting to happen with all the debris and bottles. Cllr. Morgan said the Bottle Bank containers are always full and he agrees with Cllr. Burke that if a row breaks out that somebody will get killed with all the bottles left around. Mr. Gallagher said a camera was installed at this location but there was a problem with it and it did not work. He said that a second camera would be installed as soon as possible.

Mayor Hynes said he wanted to inform the elected members and the press the current status of the Town Hall. He said that a planning decision is due on the 23rd of February next on the application lodged by McCarthy, Shaughnessy and Associates. He said that the County Council can either grant permission, refuse permission or request further information.

Cllr. Maher asked for an update on the public convenience at the Westbridge and if a decision has been made on it. Enda Gallagher said that it is proposed to provide public toilets in Loughrea and Tuam at a cost of half a million each. This amount will be re-paid over 15 years. It will be open 24 hours of the day seven days of the week. There will be a maintenance cost of €100,000 thereafter.

Cllr. Burke asked about the provision of footpaths to Mount Pleasant cemetery. He said that the existing footpath is worn down by large trucks going up on it to avoid the potholes. He said that there are over 200 trucks travelling on the Loughrea/Tynagh Road to the new gas plant in the old Tynagh mines. He said that there was €1 million spent on the Gurtymadden/Tynagh road to facilitate this development and the trucks should use this road. He said that the footpath would need replacement in Cross Street as well. Cllr. Tully said that the footpaths and the road in Cross Street needed attention. He said that Ward and Burke and the Developer were damaging the road with deliveries. He said that trucks are always parked on the footpath and the public have to walk on the road. Mr. Gallagher said that the Developer put in a one way traffic system and erected traffic lights at this location. Cllr. Morgan said that the

town boundary ends at Mt. Pleasant cemetery and the town council has no responsibility or say on the rest of the Tynagh Road. He said the Developer is responsible for the maintenance of the road and put it back in order. It would be misappropriation of public funds if the County Council did it. Mr. Gallagher, Town Engineer said that there is one grant job under E.U. co-financed funding allocated to the Loughrea Electoral Area each year. There were many projects looking for it and it will be considered with the other applications in 2006. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said the Developer should take responsibility and maintain the road in a safe manner while working in this area.

Mayor Hynes said that he was attacked on local radio by a trader recently and others came to his home to launch an attack over raising issues the community had in relation to the Traffic Management Plan. He felt duty bound to hear all sides of the story and he was not scaremongering or trying to damage any businesses in the run up to Christmas.

Mayor Hynes welcomed Mr. Pat Gallagher, County Manager to the meeting. He said that he has a great knowledge of Local Government having been a T.D. and Senator before he came to the Local Authority. His tenure is 7 years. He said he is very approachable person and makes himself available to the members. He is looking forward to working with him for the betterment of the Town and County.

Mr. Pat Gallagher, County Manager, thanked Mayor Hynes for inviting him to Loughrea. He said he had met most of the members informally at the turning of the sod for Loughrea By-pass and the extension to Cigna. He said that it is a very positive sign for Loughrea and he is looking forward to working with the elected members, staff and Chamber of Commerce with a view to progressing and supporting development of the town and surrounding areas.

Mayor Hynes extended the sympathy of the town council to Jim Cullen on the recent death of his brother in law.

Nominee to the County Development Board.

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke that Cllr. Bane be town council member on the County Development Board from 1st January, 2007 up to June 2009. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Correspondence

Letter from AMAI stating that Spring Seminar was taking place on the 11th and 12th February, 2005 in Letterkenny for approval. This correspondence was not received on time for January meeting. Approval granted.

Letter from the National Roads Authority in relation to the link road from Caherlavine to the Gort Road in response to letter written by Town Clerk to the Minister for Transport. Mayor Hynes circulated the members with a copy of a reply he had received as well. He said it is not good news about the N. 66 link road. "As a stand-alone project the N/66 N6 has very low levels of traffic, less than 2,000 vehicles per day in the design year of 2026. This together with the high cost of land and the

competing demands for funds amongst national secondary route projects, effectively means that the N/66 to N/6 can not be included in the Loughrea Bypass scheme unless Galway County Council can fund the scheme from some alternative source." Mayor Hynes said that he rang the National Roads office to confirm that the year 2026 was correct. He was informed that the year is correct. He urged the town councillors to keep the pressure on to advance this project. Cllr. Morgan said he wanted to thank Mayor Hynes and Mayor Willie Burke for their interest and efforts in trying to get this link road constructed. He said the Loughrea Bypass was the best deal at the time and we were lucky to have got it. He said that he was scared that the Galway to Ballinasloe dual carriageway would go ahead of the Loughrea Bypass.

Letter from the Chamber of Commerce setting out agenda for monthly meeting and stating that annual general meeting will take place on 15th March, 2005.

A letter from the French Market in Ireland requesting approval to hold an open air market in Loughrea for three days in June. Letter circulated to members. Members agreed in principle.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

a.) "I will propose that Galway County Council put in place a programme of work for the maintenance of

- (a) Garrybreeda Cemetery and
- (b) St. Brigid's Well, Bohar Cam, Loughrea."

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that Garrybreeda cemetery is one of the oldest cemeteries in Loughrea and some maintenance needs to be carried out. She said there are archaeological reasons why extensive works can not be done in it but if some works could be done periodically over the year, not just in summer, it would be appreciated by the public and the many visitors to this cemetery. In relation to St. Brigid's well she said that this has become an eye sore with all the debris strewn around the place. She said that one young mother, in the vicinity, carries out maintenance work on a voluntary basis but is finding it difficult to keep up with it. Cllr. Maher said that he would have to agree with Cllr. Gunter-Nix. that the place is a disgrace. He said that three weeks after he had cleaned it up it was as bad as ever again with beer cans and crisps bags all over the place. He said that this was the latest site for drinking sessions. Cllr. Tully said that it is now a law and order case and one that should be looked at by the local Gardai.

b.) "That Flashing Beacons be installed at the pedestrian crossings at Gort Road, Loughrea to safeguard the lives of those crossing to the Playground, Tennis Court and Corry's amenities".

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Hynes.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said a lot of young people frequent this area and flashing beacons might alert motorists to reduce speed and prevent an accident. Cllr. Bane said that there is very little signage along this area and motorists may not notice children

crossing to the amenity areas. Cllr. Morgan said that the Gardai should set up speed traps at this location to deter people from speeding. Cllr. Burke said that there were originally two crossings but one was removed because they were too close to each other. Mr. Enda Gallagher, said he would investigate this matter with the Road Design team to see if they can be erected at this area.

Notice of Motion - Cllr Morgan.

"That the property, namely the land on which the Old Bridewell stood and which was leased by the owners, namely Galway County Council, to Loughrea Town Commissioners, be returned to Galway County Council, by cancelling said lease".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan.
As there was no seconder this motion was deferred to the next meeting. Cllr. Morgan asked Mr. Cullen to clarify legal background to this matter. He agreed to this.

"That Loughrea Town Council in consultation with Loughrea Anglers Association, draw up a Development Plan for the lakeshore in Corry's Field, for the purpose of facilitating fishing thereat. Such a Plan to be implemented over a period of years".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said he is a member of the Anglers Association for years even though he does not go fishing. He said a meeting should be set up with Galway County Council to see if a Plan can be drawn up along the lakeshore which will be in conformity with the planning regulations. Cllr. Regan said that it would be very difficult to get insurance cover with the danger of hooks with children playing so near the area. Cllr. Burke said if shore line fishing gets children off the streets it is a good thing. It is up to parents to supervise children in the playing areas. Cllr. Bane said that a Plan for Corry's field has been mentioned a few times over the last few weeks but no definite meeting has been arranged. Cllr. Morgan proposed that 30 minutes be devoted to discussing this item at the next meeting. Cllr. Burke said that it is time to fix a date for this meeting as this item has been coming up too often and being left on the long finger. He proposed that this meeting take place informally on the 7th March, 2005 at 7.30 p.m at a venue to be decided. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Cllr. Maher asked if the Credit Union offices will be available for the meeting. Cllr. Burke said that he would check it out. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Town Clerk had circulated a Plan, which had been drawn up some years ago by the Tree Council of Ireland, and the members could tease through it and use it as a base for the Plan. Cllr. Bane said that they could meet up with the Gardner as well to discuss the Plan with her.

"That recommendation be sent to Galway County Council - to remove the ivy from the Old St. Bridget's Church ruin in Garrybreeda Cemetery, and also from the trees thereat. Garrybreeda as a place of worship goes back to at least the year 1160".

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that he had arranged for a Fas scheme some years ago to clean up this cemetery and level it off. He said that the church dates back 300 years and the ivy needs to be removed from it and from the trees. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she is not competent enough to comment on the Old St. Bridget's Church but she would not like to see the ivy removed from the trees as it a source of food for the wild life in the area.

A.O.B.

Mayor Hynes said that John Diskin is leaving the Loughrea Electoral Area to take up an appointment in Water Services Section in Headquarters. He would like to thank John for all his help and wished him well in his new appointment. He said that he was not afraid of work and he often saw him in his office until the late hours of the night getting a job done. Mr. Cullen said that John was going on a specific project which was of high value to Galway County Council and Galway generally. He said that he had been a great help to him since he came to Loughrea area. He said that he was a top level Manager of the Loughrea Electoral Area with an abundance of common sense. He said he was a great mentor to all of the Staff and a great team worker. He spent 10 years in Loughrea first as Town Engineer and subsequently as Senior Executive Engineer. He wished him well in his new post and said that he would be a great asset to the Council. Cllr. Morgan said that he was not surprised at John Diskin's promotion as he is a man of great talent and he has left a lot of fine developments since he took up office in Loughrea. Cllr. Burke said he was very honest, straight, and down to earth official and there was no beating about the bush with John. He wished him well in his new appointment. Cllr. Gunter-Nix proposed that a small presentation be made to him at the next town council meeting as he was a great help with the Tidy Towns/Environmental Groups. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley.


Mr. Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that he would be erecting barriers at the Long Point where joy riders with four wheeled drives continue to tare up the green areas with hand brake turns. The keys would be held by the local office. The barrier will be erected inside the second gate. Cllr. Burke said that barriers should be put up at the entrance gate to block cars from entering this area at all. He said it should be reviewed in a few weeks time if the situation has not changed and cordon off the whole area. He said he wanted to compliment the County Council for removing the trees at this area and making it more open.

Mr. Enda Gallagher, Town Engineer, said that Stoney Brenan plaque has been removed temporary while construction work is going on by a private developer.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she would like to congratulate Lisa Tully on her debating skills in Strasbourg.

Cllr. Curley asked if any progress had been made in regard to the newsletter from the Town Council. Cllr. Bane said that she had compiled a draft form and would present it shortly.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 14th day of March, 2005. Mayor: 

Minutes of proceeding of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14th March 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, Acting Senior Executive Engineer, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Jimmy Curley.

Confirmation of minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher that the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th March, 2005 be adopted.

Presentation by Kieran Coyne, Community and Enterprise.

Mayor Hynes welcomed Kieran Coyne to the meeting. Kieran Coyne thanked the Mayor for allowing him to address the members. He said that he proposed to attend Loughrea Town Council Meeting on a quarterly basis so as to keep the members updated on County Development Board activity. He gave the background to the setting up of the County Development Boards for the benefit of the new members. "A Shared Vision for County Development Boards" was published in May 2000 which gives guidelines on the County Development Board Strategies. County Development Boards have been established bringing together all players locally from Local Government, State Agencies, Local Development and Social Partners. He outlined the functions of the Community and Enterprise Unit as follows –
To prepare and oversee the implementation of the Social, Economic and Cultural Strategy for County Galway from 2002 to 2012: To establish a Community Forum:
To lead promote and guide local authority activity related to community activity: To develop and deliver the County Arts Programme.

The County Strategy contains specific goals, objectives and actions grouped under eight themes - A Living Gaeltacht; Vibrant Island Committee; Access to Services; Investing in Communities; Opportunities for Work and Learning; Managing our Wealth of Physical and Natural Resources; Celebrating Cultural Diversity; Healthy Economic Base. Three Hundred and Seventy One actions have been identified and each action has specific lead agents, support agents and outcomes set together in a timeframe for implementation.

He said the Social Inclusion Measures (SIM) Group is a sub group of the Galway County Development Board. At the last meeting of the SIM Group meeting in early February, 2005 it was proposed and unanimously agreed on that the Mayor of Loughrea Town Council would be formally invited to join the Group. The current Mayor has accepted the invitation on behalf of Loughrea Town Council. The Mayor

of Tuam and Ballinasloe are already members of the SIM Committee due to the Rapid status of these towns.

He outlined some of the successes and achievements of the County Development Board since its inception.

The SIM Group produced the audit of Social Inclusion Measures 2001 & 2004:
Endorsement of Local Development Agency Plans 2004 & 2005;
Establishment of Galway County Community Forum: Pilot Integrated Area Plans in Eyrecourt and Kinvara: Western Rail Corridor: Broadband Infrastructure:
Development of Strategic RAPID Plans for Tuam and Ballinasloe: Cohesion funds secured in County Galway: Dormant account funds secured in County Galway. He said there will be a review of the County Strategy Plan in 2005. He said the Town Council members should consider purpose and activities of the County Development Board. What activity the County Development Board should be engaging in and why. What measures are needed to provide and support these activities?

Mayor Hynes said it was a new experience for Loughrea Town Council and it opened up lines of communications with the County Development Board. He said that they would keep fighting for funding for the link road from the N. 6 to N.66. Improvements in water and sewerage and making Broadband widely available in Loughrea town and the hinterland of Loughrea. Cllr. Burke thanked Kieran Coyne for his hand out and talk on the County Development Board. He said that he had worked with Kieran on a previous occasion in relation to the decentralisation programme and which was a great success. He said that Loughrea needs facilities for young people to meet and have a chat, a cup of tea. It would be on the lines of the Gaffe in Galway. He requested Kieran to look at this matter and see if the necessary funding could be secured to bring this project to fruition. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she notices that one of the successes of the County Development Board was the Dormant fund secured for County Galway. She understands that this fund is available only to RAPID or CLAR areas. She was wondering if applicants who applied for funding, prior to this stipulation being introduced in 2004, would be considered or are they null and void now. Kieran Coyne said that he would have this matter investigated. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if the County Youth Federation could be included for funding as well as Youth Federation. She said that Cllrs. Gabriel Burke, Geraldine Bane and herself were involved in Youth Projects and asked if all three could be brought under the one umbrella and seek funding collectively. Kieran Coyne said that he would arrange a meeting with them and discuss this matter in more detail.

Correspondence

A letter from Mary Flynn, Executive Planner confirming Loughrea Town Council's inclusion in the 2005 Urban and Village Renewal Programme.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the Town Council has been including funding in the Estimates over the last number of years for this programme as a top up to the €100,000 grant (approx) available from the Department. Cllr. Maher said that the members had an informal meeting regarding the use of Corry's Field and they had highlighted about 10 headings where funding could be used. He was wondering if a submission could be put forward under this scheme for that area. Cllr. Bane said the Chamber of Commerce plans for the town centre might qualify for this funding.

She said that the Chambers plan is over 10 to 12 years but this money might help to get it kick started. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said one traunch of the plan for the town centre could be advanced to take advantage of the funding. Cllr. Regan said the Chamber of Commerce should match the funding euro for euro and with €2000,000 a worth while project could be undertaken which will last for all time. Cllr. Morgan said that the Chamber of Commerce was not like a leprechaun with a pot of gold. He said the Chamber had spent a lot of time and expertise on the plan and the town should work with them. Mr. Cullen said that the funding need not be confined to one project but it would be beneficial to consult with the Chamber of Commerce over their extremely ambitious plan and work in tandem with them. He said that €100,000 is only a drop in the ocean for the project but it is better than the Town Council had a month ago. He said he would be meeting the Chamber of Commerce in the near future and he would convey the town council's comments to them. Cllr. Burke asked what status the Main Street will be once the By-pass is opened. Mr. Gallagher, Acting Senior Executive Engineer said from midnight on the eve of the opening of the By-pass it will become a Regional Road. Cllr. Burke asked if trucks and traffic will be still going through the Main Street from Gort and other areas when the By-pass is opened. Mr. Gallagher said that traffic will be coming from the N. 66 to the Westbridge and will be diverted onto the Athenry Road to meet up with the round about at Caherlavine. This portion of road from the Westbridge to the roundabout at Caherlavine will be a National Secondary Road. He said that it is not anticipated that any traffic will be going from the Westbridge to the East of the town. Cllr. Burke asked if funding was forthcoming from the NRA to upgrade the Main Street. Mr. Gallagher said that talks with the NRA were ongoing at the moment. Cllr. Morgan asked if it is only Local Authorities that can apply for this grant. Mr. Cullen said that local authority can only apply.

Letter from Frank Murphy, Regional Manager, Health Service Executive, Merlin Park, Galway, extract as follows "There is no plans to close the facility at St. Brendan's and it is our intention to replace the 1840s building with a modern purpose built unit to provide long-term residential and day care at the St. Brendan's site. A planning brief devised by a multi disciplinary team representing all staff was submitted to the Department of Health and Children for approval. The Loughrea development continues to be a priority for the HSE Western Area and has been submitted in the Board's Service Plans to the Department of Health and Children. The St. Brendan's service forms part of the HSE Western Area's Older Peoples services and in line with the Health Strategy "Quality and Fairness" we intend to provide services to older people as close as possible to their own areas".

Mayor Hynes said he welcomed the letter which he said had to some extent cleared up a lot of fears and rumours that St. Brendan's Home would close. He urged the HSE get on with it and build the new units. He said that this would be beneficial to accommodate the older people of the town and the hinterland of the town and also to the economy of the town as it gives a lot of employment. Cllr. Morgan said that the letter did nothing to allay his fears as no assurances were giving on the number of beds being retained. Cllr. Regan said there was never a question of St. Brendan's closing but the number of beds being provided there. He said the first plan mooted stated 240 beds now the plan is for 80 beds. Cllr. Burke said that the only plan he was aware of was an 80 bed purpose built unit and this had not changed. Cllr. Maher said

the planning brief was widely available but he would get a copy of it for the town council members who had not seen it.

Letter from Minister Treacy in relation to the link road from N. 6 to N.66. This was in response to Town Clerk's letter asking him to use his influence with Minister Cullen in bringing the deputation from the town council to fruition.

Mayor Hynes said he would like to thank Minister Treacy for this gesture and he hoped that the deputation will be received by Minister Cullen in the not too distant future.

Letter from the Chamber of Commerce inviting all of the members and officials to the reviewing stand for the St. Patrick's Day parade.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

1. "That the property, namely the land on which the Old Bridewell stood, and which was leased by the owners, namely Galway County Council, to Loughrea Town Commissioners, be returned to Galway County Council, by cancelling said lease" (Said property was sold by Lord Harewood to Galway County Council. Loughrea Town Council held a lease of the footprint of the Bridewell from Galway County Council. The Town Commissioners never use it, they did not pay a rental, or maintain or insure same. The Bridewell was removed by Galway County Council at no expense to Loughrea Town Commissioners. This means that a mistake was made in leasing said site to Loughrea Town Commissioners, and there fore it should be returned to Galway County Council).

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan

As there was no seconder this item was not taken.

Cllr. Morgan said that this motion was deferred from the last meeting because it was not seconded. He asked Mr. Cullen if he needs a seconder before he speaks to the motion. Mr. Cullen said the Standing Orders state that the Mayor shall ascertain that every motion is seconded before the proposer is permitted to speak to it. Cllr. Morgan asked the Mayor if he would second this motion. Mayor Hynes moved onto the next business.

2. "A vote of congratulations and thanks to Galway County Council for having erected the beautiful Uileann Piper sculpture in Mount Carmel Tercentenary Park, Loughrea, and that said park be reserved for honouring traditional Irish music and musicians"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Cllr. Morgan said he would like to congratulate and thank Galway County Council for erecting the beautiful Uileann Piper sculpture in Mount Carmel Tercentenary Park. He said there are three plaques of traditional musicians already located in this park and it should be reserved for musicians. He requested that seats be erected in this area so as people can enjoy the park.

3. "That a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to provide seats in the Walks, on the north side of the pedestrian way between the Railway Road and Abbey Street"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan requested that seats be erected at the Walks between the Railway Road and Abbey Street. He said that they should be facing south. He asked that the seat at the North Mound of the Walks be removed.

AOB.

Cllr. Burke asked when the refurbishment of the play area will be completed. Mr. Gallagher said that it should be up and running within a month to six weeks time. All the equipment is stored in the sewerage works waiting to be installed. Cllr. Regan asked what is being done with the old equipment. He wondered if it would be sold or moved to the Garrybreeda Children's Playground. Mr. Gallagher said it is no longer safe to use this equipment and it would be going for scrap.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Annual General Meeting of the Tidy Towns/ Environmental Group will be held on the 4th April, 2005 in O'Deas Hotel. She said there would be a reminder on the parish newsletter. She said that there is a lot of litter and debris around various areas of the town. She said that all the members are welcome to attend this meeting. She said new members and volunteers will be needed to bring Loughrea back to pristine condition. She said that she has applied for "Pride of Place" grant under the Loughrea Environmental Group. She said that inspections will be carried out in April, May and June and Loughrea would need to be ready for it.

Cllrs. Bane and Maher said they had done a tour of the town and they came up with a job list which needs completion at the Long Point.

Wooded area across from St. Brendan's Hospital needs attention; Seats need repairs, cleaning and painting and replacement; Litter - there is a serious clean up needed on shore area - cans, bottles, bits of old seats, fallen branches etc. are strewn all over the place; Path in need of thorough cleaning and repair in some places; Poop & Scoop bins need replacing and extra litter bins also needed; Perimeter wall in need of repair in two places; Windows need replacing in the old changing rooms to the right of the main entrance. They also need cleaning and painting; Graffiti on doors of new changing rooms; Shrubbery on the side of building facing the lake needs cleaning and weeding; Pathway from main car park down to St. Brendan's in need of repair; Bins needed on the pathway somewhere; Path needs sweeping and gathering of debris after the bad weather; Sandy area is covered in timbers from piers & rubbish; sandy area also needs good cleaning and raking; a number of rocks (& traffic cones) around edge of diving area could be a danger to swimmer jumping in and landing on them. Cllr. Maher said he proposes to carry out a clean up some Saturday within the next three or four weeks. Mr. Gallagher said that the Litter Warden will arrange to provide gloves and bags for the volunteers and will take away the collected rubbish.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that St. Brigid's well is full of debris again. She said there is no point in doing clean ups until the Gardai enforce the law.

Cllr. Regan said that a major clean up needs to be done at the Long Point before the Blue Flag season starts. He said we are lucky to have Blue Flag status in Loughrea and we should keep it. He said the Gardai should be called in and address vandalism once and for all and bring the predators to order. He proposed that the Gardai be requested to take action and enforce the law. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Cllr. Morgan said that the parents should be brought with the culprits to the Barracks and that might educate them. He said that the law is too lax.

Mr. Cullen said that there is only so much that can be done within the financial constraints and Enda Gallagher would take a look at the list and prioritise it.

Cllr. Bane said they had an informal meeting regarding Corry's field. She suggested getting A 5 flyers and distributing them among the community asking them for ideas or a plan for this field. Mr. Cullen said that Enda and himself would look at the list and cost it and see what can be done immediately.

Cllr. Tully said that the Green would need to be levelled off and bring it back to its former condition. He also mentioned that there is a storm water pipe between the first and second field in Corry's (near the rose bushes) which needs attention. The water is stagnant and there is litter and debris collected at the end of it and it is giving off a bad odour in the area.

Presentation to John Diskin.

Mr. Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, was presented with a Genies clock embedded in the Turoe Stone in recognition of his service to Loughrea over the last ten years.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 11th day of April, 2005. Mayor: PAK Hynes

Minutes of Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 11th April, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair.

Mayor: Pat Hynes.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Maher that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 14th March, 2005 be adopted.

Cllr. Curley proposed that a minutes silence be observed for the late Mattie McDonagh who had passed away this morning. He said he had made a big contribution to Galway football in the 1960's. Cllr. Regan said that Pope John Paul 11 should also be included in the minutes silence and anybody who died in the area since the last meeting. The Mayor agreed to this.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Regan referred to St. Brendan's Home and the conflicting statements regarding the number of beds being provided there. Cllr. Maher said that he had come from the conference in Cork and he was assured by Minister Harney that there was a Capital Programme for 40 bed units at St. Brendan's Hospital. He said she is aware of the concerns the people of Loughrea have and is addressing them. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan that a deputation be received by the Minister or the Regional Manager of the Health Board Executive to clarify those matters. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley. Mayor Hynes said that there was a grave necessity to retain St. Brendan's Hospital and to the highest standard. He said when this unit is built that it could be used for patients recuperating after an operation and also could be used as a centre for breast screening and cervical screening. Cllr. Burke said that when the Town Council met officials from the Western Health Board they informed them there was an 80 bed unit planned for St. Brendan's Hospital. He agreed with meeting officials of the Health Services to clarify matters. Cllr. Regan said that the first time Minister Harney knew about the plan was when she visited Loughrea and a copy was faxed to her office that night. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that members should not be scoring points by knocking each other but should come together and meet the officials and get the best deal possible for Loughrea. Cllr. Bane said that there would need to be a list of facts presented to the Minister by the deputation so as she is in no doubt what is needed in Loughrea.

Cllr. Maher said that he had referred to an odour in the Corry's field/Gort Road area at the previous meeting but nothing has been done about it. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that they had carried out some remedial works at this

location but he would investigate it further if the smell persists there. Cllr. Maher asked if it was raw sewage and if it would contaminate the drinking water for the town. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the drinking water is perfect and is absolutely in no danger. He said that Mr. Raftery would investigate this matter further.

Cllr. Bane asked Mr. Cullen if he or the engineer has done a costing on the improvements for Corry's Field. She asked if some works could be undertaken this year. Mr. Cullen said that he will try and provide some funding for it this year but they were restricted on the type of work that can be carried out at this location as it a Special Area of Conservation. He said that any work or changes proposed for the area must be approved by Duchas and the Fisheries Board. Mr. Raftery said that a number of parties have been issued with maps and photos of Corry's field and an initial programme of works for the area. It is hoped that those parties will provide feedback regarding the best way to advance this project. Mr. Cullen said that the town council will not be required to contribute to the Urban and Village Renewal Programme this year and he will see if he can spend some money in Corry's Field.

Cllr. Bane asked if it was one or two projects that would be done under the Urban and Village Renewal Programme. Mr. Cullen said that the best option would be to do one programme which would ensure that substantial funding could be allocated to it.

Correspondence.

A letter from John Diskin, Senior Executive Engineer, thanking the members for the presentation to him at the March meeting. He wished the members every success in their efforts to make Loughrea a better place to live and work in. He thanked the members for the courtesy extended to him in the previous 9 years.

Notice of Motion. - Cllr. Gunter Nix.

"That the By-Pass Construction Company be requested by the NRA to re-establish the stone walls on the boundaries of the new By-Pass"

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that Galway itself has a great heritage of stone walls and we should stick with this tradition. She said that post and rail fencing is not acceptable along the approach roads to Loughrea town. She said that the stone walls were along those areas when construction work started and they should be re-established. Cllr. Burke said the County Council always stipulate that stone walls are built as part of planning conditions and should be adhered to in this case as well. He said that stone walls should be built especially at the round about at Moneamore/Cosmona / Bullaun road. Cllr. Maher said that some stone walls have been built at the Caherlavine area of the Bypass and it should be continued. Cllr. Morgan agreed with the other speakers. Cllr. Burke said that the Residents of the Ballygasty/Cosmona road were meeting officials from the NRA on the 12/4/2005 and all the members were welcome to come along. It was unanimously agreed that a letter be written to the NRA by the Town Clerk to make their concerns known to them over this matter.

"That the Environment Section of Galway County Council provide a supply of litter pickers, plastic bags and rubber gloves to Residents Groups, Community Groups and other interested parties in order to proceed with the County Council April clean-up under the National Spring Clean 2005 Campaign"

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Spring Clean Campaign started on the 1st April and would continue for the month. She said that the Loughrea Environmental Group held their Annual General Meeting on the 4th April and set up a new committee. She urged the members to get involved and give a hand to clean up the town. She said that the Loughrea Environmental Group has requested the Environment Section of Galway County Council for litter pickers, plastic bags etc. in order to carry out a clean up of the town. She said that she applied for the "Pride of Place" award on behalf of the Loughrea Environmental Group and she received a reply from Alan Farrell stating they were in Category 3 of the competition. She said that all of the groups should get together and try and win this award. She said that all the members were welcome to attend. She said that inspections would be carried out during the months of May and June and the adjudication would take place in July. Cllr. Morgan said that he was involved with the Loughrea Tidy Towns for over 30 years and he knew all about it.

"That the Environment Section of the County Council hold an information evening in each Electoral Area – inviting schools, active retirement groups, community groups etc. in order to raise awareness of environmental issues in the County".

This was proposed by Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that an education programme should be started in the Electoral Area of Loughrea in order to raise awareness of environmental issues in the County. She said that an education programme should be started in the schools so as young people can become more involved and develop a sense of pride and responsibility for their town and area. She said that Sinead Ni Mhannin and Mark Molloy from the Environment Section, would be giving a talk on Environmental issues and would give a demonstration of home composting in O'Dea's Hotel on the 18th April, 2005. She said that all the members were welcome to attend. She said that inspections would be carried out during the months of May and June and the adjudication would take place in July. She said that there could be evening seminars for Active Retirement Groups and Community Groups to see how they could reach their goal in achieving the best town or the cleanest town in the West.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"That Loughrea Town Hall, purchased by Galway County Council from the Directors of Loughrea Town Hall Ltd., for the sum of €100,000.00 be renovated and used as Loughrea's Local authority Offices for Galway County Council and Loughrea Town Council. The Town Hall was sold for less than one-eighth of its value, so as to reduce the cost which would be required for development on Galway County Council, and wishing the Hall to remain in local authority hands for the benefit of Loughrea town and district.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said The Directors and Shareholders, among them Cllr. Morgan, had sold the building to Galway County Council for a €100,000.00 which was one eighth less than the market value of the property in order that it did not go into private hands. He said that this money should be refunded to the Shareholders. He appeals to save it and maintain it. Cllr. Regan said it was time Galway County Council and Loughrea Town Council got a home of their own. Cllr. Curley said that this has come up for discussions umpteen times over the years and no progress has been made on it. He said there have been several plans for it. A non-alcoholic bar, multi culture centre, cinema etc. but nobody has put their hand in their pocket to come up with the funding. Mr. Cullen said he agreed with the members that they need a permanent home to hold meetings. He was pursuing a number of options to accommodate Council staff in alternative offices and would continue to do so until he had found suitable premises. He said he would ask the County Councillors at the next area meeting to approve the invitation of submissions from the public on development proposals for the town hall. Any submissions would have to show the financial capacity to fund the development. He said that while the Town Hall could not be left derelict it was not particularly suitable for office accommodation because of the layout of the building. Mayor Hynes said he had submitted an Expression of Interest on behalf of a myriad of community groups, including Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, Seamus O'Kelly players and Baffle to turn the centre into a civic hall. This was not accepted as a valid application as it required the County Council to fund the development. He said the hall in Craughwell was an example which Loughrea could follow. He said the public wanted the hall kept for cultural use even if it had to be developed as a Public Private Partnership project. Cllr. Burke said that you could not compare Craughwell hall with the Town Hall. The Town Hall is a protected structure which was likely to cost in excess of €2 million to renovate. He said what Clubs will be able to secure that kind of money. Cllr. Regan said that it all came down to money. Cllr. Bane enquired on the current status of the planning application and was informed that the County Council had requested further information on the application and a decision is awaited.

"To consider having angle parking to the footpaths where ever possible, as parking parallel to footpaths has shown that some motorists leave big gaps between cars, and thereby reduce the number of spaces available.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said it would be more beneficial to have angle parking which would give more space in the town for parking. He said that he finds it difficult to get parking sometimes. Cllr. Regan said that Cllr. Morgan's proposal is illegal as you can not drive in and back out. Cllr. Burke requested the engineer to have a look at it and seek if parking spaces can be improved to ensure adequate parking is available. He said that the road lining is done already and it would incur added expense on the tax payers.

"That persons who have been previously elected in a Local Government Election NOT be required to be nominated by voters in their area. That I, who have been elected on the first count four out of the six elections and having headed the poll in three of those elections, namely Loughrea Town Commissioners/Council, should not

be required to be nominated, while a person who joins a political party shortly before an election does not require to be nominated, which thereby takes away the Constitutional right of the individual"

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Mayor Hynes supported this motion. Cllr. Burke said that he would not support this motion as he was totally opposed to it. He said party members have the task of bringing their party colleagues where as non party members have just to look after their own vote. Mr. Cullen said as this motion was opposed a vote would have to taken on it.

For the motion: Cllrs. Morgan, Hynes, Bane and Regan. - 4

Against the motion - Cllrs. Burke, Curley, Tully, Maher, Gunter-Nix. - 5.

The motion was lost.

The Mayor said that he had arranged for a deputation to be received from Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann about the upcoming County Fleadh and he would take it at that point. Some members said that it was not on the agenda. He said he regretted he forgot to mention it.

The Chairman said it proposed hosting the County Fleadh in the town on the 21 and 22nd May, 2005 and asked the members for their support. He said that advertising is a costly business and word of mouth costs nothing and requested the members to tell their family and friends of the upcoming event. He said all of the entertainment will be in the heart of the town instead of the outskirts which had happened previously, He said that the aim of year's festival was to encourage as many musicians and buskers as is possible into the town. He thanked the Mayor for receiving them. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that Comhaltas Group should apply for an Arts Grant from the County Council. She said she had application forms and she would post them one. Cllr. Curley said that any business that is brought to the town is welcome and suggested that the Town Council sponsor a cup or an event over the weekend. Mr. Cullen said that they should make contact with Marilyn Gaughan, Arts Officer, for Galway County Council to see if any funding could be made available from that source. He said that because of necessity the Town Council normally stayed clear of making donations to anything. Some years back the town council was inundated with requests for funding. He said that when the budget became stretched the town council had to close the doors on all donations. Cllr. Burke said he would like to congratulate the Loughrea Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann for taking this event to Loughrea in May. He said that perhaps on this special occasion the town council would give a small contribution to defray costs for the organisers. He said that it is important to keep our traditional music alive. Mayor Hynes suggested putting an advertisement in the programme of events. All the members supported giving a small contribution to mark the 50th anniversary celebrations. Cllr. Morgan said that the Loughrea Branch is one of the best in the country. He said that Vincent and Peter Broderick won so many gold medals that the Comhaltas had to give them a perpetual gold medal to stop them competing.

AOB.

Cllr. Burke said that he had requested that directional signs be marked on the Main Street at Church Street prohibiting motorists from turning right from the Main Street onto Church Street. Mr. Raftery said that the road lining was not finished and it would be done in due course. Cllr. Burke also asked that signage be erected at Cross Street showing the Loughrea/Tynagh road.

Cllr. Maher said that there are 60 to 100 black bags of rubbish deposited on the Rathruddy road near the proposed recycling centre. He said that it was a disgrace and asked that this area be tidied up. He requested that the gates into Mount Pleasant cemetery be left open in order that people with disability would be able to visit the graves. He said that there are by-laws in place which gives the public permission to attend their own graves. He also asked if a skip could be provided occasionally in order to clear the wreaths and debris from the graves. Mr. Raftery said that he would investigate this matter. Mr. Cullen said that maybe coming up to cemetery Sunday that a skip might be provided. He would see what he could manage.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the proposed swimming pool for Loughrea. Cllr. Burke said that approval to the planning permission was awaited. He said that the planners had requested further information which had now been submitted and the committee are awaiting the outcome of this. Mr. Cullen said that they had applied for a grant to the Department of Arts Sport and Tourism for this complex. He said that they have raised a number of queries in relation to the project. He said that the Council has answered some of them and others are awaiting answers.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 9th day of May, 2005. Mayor: Mary Gunter Nix

PAT HYNES
MAYOR

Deputy

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9th May, 2005 in the Credit Union offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair.

Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully, Pat Hynes.

Officials: Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix informed the meeting that Mayor Hynes was delayed, at a County Council meeting, and he requested her to take the Chair.

Apologies for Mr. Cullen, Director of Services who was also delayed at a County Council meeting.

Confirmation of minutes.

Cllr. Regan said that he wanted an amendment to the minutes to read as follows on page 1 – "It was proposed by Cllr. Regan that a deputation be received by the Minister and Oireachtas members to clarify those matters. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley." This was agreed by Mayor Gunter-Nix.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Regan that the minutes of the 11th April, 2005 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes:

Cllr. Regan said that St. Brendan's Hospital is now very urgent as 25 beds have been lost in twelve months. He said that there is a waiting list for patients and if this trend continues the situation will become critical. He urged Cllr. Maher to use his influence with the P.D. members to move this matter on and seek a meeting with the Minister. Cllr. Maher said that Cllr. Cannon is in constant communication with the Minister and she is in no doubt about the urgency of the situation. He said that the department is waiting approval of the Capital Programme for St. Brendan's and other projects and until this comes nothing can happen. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that we should give time to Cllr. Maher and his colleagues for the Capital Programme to roll out and review it at the next meeting if it is not on the list of works to be done. Cllr. Morgan asked the Town Clerk if she has written to Minister Harney as directed. The Town Clerk said she had written to her but got no reply. Cllr. Curley enquired why the Town Council members did not meet Minister Harney on her visit to Loughrea. Cllr. Maher said they were not sure of her itinerary as her main function was in Galway city and they did not know if she would have time to fit it in or not. Cllr. Bane said that another letter should be sent to the Minister requesting her to meet the Town Council members. This was unanimously agreed.

Cllr. Bane asked for an update on the enhancement of Corry's field. She enquired if any progress had been made in relation to list of works drawn up. She wanted to know if any progress had been made with the County Council, Duchas, E.S.B. and the Fisheries Board. Mr. Raftery, Town Engineer, said he had compiled all the correspondence from the various organisations and he distributed a copy to each of them. Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked Mr. Raftery for his hand out and she said that they would need more time to study it. She suggested that they would meet informally on next Monday 16/5/2005 at 7.30 p.m. in the Credit Union offices to discuss this further.

Cllr. Regan enquired on the up to date position of the Swimming Pool for Loughrea. Cllr. Burke said that planning permission had been granted for the swimming pool. Galway County Council is totally committed to this project. He said the next task was to get a grant from the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. He said that the committee had made representations to the Minister for the necessary funding. He said the Fianna Fail party had also requested a meeting with the Minister in order to secure the funding. He said that the Minister on a recent visit to Ballinasloe advised them to come back to him when planning permission was granted. He said that this project was being done under a Public Private Partnership scheme which reduces the contribution from the committee to just €1.7 million which is not enormous. He said the cost of scheme 5 years ago was €7 million. He said that the County Council advertised this project some years ago and asked the public to bid for this scheme. He said that the successful tenderer was Brian Shaughnessy and the committee are very grateful to him and the County Council for bringing this project to fruition. He said that it was a state of the Art Leisure Centre not a Swimming Pool. Cllr. Regan asked if this was a first venture for swimming pools to be constructed under PPP. Cllr. Burke said that the norm is that County Council build the Swimming Pools and then leased them to Clubs etc. for a certain number of years. He said that the committee would have the same rights as Ballinasloe Swimming Pool Committee. Cllr. Morgan said that he was PRO for the Swimming Pool Committee and he said that he would like to thank Brian Shaughnessy, for his very hard work. in order to get an acceptable Plan up and running. He said that the Town Council might give a contribution towards this project if they can afford it. He proposed that the Town Clerk write formally to Brian Shaughnessy to thank him for his unceasing work in bringing this great facility to Loughrea. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the Committee and the Council officials should also be congratulated and thanked for all their efforts over the years in sticking with this project. She urged all the members to support the committee in securing the necessary funding. Cllr. Burke said that within three months of getting the necessary funding the project could commence and it should be open within two years.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she had tabled a motion at the last meeting in relation to the re-establishment of stone walls on the approach roads to the town centre. Town Clerk said that she had got a reply from Jack Eising, Senior Engineer, which was read out. "The standard boundary treatment on the Bypass will consist of timber post and rail fencing with sheep wire infill. The cost of stone walling is such that extensive use of stone walling on the scheme could lead to additional costs on the scheme of the order

of €2 to €3 million. Where existing stone walling is to be replaced, we will consider two options:

1. Replacing like with like
2. Use timber post and rail fencing and compensating the landowners for the cost of the stone walling. In this case, the landowner can construct his own walling with the compensation."

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the only option that was acceptable was the first one i.e. replacing like with like. She said that stone walls would be more secure for the landowners and residents. Cllr. Burke said that the NRA did not meet the residents of the Monearnmore/Cosmona roundabout on the 12th April, 2005. He said that the only option was the first one. He said that the NRA had not compensated any of the land owners for the land acquired for the Bypass and he said that it would be the same with option 2. He said that he is informed that the first layer of tar will be down before Race Week and the scheme will be up and running before any money is paid out. He said that he had complaints from stock owners that fencing is not adequate along this corridor and stock have broken out on a number of occasions. He said that there would be no durability with post and rail fencing and within three years it would need replacing. He asked the Town Engineer who is responsible for the maintenance of boundary fences along this route. Mr. Raftery said that he would check it out and come back to him. Cllr. Morgan said that he knows land owners have not been paid compensation yet. He said fencing should be made secure along the corridor as the farmers would be responsible if an accident happened. Cllr. Morgan asked the Town Engineer what is the normal procedure as regards accommodation works. Mr. Raftery said that usually the County Council would replace like with like. Cllr. Regan said that the goodwill of the farmers will be lost if stone walls are not replaced. He said that the temporary fencing should be checked daily by the Roads Personnel on the Compound to ensure that it is stock proof. It was proposed by Cllr. Burke that stone walls be replaced along the approach roads to the town and that compensation be paid out without delay to the landowners. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Fix date for Annual Meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Regan that the Annual Meeting be held on the 13th June, 2005, followed by the Monthly meeting.

Correspondence.

Letter from Minister Cullen in relation to the link road N.6 to N. 66. This was circulated to the members. This was in response to letter written by Town Clerk seeking a meeting with the Minister with a view to progressing this link road. This is an extract from the Minister's letter –

"I understand from the NRA that the proposed N66/N6 link was part of the preliminary design of the Loughrea Bypass scheme and was part of the design that formed the basis of the Part 8 planning procedure. Unfortunately when the scheme was being assessed by the NRA with a view to approving the progression to the contract documents stage of the scheme, the advice of valuers, who were engaged by Galway County Council with the approval of the NRA, was that the land costs in Loughrea were significantly higher than originally estimated". As a result the scope

of the works had to be revised to exclude the N6/N66 element when developing the contract documents in order to ensure funding for the main bypass.

Cllr. Regan asked the Town Engineer if there was large quantities of land rezoned in this area for housing or how come the land was so expensive that the NRA could not construct this link road. He recommended that this matter be deferred to the June Meeting pending the investigation by Mr. Raftery. This was unanimously agreed.

A letter from Minister Noel Treacy as follows:- "I am pleased to inform you that it is intended to carry out remedial works on the existing N.6 Main Street in Loughrea as part of the overall Loughrea Bypass project. The works will be undertaken following the opening of the bypass in order to minimise inconvenience to road users and the public generally."

Cllr. Maher said that he was informed, from a reliable source, that remedial works will not be carried out unless there is a surplus left over after the Bypass is constructed. Cllr. Burke said that a guarantee would need to be given by the NRA before the Bypass is opened that the Main Street will be restored to its former state. He said that the premises of a Butcher, near the pedestrian lights, is constantly being splashed with water because the road has gone down and the water lodges at this point of the road. He said that Dunkellin Street is another area that needs to be attended to. Cllr. Regan said that certain stretches of the Main Street especially outside Oasis and Power Sportswear are constantly being splashed with mud from passing traffic as water always lodges there. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that a strong case should be made to the NRA to seek funding before the Bypass opens for the upgrading of the Main Street. Cllr. Morgan said that they would need to get clarity on how much the NRA is leaving aside for the repairs to the Main Street.

Letter from Minister Noel Treacy stating that Galway County Council had approval to build 24 houses in Loughrea. He said that it would be going to tender shortly.

Cllr. Morgan asked what site was being used for this development. Cllr. Maher said that the Council had land in Tulla Hill behind the new Gael Scoil and that is where they would be sited.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce setting out Agenda for the meeting on the 10/5/2005.

Letter from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances inviting the town council member to their annual meeting. Cllr. Curley will attend.

Town Clerk told the members that the Loughrea Local Area Plan was on display from the 6th May to the 17 June, 2005.

The member said that they had not got a copy and requested the Town Clerk to write to the Planning Section to seek copies for all of them. Cllr. Burke said that Chamber of Commerce had got a copy. He said that they were being treated as second class citizens. Cllr. Regan said that is totally unacceptable that the elected members were left out. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that this item could also be discussed at the informal

meeting on the 16/5/2005. The Town Council could send in a collective submission before the closing date.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Hynes.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that this matter would be deferred to the June monthly meeting as Cllr.Hynes was not present.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"To have special phone numbers available to the general public for the purpose of contacting the County Council regarding illegal knocking of buildings, interference with public property and illegal burning of materials during the week-ends when County Council is closed."

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that the Council should provide a special number where officials could be contacted over the week end when the offices are closed. He said that the officials could rotate and be available to answer emergency calls. He said that the numbers could be posted on the window in the local office. He said that Dalystown house was demolished on a Saturday morning and every thing was gone by Monday morning. He said that the trees were knocked at the fairgreen over a long week end. Cllr. Bane suggested that the numbers be given to the members to use at their discretion. Mr. Raftery, Town Engineer, said that there are emergency numbers left with the Garda Stations of Officials, Overseer and Community Wardens if needed. Cllr. Burke said that officials could not have telephone numbers on display on the windows as the public could be ringing them at any hour of the night. He said that the Gardai will know when to contact the County Council officials.

"That a regular check be made of the Town Moat, so as to stop the dumping of building materials and rubbish into said moat"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr.Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that building blocks and building rubble are dumped in the river and would need to be addressed by the Town Engineer. He said that it is the only functioning Moat in the country. He said that the Community Wardens are doing a great job in trying to protect our heritage. Cllr. Curley said that Fisheries Board do a clean up of the river once or twice a year. He said that they are more professional to carry out that type of work. Cllr. Morgan said that he cleaned up part of the Dunkellin drainage some years ago on his own. He took dead cats and all kinds of debris from the river and the Council Staff took it away for him.

"That the County Council repair holes and subsidence on the streets of Loughrea, as they occur, so as to avoid having to pay compensation to householders and businesses who are suffering greatly from water and muck being splashed up on to their premises/houses.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that the road at the Westbridge and Bride Street is in need of repair and he urges the County Council to do the necessary remedial works. He said that he reported severe flooding outside his business previously and nothing has been done since. He said that he can not open the door on a wet day as the water splashes up to the roof. Cllr. Bane said that the same problem exists at Kings Garage where water lodges as well. Mayor Gunter-Nix said with all the heavy traffic going through the town that the road is subsiding and she suggested that some remedial works be carried out where necessary until the Bypass is opened. Town Engineer said some patching was done along the Main Street but it is difficult to get the job done during normal working hours with the traffic.

AOB

Cllr. Regan asked the expected date for the opening of the playground. Town Engineer said that it should be open by mid-June. Some kerbing, footpaths and safety zones are to be put in place before the opening. He said there would have to be an inspection from a Health and Safety Inspector before it is opened and a certificate will be issued if in order. Cllr. Bane said that she saw children playing in the area while the workmen were there and she said that it was very dangerous and there was an accident waiting to happen. Mr. Raftery, Town Engineer, said that signs were in place prohibiting people entering the site.

Cllr. Tully said that there is a dangerous hole in Garrybreeda playground which needed attention. He asked the Town Engineer to make it safe. Cllr. Burke asked when it is planned to erect the swings, provided by the Credit Union, in this playground. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Loughrea Tidy Towns group were also donating some money for this playground. She said that some dangerous trees were removed from this park which left a hole in the playground.

Cllr. Burke asked when the Disability Parking Sign, outside the Credit Union, would be going back. It was removed when work started to reduce the footpaths, in Dunkellin Street. He also asked when it is planned to review the Traffic Management Plan and if it was proposed to make any changes to it. Cllr. Maher enquired how much money was collected to date and if it would be spent in the town. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the land and legal fees will have to be paid out of the money collected. She said that the parking meters and the road lining would also have to be deducted.

Cllr. Curley said that he had got a letter from the residents in Lake View, Loughrea concerning parking of cars from Lake View to the Gort Road. He said that since paid parking was introduced parking has increased at this area. He said that there are about 12 vehicles parked on a private right of way which reduces traffic to one lane. Cllr. Bane said the Old Galway Road/Gort Road area has become very busy and would need to be looked at when the review comes up. Cllr. Regan said that the final decision will rest with the Area County Councillors.

Cllr. Burke enquired about the public toilets at the Westbridge and when they were going to be put in place. He said that it was time that new toilets are installed at this

area as the public can not use the existing ones. He said that the developer working at this area had dumped cans and bottles in the toilets and the Caretaker can not keep it clean. He asked if an estimate was done by Mr. Gallagher, Acting Senior Executive Engineer, on putting a row of toilets back to back with the Tennis Court Club House which would facilitate the playground.

Cllr. Burke asked if any of the works recommended by the members had been done at the Long Point. He said that it was coming into the Blue Flag season and the changing areas would need to be looked at as they were vandalised over the week end. He said that the Gardai should address those problems and take action with the offenders. Mr. Morgan also supported this and said that the law should be enforced. Cllr. Burke also asked when the barrier will be erected at this location. Mr. Raftery said he will try and get it up as soon as possible.

Mayor Hynes took the Chair.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that they had deferred the motions submitted by him but he could put them through if he wished now.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Hynes.

"That a pharmacy service be provided in Loughrea Town during weekends and bank holidays".

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Mayor Hynes said that there is no pharmacy service in Loughrea during weekends and bank holidays. He urged that this problem be addressed and make facilities available for the public. Cllr. Burke said that Brogans, Killians and Leahys are open on a rota basis. He said that the times are posted on the window and who is on duty. Cllr. Regan suggested that this item be deferred until Mayor Hynes checks this matter out. This was agreed.

"That Galway County Council prepares a plan for the construction of a footpath around the lake of Loughrea: this proposal is an objective of the current Development Plan."

This was proposed by Cllr. Hynes seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Mayor Hynes said that there is a foot path out as far as Flaggy Meadow and it would not cost much more to complete the circle around the lake. He said several people made representations to him. He said that the land owners are approachable and would be amenable to selling to the County Council. He said that there is such emphasis on Health and Fitness now a days that this facility should be provided. This was unanimously supported by all the members.

"That public facilities for (a) Breast Screening: (b) Cervical Screening is provided at St. Brendan's Home, Loughrea."

It was proposed by Cllr. Hynes seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Mayor Hynes said that this matter has been brought up several times over the past few years and nothing has been provided in St. Brendans to deal with those ongoing problems. He said that St. Brendan's could also provide aftercare service for people who had surgery and they would be near their families. Cllr. Curley proposed that extra respite beds be provided in St. Brendans as a matter of urgency. This was seconded by Cllr. Burke. He said that there is only one female and one male respite bed at present which was totally inadequate.

Cllr. Burke said that the Housing Section of Galway County Council is selling a site on the open market on the Gort Road near Leahy's Garage. He asked Mayor Hynes if he knew anything about it. Mayor Hynes said that he was not aware of a Council site being sold. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Childcare Group is looking for a site for childcare facilities in Loughrea and there was money available for it. She said that Cllr. Bane and herself were on the committee. She asked the County Council if they had any site available but were told no. She urged the Mayor to pursue this matter. Cllr. Maher said that he was on the Housing SPC and he would raise it at the next meeting. It was unanimously agreed that a letter be sent to the Housing Section to clarify matters.

Mr. Raftery, Town Engineer, said that there was funding available for footpaths in the former Town Commissioners area and gave a copy to each member of what he proposed to do. He said that the submissions would have to be with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government before the 20th May, 2005. They said that they would browse over it and meet informally to discuss it. It was agreed that this would also be discussed when the members met informally on the 16/5/2005. They would submit their list in order of priority the following day.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 13th day of June, 2005. Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13th June, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Chair: Mayor Hynes.

Members: Cllrs. Bane, Burke, Curley, Gunter-Nix, Maher, Morgan, Regan, Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Meeting opened with prayers.

The Mayor said that he was approaching the end of his term as Mayor of Loughrea. He expressed his thanks to the Town Councillors, and also to Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Enda Gallagher, (who is now working in the Oranmore area) Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer and Imelda Deely, Town Clerk for their assistance during his term of office. He said that he was two terms Mayor and one term as Chairman. He said that he was very grateful to the people of Loughrea Electoral Area for having giving him such a vote in the 2004 Elections. He said that he was honoured to be Mayor of County Galway and he would do all in his power to progress the Swimming Pool, Town Hall, St. Brendan's Home and a new walkway around the shore of the lake. He said that he has spoken to Mr. Pat Gallagher, Manager of the County Council about the lake project and he will keep up the pressure to bring this to fruition. All the members and officials wished him well as Mayor of the County of Galway and thanked him for the way he conducted the business during the year. Jim Cullen said that Mayor Hynes had made history in holding three positions as the same time i.e. Mayor of Town Council, Mayor of County Galway and Chairman for County Council Area Committee.

Election of Mayor.

Mayor Hynes said that he would take nominations for the position of Mayor. Cllr. Regan said that he was proposing Cllr. Tully as Mayor as he was the second candidate to be elected at the 2004 Elections. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan who stated that he was also throwing his support behind this nomination on the same grounds. Cllr. Tully said he wished to withdraw his name as he could not give the full commitment at this time to the job. He thanked his proposer and seconder for nominating him. He said he wished to propose his party colleague Cllr. Gunter-Nix as Mayor as she is hard working, dedicated and some one with much experience. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher, who said that Cllr. Nix had worked very hard to progress several key issues in the town. Cllr. Regan then nominated Cllr. Morgan saying that the veteran public representative had come third in the Elections of 2004. This was seconded by Cllr. Hynes again voicing his approval of putting candidates forward on the basis of their votes. A vote was then taken which resulted as follows:-

For Gunter-Nix - Cllrs. Bane, Burke, Curley, Gunter-Nix, Maher, Tully.

- 6 Votes

For Morgan: - Cllrs. Hynes, Morgan, Regan.

- 3 Votes

The Mayor declared Cllr. Gunter-Nix elected. Mayor Gunter-Nix then took the Chair.

Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked her proposer and seconder and the members who had voted for her. She said that she too would be impartial like her predecessor in conducting the business of the town council. She said that she looked forward to a progressive year. Some of her priorities for the year will be an Affordable Childcare facility in the town; A Children's playground and a Swimming Pool for Loughrea.

Deputy Mayor.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she would take proposals for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Cllr. Curley proposed Cllr. Bane. This was seconded by Cllr. Burke.

As there was no counter proposal Cllr. Bane was elected Deputy Mayor.

Cllr. Curley said that more history was made to night with the election of two females as Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 11th day of July, 2005. Mayor: Mary Gunter Nix

Minutes of Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13th June, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair

Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher that the minutes of the 9th May, 2005 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Hynes referred to the link road from the N. 6 to the N. 66 and said that the letter from Minister Cullen, which was circulated to the members, was totally unacceptable. He said that he would keep the pressure on until this link road is constructed. Cllr. Regan said this road is now a priority. He can not understand how this land can be so expensive as it is all zoned agriculture. He said that no farmer has been paid compensation for land acquired for the Bypass so the NRA could not use this as an excuse for excluding the link road for 20 years. Cllr. Burke said that any funds left over after the construction of the Bypass would not be sufficient to repair the Main Street as there is considerable subsidence due to the heavy flow of traffic over the years. He said that businesses were suffering because of flooding on the Main Street. Cllr. Bane asked if the NRA could be pushed into completing the remedial works in the town before the Bypass is completed. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the Mayor of the County should use his influence to have the necessary works carried out. She also requested that ducting for all the services are put in place at the one time and not have several cuttings on the road. Cllr. Maher said that a mini roundabout should be constructed at Fitzzy's corner in order to regulate the traffic generated by the schools. He said that there is a similar situation in Salthill and a mini roundabout has been put in place which is very successful. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the upgrade of the current N. 6 by the NRA was not something they could walk away from. He said that the NRA has a good track record of rejuvenating areas where Bypasses had been open. He said that Galway County Council would, however, press home the case that it would need to be done as soon as possible. He also said that the County Council would continue pushing hard for the link road to be done but it should not detract from the benefit that the Bypass would bring to the town, when it is opened ahead of schedule, later this year. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said he would investigate the provision of a mini roundabout at the Casket/Fitzzy's corner.

Cllr. Maher asked when the Traffic Management Plan will be reviewed. Mr. Cullen, said that the Bypass is coming in ahead of schedule and it will be reviewed when this is open. It was agreed that this would make sense.

Cllr. Regan asked if there was any further developments in relation to St. Brendan's Hospital. Cllr. Maher said that his party was constantly in contact with Minister Harney about this matter and he was hopeful that there would be no downgrading of this facility. He said that a 40 bed unit is planned for St. Brendan's Hospital. Cllr. Hynes said he is aware of Health and Safety Regulations in some of the areas in St. Brendan's but would hope to see an upgrading of it to cater for Cancer Screening, A & E Services and an Administration Centre and other services. He said that it is very important to the economy of Loughrea and the hinterland of Loughrea that this facility be kept open and not have it downgraded.

Cllr. Maher said that the Long Point was a disgrace and he said that there was no maintenance being done at it. He said that there are huge boulders in the water and asked to have them removed. Mr. Raftery said that the County Council were doing some works at the Lake and were asked to stop by the Anglers Association. Cllr. Burke asked who owns the Lake and if the Anglers have a right to stop the County Council from doing some improvements at this location. Cllr. Regan said that the Anglers have the fishing rights over the Lake. Cllr. Morgan said that the Lake is invested to the County Council and the Anglers have fishing rights over it. He said that there is always great co-operation with the County Council and the Anglers. He said that a machine does not have to go into to the water to remove the boulders. He said that a rope could be put around them and they could be dragged out to the shore. Cllr. Burke asked when the barrier would be erected at this location to stop the cars from rallying.

Cllr. Maher asked if the keys for Mountpleasant and Garrybreeda burial grounds could be left in the local office to facilitate people wishing to visit them. He said that this was totally unacceptable that the Caretaker is the only one with a key. This is not very user friendly for people who wished to visit the graveyards after work or at weekends or to clean up the graves. He said that the state of the graveyard was a disgrace and an insult to people who had relations buried there. Cllr. Burke said that he had got several complaints about the condition of the graveyard and he had mentioned this at previous meetings but nothing had been done about it. Cllr. Regan said that he was Caretaker of the burial grounds and the gates could not be left open because of vandalism. He said that he had visited many other cemeteries elsewhere and he said that Mount Pleasant was one of the worst kept in the Loughrea Area. He said that the grass areas have been increased but the staff had decreased. He said that community schemes are used in other areas to maintain the burial grounds. He said that he will open the barrier at any time within reason. Cllr. Morgan suggested that his telephone number be put on public display in the local offices so as people could contact him when they wished to visit the graveyards. Mr. Cullen said that graveyards should be a peaceful place and it was unfortunate that they fell into disrepair. He would investigate the matter about gaining access to the burial grounds and the condition of the graveyards for the next town council meeting. He said that they were restricted with Employment Law and insurance in carrying out work in burial grounds by the community.

Cllr. Regan asked when was the official opening of the Children's Playground. Mr. Cullen said it was on International Childrens Day which is the 3rd July, 2005. All the members stressed the importance of having good signage erected at the playground in order to keep parents and children out until work is complete.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the priority list for repairing footpaths in former Town Commissioners area and if approval had come back from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to carry out the work. Mr. Raftery said he had forwarded the list to the Department but had received no reply.

Annual Financial Statement.

Mr. Cullen presented the Annual Financial Statement for the year ending 31/12/2004. He said that one of the biggest items that occurred in 2004 was the Local Elections which incurred extra expenditure with the change from the Electronic System to the Manual System for the Count. Cllr. Regan asked if the invested monies could be transferred to the local Credit Union offices instead of being lodged with the County Council fund. Cllr. Burke, said he was Chairman of the Credit Union, there is not a fixed interest in the Credit Union as it depends on how well the Company do over the year. He said that there is no problem with having it invested in the Credit Union. Mr. Cullen said that the Credit Union could tender for the Town Council's business if they wished. Cllr. Burke asked when will the annual budget be held and if they could have a say in framing it. Town Clerk said that it is usually held in December. The notification comes from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan the Annual Financial Statement as presented be adopted.

Correspondence.

Letter from AMAI seeking motions for the Annual Conference to be held in Shannon.

"Resolutions from Monaghan Town Council requesting the Minister for Marine, Communications and Natural Resources to introduce annual licensing system for all communication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment and to include the registration of all items of equipment on each mast".

"That this Council notes with concern the proposals of the Minister for Justice to introduce five new categories of liquor licence under the proposed codification of liquor licencing legislation"

Letter from Martin Lavelle, Senior Engineer, regarding the provision of Second Pedestrian Crossing on the Gort Road, Loughrea. This was in response to motion by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Cancer Care West Oncology Conform Fund - Secondhand Book Sale.

Letter from Paul Finnegan, Private Secretary to the Minister of Health and Children regarding St. Brendan's Home.

Letter from Minister Treacy regarding representations to Minister Harney.

Letter from Deputy McHugh regarding representations to Minister Harney

Letter from Deputy Grealish regarding representations to Minister Harney
Letter from Deputy Connaughton regarding representations to Minister Harney.

Letter from Jack Eising, Senior Engineer, NRA, Corporate House, Ballybritt, Galway, regarding stone walling on the approach roads to the town, compensation to landowners and straying animals. (This was in response to NOM by Cllr. Gunter-Nix).

Letter from Kieran Coyne, Community & Enterprise, County Hall, Galway, regarding Pride of Place meeting on the 16th June, 2005 in the Credit Union.

Letter from Colm Wallace, Senior Executive Officer, Housing Unit, Galway County Council regarding site for sale on the Gort Road. This was in response to letter from Town Council making representations to consider childcare facilities at this location.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce with Agenda setting out business for meeting on the 14th June, 2005 at 6.30 p.m. which included Loughrea Town Development Plan, Pay and Display Parking and their Web site is up and running again.

Resolution from Castlebar Town Council "call on the government to make it compulsory for the wearing of seat belts on all buses (including school buses) from September 1st, 2005 and to outlaw the current arrangement of 2 seats for every 3 children".

Correspondence forwarded to each member. It was noted.

Notice of Motion.

1. "That having personally made enquiry to the contractors of the Loughrea By pass, some months back, regarding surplus top-soil, and having been informed that they would, in June, be in a position to say what would be available, I recommend that Galway County Council speak with said contractors with a view to securing said surplus clay for the Green Public Park, which is not a natural field but land reclaimed from the lake, and has a light sod.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Cllr. Morgan said that he spoke to the Contractor some time back about getting top-soil for the Green Public Park and he was told it would be available in June. He has requested that this matter be taken up by Galway County Council. Mr. Cullen said that he should negotiate with the Contractors of the Bypass as it is they who determine where the soil goes.

2 "That a recommendation be made to the Garda Siochana at Loughrea, to stop the double parking by vehicles in the zone marked For Buses, at Main Street, Loughrea. Double parking on Bus zones is causing buses, as I have seen, having to triple park to let on and off passengers, causing inconvenience and danger to those using the road".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Cllr. Morgan said that the Gardai should be contacted with a view to rectifying this matter. He said that it is very dangerous for passengers alighting from the buses where there is triple parking and also for motorists travelling through the town.

3. "That a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to provide a central depot for machinery, materials, etc. at Loughrea ; so that the Long Point car Park and the field adjoining same, and other areas used from time to time, may cease to be used as council dumps for rubble etc".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said that there is rubble being dumped at the Long Point from time to time and other areas around the town. He requested that a central depot be secured in order that debris is not dumped all over the town. Mr. Cullen said that they are actively pursuing this matter.

AOB.

Cllr. Burke said that he would like to congratulate the County Council on the purchase of the Teagasc office for Council Staff in Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said that the County Council had a bid with Teagasc for the premises and he hoped that it would be successful. He said that it will be some time before the staff move to it as some works have to be done with the building.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said she would like to congratulate the County Council in being successful in retaining the Blue Flag for Loughrea. In this context she said that Loughrea Tidy Towns had applied for the Pride of Place for Loughrea and adjudication will be taking place on the 6th July, 2005. She urged the members to support this project and help in the clean ups which are taking place weekly.

Cllr. Maher asked when will the disability parking area be restored outside the Credit Union offices. Mr. Cullen said that it would be looked at when the Final Traffic Management Plan is adopted. He also said that the County Council had a Derelict house at Cosmona which needed attention.

Mr. Raftery, informed the meeting that roadworks will be taking place on Barrack Street starting within two weeks and continuing for approximately 3 months. These works are necessary to lay the Advance works for the Craughwell Water Supply Scheme. The works will also include replacing the existing watermain and foul sewer on Barrack Street so as to eliminate the need to carry out such works at a later stage. It will start at Knockanima onto the Gort Road by the boathouse and continue to Tullahill. He said that Warde and Burke are the contractors.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 11th day of July, 2005.

Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 11th July, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair

Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes:

Annual Meeting -

Cllr. Morgan said he wished to have an amendment made to the end of the minutes of the Annual Meeting as follows. "The meeting was adjourned for five minutes. This was proposed by Cllr Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Monthly Meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 13th June, 2005 be adopted.

Presentation by Kieran Coyne, Community and Enterprise.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she would take this item on the Agenda first. This was agreed by the members. Kieran Coyne thanked the Mayor and the members for allowing him to present a progress report on the Galway County Development Board Strategy up to the year 2012. He said that it was being reviewed this year and would be completed by December. He said that over 300 actions have been identified with lead agents and supporting partners. He said that actions were now being prioritised under 11 Programmes outlined as follows. Programme for Agriculture & Rural Development with the programme preparation to be undertaken by Teagasc; Programme for Economic Development with the programme preparation to be undertaken by Galway County Council; Programme for Tourism with the programme preparation to be undertaken by Ireland West; Programme for Transport with the programme preparation to be undertaken by Galway County Council; Programme for Arts & Culture with the programme preparation to be undertaken by Galway County Council. Programme for Gaeltacht & the Islands with the programme preparation to be undertaken by Udaras na Gaeltachta; Programme for Health Care with the programme preparation to be agreed; Programme for Youth, Sport & Recreation with the programme preparation to be undertaken by County Galway Vocational Education Committee; Programme for Social Inclusion with the programme preparation to be undertaken by Galway County Council; Programme for Protecting our Communities with the programme preparation to be agreed; Programme for Learning with the programme preparation to be agreed. He said that it was in the handout which he had

circulated to the members and his contact number was also available should they require clarification on any matter. Cllr. Burke said that he is interested in setting up a Youth Café (non alcoholic) for young people to meet and have a chat and wondered who would be dealing with it. Kieran Coyne said that the County Galway Vocational Education Committee would be undertaking the programme preparation so this organisation would be the key link. . He said that he would be glad to help if needed. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that Kieran Coyne will be briefing the Town Council quarterly on issues relating to the County Development Board Strategy. He said that issues like Health, Security, and Gardai etc. will be coming under the County Forum not Local Government. Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked Kieran Coyne for his very informative presentation and for the hand out. She said that the members could reflect on it over the holidays and if further assistance was needed they could contact Kieran. She then moved onto the next business.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Maher said that approval has been given by Minister Harney to a €6.2 million grant for St. Brendan's Home for the construction of a 40 Bed Unit. He said that his colleague Kieran Cannon had progressed this matter. Cllr. Regan, asked if there was a time frame for the spending of this allocation and if there was a plan in place. He said that there was no commitment when this will be spent. He said that this is a major investment and the work would need to be done in the next two years. He said that there are two beds being lost every week for the last year. Cllr. Curley said that he welcomes the news from Minister Harney. He said this would need to start as soon as possible as there is a waiting list for St. Brendan's Home. Cllr. Morgan said he is delighted that the Minister has sanctioned the funding for St. Brendan's Home. He said that care of patients is a priority but if there is a reduction of beds or the workforce that it will affect the economy of the town as well. Cllr. Burke said that when the Town Council met with the Health Board officials, 3 years ago, they assured them that an 80 Bed Unit would be provided. He said it was a good start to get €6.2 million and we should keep the pressure on to get good facilities for St. Brendan's Home. He urged that a meeting take place with Adrian Ahearn as soon as possible. Cllr. Regan proposed that a representative from the HSE/WHB be requested to meet with the Town Council to clarify where the €6.2 million will be spent. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the town council should be positive about this allocation and move forward and get the project moving without delay. She said that Cllr. Maher can negotiate with his party colleagues for a further allocation when the €6.2 million is spent. She said that the resolution is proposed and seconded that we meet the Health Board.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she was Chairperson of the Loughrea Environmental Group and they made an application for the Pride of Place competition. The inspection was carried out on the 6th July, 2005. She thanked Cllrs. Bane, Burke and Maher for their help and assistance to the Environmental Group in getting Loughrea in order for the big day. She also thanked the County Council for their assistance to the Environmental Group. She said that it is a National Competition and there are hopeful that the judges will look favourably on them. She said that they would like to thank all the other groups involved in making the video for the competition. Cllr. Burke said that he would like to congratulate Mayor Gunter-Nix for showing

leadership in applying for the competition and also arranging the clean ups. He wished the Environmental Group every success.

Cllr. Regan asked how much did the Playground cost and if it was within budget. Mr. Cullen said that he had not the final cost yet but he would imagine it went slightly over budget. He said that the County Council will be paying for it if it did. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she would like to compliment all involved in this project and said that Loughrea will be the envy of East Galway. Cllr. Burke said that he has concerns on the safety aspect of the playground as it is his opinion that post and rail fence is not sufficient to keep this big area safe. Cllr. Morgan said he was thrilled to see the re-opening of the playground. He said that he was first person to put this playground in place out of his own money. He said that he also put in the chain link fence around The Green out of his own pocket. He said that he would also like to thank the Chairperson of the Playground Committee for her hard work in bringing this to fruition. Cllr. Regan said that the car park at the Tennis Court should be reserved for patrons attending the playground. He said that cars are parked at this location all day leaving no space for people using the playground.

Cllr. Maher asked if a key is available in the local office for Mount Pleasant and Garrybreeda burial grounds as discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that he is arranging to have keys cut and they will be available in the local office during normal working hours. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the Loughrea Environmental Group had arranged for a private contractor to cut the grass in both cemeteries and she expected that it will be done shortly.

Cllr. Burke asked when is the expected date for completion of the road works on Barrack Street. He said that there was a loss of business by people along this route. He said that the contractors left the tar dug up over the weekend and it was very dangerous. He said he knows the work has to be done and wondered if they could work longer hours or on a Saturday in order to get the works done quicker. He said if they had a better method it might ease the congestion slightly. He said he can not understand how they can not surface dress each piece so as cars can travel on it. Cllr. Regan said that the businesses will need to have a little patience. He said when the works are completed that the benefits will be enormous. He said that they encountered a few hiccups along the route which delayed them. Every one knows that the sewerage and water lines have to be replaced. Cllr. Curley said that he was approached by businesses in the area that are steadily losing trade because of the ongoing road works. Cllr. Morgan said that greater good and greater benefit will stem from this when it is complete. He said that they will be coming up his street later and he is delighted to see improvements no matter what the cost. Mr. Raftery said that the water and sewerage pipes have to be replaced and people would have to bear with it. He said that he had spoken to the Contractors and asked them to get the job done as quickly as possible. Mr. Cullen said that the frustrations of the traders were understandable. He said that the works are quite complicated and they involve more than laying a 12" pipe. He said that he would check out and see if conditions could be placed on the Contractor which would minimise the impact on the businesses. He said that it is absolutely essential for the town to upgrade the water and sewerage system.

Urban Renewal.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that Mary Flynn, Executive Planner was attending the meeting to present the plans for the Urban Renewal Project for Loughrea for 2005. She requested that the other business be left until Mary Flynn had finished. This was agreed. Mary Flynn was accompanied by John Yates and Company, Architects for the Project. She said that she had got approval from the Department of the Environment and Local Government for €500,000.00 to be spent before the end of December, 2005. She said some of the projects that were done previously by the Town Council/County Council were Corry's Field, The Potato Market, Barrack Street, and Public Lighting Standards at the Walks etc. She said the funding was coming from the NDP and the whole of Loughrea Electoral Area was included. She said that projects will be done in Athenry, Portumna and Killimor. She said that the funding will be divided equally among the four areas. She said that the scheme started in Tuam five years ago and this is the end of the present phase. She said that there will be funding available for the whole county next year and Loughrea can apply again for it. She said the Chamber of Commerce had presented a plan for Kings Street under Village Renewal, which had been approved by the Town Council at a previous meeting. In April she called a meeting which included the Town Engineer, Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, Tidy Towns and Traders. The representative committee had to include a cross section of the community in relation to gender and age and people who could attend all the meetings and site meetings. She said that it was critical that each participating group convey the thoughts of the committee to their representatives. She said that they had four site meetings to decide which project should go ahead. She said the first one was to pedestrian King Street. The Architects felt that this project did not come under the regulations specified by the Department of the Environment. It is also a parking zone area and it would reduce the number of spaces available in the town centre. They also looked at Church Street to do an Artistic feature at the Library but then discovered that there was a two way traffic system in operation at this area and it would not be possible to do this. They looked at the Walks but they were informed by the Committee that there is a lot of vandalism at this location at present and they felt that there was no point in spending money until this is tackled by the Gardai. They looked at Station Road and the Committee and the Architects felt that this could be the focal point to the town which is near the long stay car park. The Architects drew up plans for this area which is a water sprinkler which will be recycled through channels back into the river and also including decking, a seating area with apple trees and mature trees. This will be a glazed area and it will be lighted at night. She said that the committee and herself had a meeting with the Fisheries Board and presented the plans to them. They have no objection to this project. She said that the plans will also have to be run by Duchas as they will have to cut some of the stone wall to give a better view of the stone cut bridge at Bride Street. She also said that there would be an information board and signage erected indicating the architecture, amenities etc. in the town. Michael Mullen from John Yates and Company presented the plans to the town councillors and outlined in detail exactly what is intended to be done under this project. Cllr. Regan said he was glad to see that they were planting mature trees because they can not be vandalised. Cllr. Morgan said we should not give into vandalism as they will think they are winning if we give into them. He asked will the water be dirty going back into the river. Michael Mullen said it should not be. The town councillors approved of the plans as presented and looked forward to the finished product.

Mary Flynn said the project would go to tender and it is hoped that work would commence as soon as possible. It will have to be completed before the end of the year. She thanked the committee and the members for their interest in the project. Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked Mary Flynn for steering the project and bringing it to a conclusion. She also thanked John Yates and Michael Mullen for their help and assistance to the committee and presenting the final plan to the town council. She said that the town council will try and get the message across to the young people and the different agencies to try and curtail vandalism. She said this feature will enhance this area of the town and she hopes that it will be there for generations to come. She said that the plan will be displayed to the Chamber of Commerce at their meeting on the 12th July, at 9.00 p.m. in O'Dea's Hotel.

Correspondence.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce giving details of agenda for meeting on the 12th July, 2005 at 9.00 p.m. in O'Dea's Hotel.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce saying that they have been spearheaded by the Irish Heart Foundation to set up a "Sli na Slainte" route in Loughrea. Suggested route would be Corry's Field. In this context they required the written consent of the Town Council to proceed with this. They also requested that a nominee from the Town Council be appointed to the Sli Development Team. Cllr. Burke said that Mayor Gunter-Nix was the delegate from the Town Council and he suggested that she be nominated.

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke seconded by Cllr. Maher that Mayor Gunter-Nix be the nominee on the Sli na Slainte Development Team.

The following correspondence was circulated to each member prior to the meeting.

Letter from Mullingar Town Council as follows "That Westmeath County Council would call upon the Government to progress the Labour Party Planning and Development (Bill) 2005, which was given a second reading in March, 2005 and is now ready to proceed to Committee, and if enacted, would help address the scourge of unfinished housing estates"

Letter from Monaghan Town Council as follows "That this Council calls on the Government and more specifically Justice Minister Michael McDowell to appoint a single ombudsman on the Patter model whose office would be totally separate from and independent of the Garda Siochana and the Department of Justice and would have powers at least equivalent to those of the Ombudsman Nuala O'Loane."

Letters dated the 16th and 27th June from Private Secretary to Mary Harney regarding St. Brendan's Home.

Extract from letter from Fingal County Council as follows " That this Council given the recent revelations by the Morris tribunal and the treatment of the McBrearty and other families have received from Michael McDowell's department hereby calls on Michael McDowell, T.D. Minister for Justice to resign from his position due to the clear display of his incapability to address the issues needs and concerns of not just

the McBrearty family but the people living in the communities throughout Ireland in general."

It was noted.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Curley.

1. "To write to Mr. Ray Bonner, Chief Ambulance Officer, HSE (Western Ambulance Service), Castlebar to cease the following practise - i.e. When Ambulance cover is inadequate in Galway City (Night) the ambulance services are brought into the Galway Base to cover the vacant night roster.

This practise leaves Loughrea and its surrounding areas without an Emergency Ambulance Service. It also adds at least 45 minutes for an Ambulance to respond to an Emergency Ambulance Call in the Loughrea area.

Loughrea Ambulance Base went into 24-Hour cover in 2001, for the purpose of rendering an Emergency Cover to Loughrea and its surrounding areas. This purpose is being breached and exploited by the above practise.

It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Hynes.

Cllr. Curley said that when the ambulance cover is inadequate in Galway City the Loughrea crew are called in to attend to cases thereby greatly increasing their response time to emergencies calls in Loughrea and its surrounding areas. He requested the Town Clerk to write a letter to Ray Bonner, Chief Ambulance Officer, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, to cease this practise. He said after much pressure from Loughrea Town Council and others in Loughrea the ambulance base went into 24 hour cover in 2001 to respond quickly to emergency calls in Loughrea and surrounding areas. He said that the ambulance crew were anxious to address the town councillors but he told them he would take care of it. He said two serious calls, in the area, had been made to the ambulance services but both people had died before the crew arrived on the scene. He said if this service goes this time that it will not be replaced. He said that there is a population of 70,000 to 80,000 in Galway City and they should be providing their own services. It is not fair that lives are lost in Loughrea while the crew are attending cases in Galway City. Cllr. Hynes said that he fully supports this motion and the message has to go out loud and clear to discontinue this practise. They had fought long enough to have a 24 hour cover in Loughrea and the hinterland of Loughrea. He said if this service is not re-introduced immediately that the town council would be asking Ray Bonner to attend a meeting to answer some questions. Cllr. Regan supported this motion and said he knew of a similar case where the Loughrea crew were attending an emergency call in West Galway while a patient died, in the Loughrea area, because there was no ambulance to answer to the call. He said that it is unacceptable in this day and age that the Loughrea service is taken to cover the whole county. Cllr. Morgan also supported this motion. Cllr. Burke, said a family member had taken ill recently and the ambulance service arrived within seconds of the call.

2. "To ask Galway County Council would they be able to provide toilets in this location of the new playground which was recently opened, as the volume of people using this area is extremely large".

It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Curley said he would like to congratulate everybody involved in getting the playground up and running but he said the lack of toilets at this area is a serious issue. He said that the nearest toilets to the playground are a public house which is not acceptable. He said that toilet facilities will have to be provided at this location. He said it is difficult for parents with small children to cope without such facilities. He asked if anything materialised about the suggestion of putting toilets back to back with the Tennis Club or if the toilets at the Tennis Club could be used until permanent facilities are put in place. He also asked if Porto Loos could be put in here if they found a sponsor. Cllr. Burke asked for an update on the toilets at the Westbridge and if they could be relocated to the Playground area. Cllr. Bane said that the skateboard area is widely used by teenagers and toilet facilities are essential in this area. She said that temporary toilets will have to be put in place until permanent ones are found. Cllr. Regan said that money will have to be found to provide toilet facilities. He said that it is unacceptable to have a playground without any toilet facilities. He said that the Town Council/County Council own the ground and the provision of toilets would be grant aided. Cllr. Maher said that the Town Council own the Tennis Court and we should be allowed to use their facilities. Mr. Cullen said that the Tennis Court is leased to the Committee and because of insurance it would not be possible to use the toilets there. He said he would look at the issue and see if a solution could be found. He does not know if there is a contract signed with the firm supplying the modern toilets at the Westbridge or if they could be re-sited at the Playground.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

1. "That a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to erect roundabout signs approaching the new roundabout at Mount Pleasant, Loughrea, especially on the approach from the town side.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said that a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to erect signs at the roundabout at Mount Pleasant, Loughrea. He said that it is very confusing for visitors to the area especially on the approach from the town side.

Mr. Raftery, Town Engineer, said the signs will be erected at this location as it is part of the planning conditions attached to this application.

2. "That a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to be extra vigilant with regard to any activity which might in any way adversely affect the quality of the water in Loughrea lake, especially in the region of the Loughrea Waterworks Intake Pump house, where water for human consumption is being taken".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. Morgan said that there is land filling or dumping of material being done at Earlspeak and he has concerns in case it gets into the drinking water. He spoke to the owner who assured him that he was filling this area in as it is subject to flooding.

Mr. Raftery said that there is no unauthorised development taking place at this location. He said he would keep the matter under review.

3. "That an enquiry be sent to the Garda Siochana as to why after all the damage to trees, etc. by speed-cars at the Long Point, the offending persons have not been brought before the Courts".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that this amenity area at the Long Point is being damaged by speed cars. He asked that an enquiry be sent to the Gardai as to why no prosecutions have taken place. Cllr. Burke asked when will the barriers at the Long Point be erected as this might eliminate some of the problems. He said that there was an influx of travellers in O'Dea's car park over the week end and he said that the same thing can happen at the Long Point. He said that barriers should be put up on the Main Street and O'Deas car park to restrict caravans parking there. Cllr. Regan said that there was legislation brought in to deal with this problem and it should be implemented. He said that the local authorities were being held to ransom. Mr. Cullen said that he would take up the matter of barriers with the Director of Services for Roads and Transportation and he would have a report for the next meeting.

AOB.

Cllr. Regan said that the road in Dunkellin Street is in a terrible state and wondered if some temporary measures could be put in place to rectify this matter. He said that there is an 80 year old lady living on this street and the water is constantly coming under the door when there is heavy rain. He also asked when the footpath will be completed. Cllr. Burke said that the road also needs attention on the Main Street near the Traffic Lights. Cllrs. Bane and Maher asked if the town engineer had costed the mini roundabout at Fitzy corner and if it would be implemented. He said that they would try and do some remedial works at Main Street and Dunkellin Street but no major works can be done until the Bypass is open. He said that he had done a Safety Audit at Fitzy corner and is awaiting a report.

Cllr. Regan asked if the Children's Playground would be done this year at Garrybreeda. He asked what is the cost of the improvement works and he suggested that a contribution be made from the Town Council. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she is on the Garrybreeda Playground Committee and Ann Mallaghan has given an estimate of €18,000.00 to €19,000.00. to carry out improvements and put in some equipment. She said that there is a lot of ground work to be done in it. She said they do not have that amount in their funds and would have to start fund raising for the balance. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan that the Town Council contribute to the upgrading of this Playground. This was seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Cllr. Burke said that the Irish Youth Federation had got a grant of €5,000.00 to carry out a feasibility study to provide a Youth Café in Loughrea.

Cllr. Regan said that none of the land owners had got paid compensation yet for land acquired for the Bypass. He said that the Town Council had kept up the pressure over the years to get the approval for the Bypass. He said that they had got the goodwill of the land owners to sell the land for this project and it will be an embarrassment to the Town Council if compensation is not paid soon. Cllr. Burke said that there is not even a price agreed with the land owners. He said that he had asked that this matter be dealt with at a previous meeting. Cllr. Maher said that stone wall fencing has not been resolved yet on all the approach roads to the town. He said that Caherlavine is the only area that has got stone walls replaced. Cllr. Burke said that the stone walls were in place when construction works started and they would have to be reinstated. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she had tabled a motion recently that stone walls be replaced on all the approach roads to the town but to date this has not happened. It was proposed by Cllr. Burke that the Chief Executive Officer from the NRA be requested to attend the next meeting of the town council to discuss the reinstatement of stone walls on all the approach roads to the town and also compensation to the land owners. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley. Cllr. Burke said that a copy of this resolution should also be sent to Jack Eising, Senior Engineer, NRA, Galway.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 19th of September, 2005. Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 19th September, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair.

Mayor: Mary Gunter Nix.

Members: Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 11th July, 2005 be adopted.

Matters arising from the Minutes.

Cllr. Regan raised the question of St. Brendan's Home and the number of beds available for patients. He said the number quoted by Adrian Ahern was not correct information. He said there are n 144 beds being used at present and not 174 as stated. Cllr. Burke said that the Town Council should demand a meeting with Mr. Ahern and meet him face to face in order to confirm what plans are proposed for St. Brendan's Home. Mayor Gunter-Nix said the Town Clerk should write to the Health Board again and arrange for a meeting formally or informally with Officials there. Cllr. Morgan said that we would need to get confirmation on the correct number of beds. He said that the Town Council could not demand a meeting but ask if they would be agreeable to meet them. It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Tully that the Health Board be requested to meet with the town councillors as soon as possible.

Cllr. Curley said he had tabled a Notice of Motion regarding a 24 hour ambulance cover at the last meeting. He said the reply from Ray Bonner, Ambulance Service, Castlebar, was totally unsatisfactory. He said he did not agree with statement that there were very few emergency calls in Loughrea between the hours of 8.00 p.m and 8.00 a.m. to warrant a 24 hour service. He said if the Fire Service is not used for 6 months it does not become redundant. Cllr. Regan said that the Town Council had campaigned for a 24 Ambulance Service in the East of the County for years and were delighted when this was granted in 2001. He said Galway City has a 24 hour standby service and East of the County should be treated the same.

Cllr. Bane said that concern about the lack of toilet facilities, in the re-opened playground, was raised at the last meeting. She said since that Town Council meeting the Chamber of Commerce provided two Port-a-Loos at the Playground for July and August. She said that she would like to congratulate them on this generous gesture and also on the Heart Safe Day which was held on the 10th September. It was proposed by Cllr. Bane that a letter be sent to the Chamber of Commerce for arranging the provision of the toilets during the summer and also on the Heart Safe Day. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan. Cllr. Maher said that he was at the AMAI

Conference at the weekend and they were given leaflets on new toilets now on the market which he would consider suitable for the playground area. Cllr. Burke said they were made of aluminium, very durable, with steel cabin and it could be tapped into the Council's main water and sewerage scheme. He said that the cost would not be enormous as they were very reasonably priced. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he was very grateful to the Chamber of Commerce to make the Port-a-Loos available for the high season time in the playground. He said the County Council and the Chamber of Commerce had agreed to share the expenses. He said that he would look at the brochure circulated by Cllr. Maher and see if it was suitable. He said that the crisis is over for this year but he would look at it for next year. Cllr. Bane asked if the public toilets could be relocated from the Westbridge to the Playground area. Mr. Cullen said he would look at this option but the Council could be bound by contractual law to leave them at the present site. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that it would be a better option to relocate them to the Playground area as there is a lot of traffic in this area. Cllr. Regan said that the public toilets should be left central to facilitate tourists. He said there would be less vandalism in a public area.

Cllr. Morgan suggested that the road down by the Courthouse should be closed off in the interest of safety. He said children jump out of the cars and rush for the playground and it is very dangerous. Cllr. Bane asked if large trucks would be able to turn at Leahy's Garage junction. Cllr. Regan said that the patrons of the playground should use the car park provided and should not be parking on the road. Cllr. Burke said that the Playground should be fenced off and just leave one entrance for security reasons. He said at the moment there are several entrances and exits. He asked if signage would be erected defining the different areas. He said that it should be closed at night as adults are using small children's swings etc. He said that some of the equipment is damaged already. Mr. Cullen said that parents are responsible for the safety of their children while using the playground. He said that it would be more secure just to have one entrance. He said that a notice board could be erected indicating the opening times. He said if people use it outside of those times the Town Council would not be responsible for any damage. Mr. Raftery said the signage was ordered, indicating the different areas, and would be erected shortly.

Cllr. Regan said that the condition of Dunkellin Street is still deplorable and asked when this problem would be attended to. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that a planer had been ordered and it is expected that the work will be done shortly. He said that a layer of DBM was put out at this location but it has melted during the very hot weather.

Cllr. Bane asked for an update on the provision of the mini-roundabout at Fitzy's Corner. Mr. Raftery, said that he was having an independent safety audit carried out at this location and he was awaiting the outcome of this report.

Cllr. Regan asked if any progress was made on Garrybreeda Playground. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she was on the Playground Committee and some of the preliminary work was done. Cllr. Regan asked if there was sufficient funding to cover the cost of this refurbishment. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she had not got the final figure from Ann Mallaghan but she thought there would be a shortfall. She said the Playground Committee would hold a Race Night or do some kind of fund raising to meet the extra cost. Cllr. Burke, asked if the swing supplied by the Credit Union would be erected at

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I Lathair.

Mayor: Mary Gunter Nix.

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Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

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Cllr. Regan raised the question of St. Brendan's Home and the number of beds available for patients. He said the number quoted by Adrian Ahern was not correct information. He said there are n 144 beds being used at present and not 174 as stated. Cllr. Burke said that the Town Council should demand a meeting with Mr. Ahern and meet him face to face in order to confirm what plans are proposed for St. Brendan's Home. Mayor Gunter-Nix said the Town Clerk should write to the Health Board again and arrange for a meeting formally or informally with Officials there. Cllr. Morgan said that we would need to get confirmation on the correct number of beds. He said that the Town Council could not demand a meeting but ask if they would be agreeable to meet them. It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Tully that the Health Board be requested to meet with the town councillors as soon as possible.

Cllr. Curley said he had tabled a Notice of Motion regarding a 24 hour ambulance cover at the last meeting. He said the reply from Ray Bonner, Ambulance Service, Castlebar, was totally unsatisfactory. He said he did not agree with statement that there were very few emergency calls in Loughrea between the hours of 8.00 p.m and 8.00 a.m. to warrant a 24 hour service. He said if the Fire Service is not used for 6 months it does not become redundant. Cllr. Regan said that the Town Council had campaigned for a 24 Ambulance Service in the East of the County for years and were delighted when this was granted in 2001. He said Galway City has a 24 hour standby service and East of the County should be treated the same.

Cllr. Bane said that concern about the lack of toilet facilities, in the re-opened playground, was raised at the last meeting. She said since that Town Council meeting the Chamber of Commerce provided two Port-a-Loos at the Playground for July and August. She said that she would like to congratulate them on this generous gesture and also on the Heart Safe Day which was held on the 10th September. It was proposed by Cllr. Bane that a letter be sent to the Chamber of Commerce for arranging the provision of the toilets during the summer and also on the Heart Safe Day. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan. Cllr. Maher said that he was at the AMAI

Conference at the weekend and they were given leaflets on new toilets now on the market which he would consider suitable for the playground area. Cllr. Burke said they were made of aluminium, very durable, with steel cabin and it could be tapped into the Council's main water and sewerage scheme. He said that the cost would not be enormous as they were very reasonably priced. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that he was very grateful to the Chamber of Commerce to make the Port-a-Loos available for the high season time in the playground. He said the County Council and the Chamber of Commerce had agreed to share the expenses. He said that he would look at the brochure circulated by Cllr. Maher and see if it was suitable. He said that the crisis is over for this year but he would look at it for next year. Cllr. Bane asked if the public toilets could be relocated from the Westbridge to the Playground area. Mr. Cullen said he would look at this option but the Council could be bound by contractual law to leave them at the present site. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that it would be a better option to relocate them to the Playground area as there is a lot of traffic in this area. Cllr. Regan said that the public toilets should be left central to facilitate tourists. He said there would be less vandalism in a public area.

Cllr. Morgan suggested that the road down by the Courthouse should be closed off in the interest of safety. He said children jump out of the cars and rush for the playground and it is very dangerous. Cllr. Bane asked if large trucks would be able to turn at Leahy's Garage junction. Cllr. Regan said that the patrons of the playground should use the car park provided and should not be parking on the road. Cllr. Burke said that the Playground should be fenced off and just leave one entrance for security reasons. He said at the moment there are several entrances and exits. He asked if signage would be erected defining the different areas. He said that it should be closed at night as adults are using small children's swings etc. He said that some of the equipment is damaged already. Mr. Cullen said that parents are responsible for the safety of their children while using the playground. He said that it would be more secure just to have one entrance. He said that a notice board could be erected indicating the opening times. He said if people use it outside of those times the Town Council would not be responsible for any damage. Mr. Raftery said the signage was ordered, indicating the different areas, and would be erected shortly.

Cllr. Regan said that the condition of Dunkellin Street is still deplorable and asked when this problem would be attended to. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that a planer had been ordered and it is expected that the work will be done shortly. He said that a layer of DBM was put out at this location but it has melted during the very hot weather.

Cllr. Bane asked for an update on the provision of the mini-roundabout at Fitzy's Corner. Mr. Raftery, said that he was having an independent safety audit carried out at this location and he was awaiting the outcome of this report.

Cllr. Regan asked if any progress was made on Garrybreeda Playground. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she was on the Playground Committee and some of the preliminary work was done. Cllr. Regan asked if there was sufficient funding to cover the cost of this refurbishment. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she had not got the final figure from Ann Mallaghan but she thought there would be a shortfall. She said the Playground Committee would hold a Race Night or do some kind of fund raising to meet the extra cost. Cllr. Burke, asked if the swing supplied by the Credit Union would be erected at

this location. Mayor Gunter-Nix said it would be. She said she would also like to see one or two picnic benches put in place here as well. Cllr. Morgan said that he was prepared to give a contribution for the surplus funding if all of the Councillors matched it.

Cllr. Tully said the road works at Barrack Street was causing huge problems on the business people and also on people using the Cathedral. He said the Film Company caused further congestion with lorries parked on Church Street and Barrack Street. He said on the 17th September the Contractor put out tarmacadam outside the Cathedral but the roller did not arrive until evening and the whole street was blocked for another weekend. Cllr. Maher said that the hearse had to be lifted up as it got stuck in the channel/slope dug up by the contractors. Cllr. Burke said the business lost customers, on the All-Ireland weekend as they could not get into the shops. He said they had flags, bunting hats etc. but the public could not get near the shops that week end as the contractors had parked trucks and equipment there. Cllr. Regan said that the public would have to be patient as the upgrading of services will be an enormous benefit to the town. Mr. Cullen said Ward and Burke was the successful tenderer and they own the site while working there. He said that it is a very intricate job on a busy street. He said he regrets the disruption but it is outside his control. He said that the final restoration of this street should be done in 6 to 8 weeks. Cllr. Regan said that a representative, from the County Council, should call to the businesses and residents along this street and explain what is happening and the likely time frame for completion. Mr. Raftery said that he had spoken to the Resident Engineer on the scheme about the angle of the slope and to rectify it. He has requested them to minimise the impact on the public. Cllr. Hynes said since work has started at this location that people have sustained injuries and their cars have been damaged. He said that claims will be submitted and some of them will be substantial. He asked would it be the Galway County Council or the Contractor that will be paying the claims. Mr. Cullen said the Contractor is responsible. He said not everyone will qualify for compensation. He said that they would look at each claim and adjudicate on it. Cllr. Morgan said he hoped that the Council had learned by the mistakes in Barrack Street and hopes when Main Street is being upgraded that it will run more smoothly. He said that there is an ongoing problem outside his premises with flooding and nothing has been done about it. He has raised this matter at several meetings but to no avail.

Plan for Urban and Village Renewal for Loughrea for 2006.

The Town Clerk said that an advertisement was placed in the local paper inviting submissions for the above scheme. She said that the final phase of this scheme was finishing this year. She said that there would be funding available for the whole County next year and plans and submissions had to be in Forward Planning before the 28th October, 2005 at 4.00 p.m. She said that substantial funding will be available. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that this could not be discussed in a short space of time and suggested that they meet informally to put a plan together. She asked if the Chamber of Commerce and other interested bodies meet as well. Mr. Cullen said that was the final year of the sixth year strategy for Urban and Village Renewal and one scheme will be considered from each of the 5 Electoral areas within the County. Cllr. Regan proposed that the Town Council meet informally to put a plan together. This was seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Correspondence.

Letter from Baffle seeking a contribution for the Bank Holiday Festival. It was proposed by Cllr. Maher seconded by Cllr. Burke that a contribution be given to Baffle group.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she had got a letter from Mary Ida Kelly, Baffle Poetry Group, Festival Co-Ordinator, regarding the erection of a seat in Loughrea to commemorate James Joyce. The letter is as follows – "In October 1998, one of Joyce's homes, at Millbourne Avenue in Drumcondra, was demolished despite the existence of a preservation order. When Brendan Kilty, owner and restorer of 15 Usher's Island, (the setting for James Joyce's famous story *The Dead*), heard the news, he rushed to the site and purchased the rubble as it was en route to the dump. At the time he was not sure what he would eventually do with the tons of bricks. An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern suggested building a seat, incorporating a brick, to commemorate Joyce, and the first seat was unveiled in Drumcondra. Since, then, seats have been built in such diverse places as Kuala Lumpur and Melbourne, Australia. Brendan plans to build 63 seats in all, and his vision is that they will be connected to each other through the common theme of James Joyce, and will be seen as ambassadors for Joyce Dublin and Ireland.

While on a visit to Loughrea with his sons who are members of the Palestrina choir, Brendan was intrigued by the diversity and inventiveness of local poetry group BAFFLE, and presented them with a brick. They plan to construct a seat in the town.

In Loughrea Library, Brendan was struck by an extraordinary coincidence; when he had visited Australia for the unveiling of the Melbourne seat outside the State Library of Victoria, he had viewed the letters and papers of hero/explorer Robert O'Hara-Burke's final voyage (an attempt to cross Australia from top to bottom, unfortunately they perished a few miles from rescue,) not realising that the man had been born and reared outside Loughrea! The connection prompted Brendan to suggest the theme "Exploration" for the Loughrea seat. The seat will be designed and cut in Australian bluestone, (the same as the Melbourne seat), and so, will provide a major link between Melbourne and Loughrea, it will also form a literary and historical connection to the other seats, and in so doing, foster communication between Loughrea and, potentially, many other countries. Loughrea's proximity to Nora Barnacle's home in Galway could provide a valuable link along the visitor's literary and historical trail. It has the potential to attract many visitors to the area, and could also become part of the BAFFLE tour of the town. Already in Australia, people are booking their "five minutes" on the Melbourne seat, to read, as part of the Bloomsday celebrations."

Letter from Health Service Executive in response to correspondence from Town Clerk to hold a formal or informal meeting.

Letter from Ray Bonner in relation to 24 Hour Ambulance Service in response to Notice of Motion from Cllr. Curley.

Letter from Association of Irish Festival Events outlining details of their Conference.

Letter from Sunday Business Post giving details of 3rd National Waste Summit in Croke Park Convention Centre, Dublin.

Letter outlining Special Offer from Automobile Association for members.

Macroom Town Council as follows – "This Council calls on the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Finance to introduce financial incentives to encourage the use of alternative forms of energy to encourage their use in the Irish construction industry".

Preliminary Notice of Community Safety Conference from Dundalk Town Council.

The correspondence was circulated to all the members. It was noted.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

I will propose that a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council –
"That the Public Lighting in the Walks be changed from amber to white, so as to make it safer for pedestrians to walk there at night.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr Morgan requested that the public lighting in the Walks be changed from amber to white in the interest of safety.

"That the footpath at the lake opening between the Car Park and Corry's Field be marked "No Vehicle Parking on this footpath" so that pedestrians alone or with children and buggy may move safely along the footpath from the Playground to Corry's Field"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that motorists park at this location obstructing pedestrians. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter and see what can be done.

"To consider fencing and locking the Children's Playground at night, so as to protect the facilities from vandals and adults who use equipment which is suitable only for children".

Cllr. Burke said that he had raised this matter at the last meeting as well but nothing has changed. He said he felt that this matter was fully aired at the beginning of the meeting. He said that he had no problem seconding the motion. Cllr. Morgan said he was satisfied that enough time had been given at the beginning of the meeting to this subject and he was not aware that Cllr. Burke had raised it until he got the minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke to consider fencing and locking the Children's Playground at night.

AOB.

Cllr. Maher said he wanted to congratulate Mayor Gunter-Nix and the Environmental Committee for the effort they put in to tidy up the graveyards for Cemetery Sunday. He asked if there was an embargo on staff, as an employee who retired during the year was not replaced. Cllr. Burke supported Cllr. Maher and said that the Loughrea

Environmental Group should not be undertaking this work as they are a voluntary group. He asked if a FAS scheme could be put in place to take care of the two burial grounds during the growing season to keep the cemeteries tidy. He understands that the Council workers do not have the time during the growing season to do the work with the many road jobs going on. Mayor Gunter-Nix said the Department of Social Welfare had a great scheme going a few years ago where third level students were employed over the summer months to cut the grass, paint the seats and do a general tidy up at no expense to the County Council. She said that the Deputies in the area should be lobbied to see if this scheme could be reinstated.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she was at the Heritage Awards recently and two Loughrea Groups were successful in the awards. Gerard McInerney and Kilnadeema Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann. She said that she would like to congratulate them both. She said that she would also like to congratulate all the Galway Hurling Teams for their success and entertainment over the summer months and she hopes it continues.

Cllr. Burke asked if Public Lighting will be erected along the Bypass Road. Mr. Raftery said that it would be outside the scope of the Contractors to put public lighting along the route. He said there would be public lighting at the roundabouts. Cllr. Burke asked if a representative from the NRA will be attending the Town Council meeting to discuss the concerns which the public have in relation to compensation and stone walls. The Town Clerk said that she had invited the NRA to the meeting but she had got no reply from them. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she had brought up this matter at the Area Council meeting about reinstating the stone walls but was informed that they could not be provided for safety reasons. Cllr. Burke said that he considered stone walls safer than the present steel fencing being erected near Galway on the dual carriageway. Cllr. Regan asked if any of the land owners had been compensated yet for the land acquired for the Bypass. Cllr. Burke said as far as he was aware no compensation had been paid yet. Cllr. Regan said that the scheme is almost complete and nobody has got compensation yet. He said that it will be a very poor reflection on the members, after keeping on such pressure, to get the Bypass up and running and trying to get the good will of the land owners. He said that it will be a poor look out for the Super Road, due to start later on this year, if they have to wait as long for compensation. Cllr. Hynes asked when will work start on the N. 66 Gort Road i.e road widening, repair footpaths etc. from Ryans and Hynes resident to Maddens in Cuscarrick. He said there is a plan in place and Duchas has given approval to the work. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter.

Cllr. Regan asked what is the position with the provision of a Swimming Pool for Loughrea as the public are anxious to know what is happening. Cllr. Burke said that he was Chairman of the Swimming Pool Committee, and that planning permission was granted on the site in February. Subsequently an application was submitted to the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism for funding. Further questions were received from the Department seeking clarity on a number of issues which were replied to and returned. He said Cllr. Hynes and Morgan were also members of the Committee and they were frustrated with all the red tape being put before them to secure this funding. He said that he was ten years on this Committee and Jim Cullen was the fifth official he was dealing with in the County Council in that length of time. He said that two people from Dublin had met with the Social Inclusion Group Sub Committee to

clarify a few matters. He said they are due to meet again at the end of the month. He said that the Committee should know, he hopes, if they are successful then or not. He said that some of the questions asked by the Civil Servants in the Department were unreal i.e. what impact the swimming pool would have on the Nenagh Pool. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she was a member of the Social Inclusion Sub Committee, of the County Development Board, and a meeting is scheduled for the end of the month and it was best to wait until this takes place to see what will be the outcome. She said if this is not satisfactory there are other options available to the Committee. She said that this is a first venture of PPP in the Local Authority for the construction of Swimming Pools, and the Department is probably treading carefully. Mr. Morgan said that he is the PRO Officer for the Swimming Pool Committee and he said that the funding required is not enormous. He said that the committee were very grateful to the Local Authority for providing the site and to Brian Shaughnessy for giving an undertaking to steer this project. He urged the members to use their influence with the Department to get this scheme up and running. Mr. Cullen said that there was not much more to be added to what was already said. He said that the application was currently with the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, and he could not offer any explanation why there was delay. He said that they had put the proposal together and had answered all their questions and they can not do any more until approval is given by the Department.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said Loughrea Environmental Group had got an invitation to the County Council meeting on the 26th September, from the County Enterprise Board. She said that they would be presented with a cheque and scroll in acknowledgement of their efforts for Pride of Place Competition held on the 6th July. She said that they are also invited on the 26th October, to Belfast City Hall to the Award Ceremony with all of the other participants. Cllr. Burke said that he would like to congratulate Mayor Gunter-Nix, who spearheaded this project and wished them every success. Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked all the members who helped with painting, clean ups etc. for the event.

Cllr. Burke said he was disappointed that the Town Council were not invited to the handing over of the new fire engine to Loughrea prior to the meeting. He said he would like to congratulate all involved but was aggrieved that the Mayor of the Town, especially, was not invited. He said that the Mayor of the Town takes precedence over any other Official except the President of Ireland. He said he knows the Council provided the tender but when officers wanted help to secure a second tender, they came to the Town Council, and he said the same thing had happened with the re-opening of the Playground. Cllr. Hynes said that he was asked to perform the handing over ceremony to the Fire Officer, but was not aware that the Mayor of the Town was not invited to attend. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she was not aware of the event taking place. All of the other members supported Cllr. Burke and said that the Mayor of the Town is the first citizen in the town.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 10th day of October, 2005. Mayor: *Mary Gunter-Nix*

Minutes of Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 10th October, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair.

Mayor: Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllr. Curley.

Confirmation of Minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 19th September, 2005 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Regan asked if there was any response from the Health Executive in relation to St. Brendan's Home. The Town Clerk said that she had requested a meeting formally or informally but had got no reply from the Health Board. Cllr. Maher said that Cllr. Cannon had several meetings with Minister Harney on this matter. He said that they are seeking tenders and works is expected to start early in 2006. Cllr. Bane said that they are being fobbed off by the Health Board and she suggested they go to the Health Board every Friday, in either Ballinasloe or Galway, until they agree to meet them. Cllr. Hynes said that the numbers are declining at St. Brendan's Home and when patients die no new patients will be admitted. This is a worrying factor for the town as it will not help the economy of the town if Staff numbers are being reduced as well as patients. He recognises that no patients are permitted upstairs because of the risk of fire. He would like to know what the Health Executive's future Plan is for St. Brendan's Home. Mayor Gunter-Nix said the Town Council should await a response from the Health Board and if a reply is not received by next month they could plan what action to take at that stage. Cllr. Morgan said the Town Council have no right to demand a meeting and did not agree with Cllrs. Bane's course of action. He suggested that the Town Clerk should speak to them on the telephone and see if they would be agreeable to meet them. Cllr. Regan said that this is not the correct procedure and a meeting should not be arranged over the telephone by the Town Clerk. Cllr. Burke said the members should wait until the next meeting to see if a response will be forthcoming. This was agreed.

Cllr. Regan asked if there was any developments with the Swimming Pool for Loughrea as the public are asking questions. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she had attended a meeting of the SIM group and this matter was discussed. She said that they agreed on the opening hours, fees etc. and all of the information will be forwarded to the Department of, Arts Sport and Tourism in support of the application. Cllr. Burke said

that the Swimming Pool Committee had made representations to Minister Treacy and Deputy Callanan to use their influence with the Minister for Arts, Sports, and Tourism to progress this project. He is 10 years on the Swimming Pool Committee and he is getting frustrated with all the red tape encountered. He knows it a first venture for the Department to construct a swimming pool under PPP. He said another winter is coming and nothing concrete is in place by the Department. He said the original proposal was that the Department would give a grant up to 90% of the cost or up to €3 million. He said when they went down the road of PPP it was a saving for the Department as the Committee will just have to contribute €1.7 million which is a saving of €2.3 million on the original deal. They are 7 years waiting for the money from the Department and it is decision time now. He said Galway County Council has given tremendous support to the project and they will have responsibility for it not the Committee. Cllr. Hynes said the Department are throwing out red herrings on the possible damage this development would have on the Ballinasloe and Tuam Swimming Pools. He said that the message has to go out that the public demand this pool and there is huge commitment and effort by the community in seeking their goal. He said there are no real assurances or nothing in writing that approval to grant aid this project will be forthcoming. He said that it is time to move on with project under PPP and provide the Swimming Pool for Loughrea. Cllr. Maher said that all of Loughrea are waiting for their dream to come through and see this much wanted swimming pool in place before long. Cllr. Morgan suggested that the Town Council write to support Officials of the County Council to bring this project to fruition. He said it is disappointing that there is no definite sign of a pool being provided in Loughrea. Cllr. Regan said that a deputation has requested to meet the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism and it should be parked until next month to see if that will happen. Cllr. Hynes asked Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, if he had any more information. Mr. Cullen said that he is not the Director now dealing with it but he thinks there is no point in bombarding the Department. He said the ball is now in the Department's court and we should await their decision.

Cllr. Regan said he was delighted that Mr. Raftery, acting Executive Engineer, had repaired the road at Dunkellin Street, Loughrea, which he had mentioned at the previous meeting. Cllr. Burke said he would like to thank Mr. Raftery for doing the footpaths on the Hill.

Cllr. Bane asked if the toilets would be staying at the Westbridge. Mr. Cullen said we are contractually obliged to leave them there. Cllr. Burke asked if a decision was made on providing permanent toilets at the Playground. Mr. Cullen said that he was looking at the brochure circulated at the last meeting and they are investigating it further.

Cllr. Maher asked if the safety audit was available yet and if the roundabout will be going at Fitzzy's corner. Mr. Raftery said that the roundabout is not the most suitable option. He will have to write to the NRA to change the gradient at this location.

Cllr. Burke asked if a costing was done on the fencing or safety device at the Playground. He asked when will the signs be erected at the various locations in the Park. Mr. Raftery said the signs are ordered and will be erected shortly. Cllr. Regan said that the gates would need to be made more secure. Mr. Raftery said he will look at it.

Cllr. Tully said that the Contractor laying the watermains at Barrack Street and Gort Road were discharging water onto the fairgreen at both sides and the ground was in terrible condition. He said that anybody knows once you go two feet down along this area the water comes gushing up. He said that the contractors had made no provision for this except to pump it into the lake. Cllr. Burke also said that the contractors had no plan to dispose of the water and should have thought this out before hand. He said that a holding tank should have been put in place to contain the surplus water and not discharge it into the lake without treatment. Mr. Raftery said that they had a prior meeting with the Contractor, Water Services Unit, Anglers and Fisheries before the work started on the Gort Road. He said that they had got the agreement of the Anglers and Fisheries to dispose of the water into the Lake. He said the Contractor has a percolation system in place which prevents the silt going into the Lake. They plan to put a settlement tank in place within the next few days.

Cllr. Bane said that the fairgreen was left in terrible condition when the circus moved out. She said it was like the ploughing champion was held in it. She asked is there a bond or a deposit put down by the Company. Mr. Raftery said the Company pay €700.00 deposit. He said he had written to the Fossett Company to reinstate the ground. They have agreed to this but it is too wet at the moment. Cllr. Burke said that the skip was left there for a week after the circus moved out. The Town Clerk said that the skip was on hire from East Galway Waste Company. She said that Fossetts had notified them to remove it but the Company did not do it. It is gone now. Mr. Raftery said that serious consideration will have to be given to holding such events, at this location, in the future

Correspondence:

Letter from Monahan Town Council regarding a Notice of Motion as follows:- "That this Council set up a committee as provided for within legislation contained under Section 51 of the Local Government Act, 2001, to provide a forum that establishes at a statutory level opportunity for formal contacts between this Local Authority, relevant Community Groups and An Garda Siochana" Cllr. Burke said they want to make sure that the Town Council is represented when this Act is enacted. He asked if there was time to send submissions on this Bill to the local deputies before it becomes law. This was noted.

Galway County Council Stone Wall Workshop which will be held in Teagasc Research Centre, Athenry, on 21st October and 22nd October, 2005.

Ceifin Conference 2005 to be held in West County Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare on 8th and 9th November, 2005.

Letter from NRA dated 30th September, 2005, apologising for not replying to letter of 18/7/2005 and sending a representative to the meeting. This letter outlined the policy in relation to the erection of stone walls and compensation. Cllr. Regan said that this letter was very vague. It was unanimously agreed that stone walls be provided along the approach roads to Loughrea Town. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she had tabled this notice of motion and it was made quite clear that the members requested that stone walls be reinstated along the approach roads to town. She said that stone walls are

part of the Heritage of Galway. Cllr. Burke said he believes that offers have now gone out within the last few days for land acquired for the Loughrea Bypass. He said that he would also like to support the other councillors in regards to the replacement of stone walls. He said that the NRA had put down foundations for the stone walls but now the policy seems to have changed. He said stone walls were erected at Caherlavine and even foundations laid on private property which did not form part of the corridor. Cllr. Morgan said he always believed in the right of the individual if the walls were knocked down they should be replaced. He said if individuals want compensation in lieu of stone walls that is their right. This was noted.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"To advise Loughrea Town Councillors, that if any of its members wish to donate a sum of money, from their council income to a County Council or Town Council Project would the total sum be transferred to the project without income tax.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Mayor Gunter-Nix.

Cllr. Morgan said if members wish to donate to any project would it be tax free. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that Voluntary Organisations would come under this category but she is not aware that it applied to anybody else. Mr. Cullen said that representation payments made to the members is taxable. He said if a tax form is returned to the Revenue Commissioners at the end of each year they would refund whatever was due to the individual. He will make enquires but doubts if it is tax free. Cllr. Regan asked Cllr. Morgan if he was a paid representative like all of the other members. He replied in the affirmative.

"To upgrade the gully at Maggie May's, Bride Street, Loughrea, where whenever there is rainfall there is always flooding, which causes pedestrians on the footpath to get soaked with dirty water splashed on them by passing motor vehicles"

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said that he can not step outside his door on a wet day with flooding. He said that the water is splashed up on himself and his house by passing cars. He has reported this matter several times but to no avail. He asked that the County Council investigate this matter and see if funding will be available to carry out this work. Mr. Raftery said that it is intended to do this work soon.

"That action be taken to relieve the flooding at the north end of Rus-en-Urbe Estate, off Bride Street, as there is a large Galway County Council surface water pipe which runs northwards from Willie Greene's to a stream in Eddie O'Dea's Field. This stream needs to be kept clean because some of the resident's property gets flooded due to residue from the council's pipe building up and stopping the flow of the water".

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said there is a large County Council surface water pipe running northwards from Willie Greene's to a stream in Eddie O Dea's field. He said it is full

of silt, papers etc. and needs to be cleaned regularly. He said that it is causing flooding to resident's property. Mr. Raftery said that he would check out this matter.

AOB.

Cllr. Maher asked if the sewerage system was up to capacity and if any more developments can take place in the town. Cllr. Morgan said that the sewerage plant was out of date before the official opening, as it was planned for 20 years in advance. He said by the time it was constructed this time had elapsed. Cllr. Burke said that there is an awful smell from time to time at this plant and asked if it was working properly. Mr. Raftery said that a report has gone to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for upgrading of the plant and a decision is awaited. He said that there was a smell coming from the drying shed where sludge is stored awaiting land spreading. He said that it can only be spread at certain times of the year where land is suitable. He said that this summer was particularly warm and not much rainfall. He said that in winter more rain water goes into the system which dilutes it and reduces the smell. He said there is a new product on the market which controls odours and this should eliminate the smell from now on. Mr. Cullen said it was a state of the art facility but Loughrea has grown immeasurable even far above the level of expectation. He said that it is not at crisis stage but he said that the cost would be enormous to expand it. He said there is a process to be gone through before approval can be granted. Cllr. Regan asked if there is room for expansion on the existing site. Mr. Cullen said there is room for further development on site. Cllr. Tully asked if this will hold up development in Loughrea and what will happen. Mr. Raftery said that developers will put in a temporary treatment system until the present system is upgraded. It will be connected into the system when the present plant is upgraded. He said that whatever effluent is created in the system it is treated and broken down automatically.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the members had two meetings in regard to a plan for the 2006 Urban Renewal Scheme. She circulated a copy of the minutes to all present at the meeting. She said that the most favoured option was the Fairgreen near the Bridewell and the Pound. She gave an artists impression of what it would look like. She said there would be a band stand, which could be used for poetry reading or musical recitals by local groups or visiting groups. She said she would be attending a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday night, as the official delegate from the Town Council, and she would run it by them. She will also inform the Baffle Group, the Environmental Group etc. of the plan. She said that there would be competition from other towns in the Electoral Area and the decision will rest with the Planning Section. Cllr. Regan suggested that Stoney Brennan's monument be re-sited into this area and it could be known as "Stoney Brennan Park" He said this would eliminate its use by the Circus Companies and others who use the Fairgreen. Cllr. Maher said he will take photographs of the area to support the document. Cllr. Burke said he hoped that support will be forthcoming from the Chamber of Commerce for this worth while project. Mr. Cullen said it was an interesting project but it would be important to have all the community support as well. Cllr. Morgan said he also supported it but said that Loughrea has done well on previous occasions and can not be too confident of getting the necessary funding. Mr. Cullen said that this is a new phase of Urban Renewal and each application will be looked at on its merit. He said because Loughrea got funding in the past it does not preclude them from receiving it

again. He said Loughrea is the biggest town in the Electoral Area. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Maher and unanimously agreed that this plan be submitted for Urban Renewal 2006.

Cllr. Bane said that there were two reports on local radio of hazardous waste being discharged in Loughrea. She asked if the culprits could be named and shamed. Mr. Cullen said the Council is at present investigating this matter and he is not prepared to comment on it. He said that the incident is confined to one area and not posing a treat to ground water. Cllr. Regan asked if it is west or east of Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said it was west of the town. Cllr. Tully asked if it is in a public place is there a danger to the public. Mr. Cullen said while the incident is hazardous it is contained and in no danger to the public.

Cllr. Maher asked about the Traffic Management Plan and the amount of money collected since it was implemented. Mr. Cullen said that the accounts would not be finalised until the end of year Annual Financial Statement.

Cllr. Burke asked when the signs to slow down the traffic on the Gort Road will be erected. He said he had made this request at a previous meeting but there is no sign of them yet.

Cllr. Tully said that the kerbing at Cross Street is not still in place by the Contractor. This was promised over five weeks ago. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said she would like to congratulate Tom Gibbons, President of the Lions Club, on the launch of the local directory. She said it is a credit to them and a lot of work went into compiling it. She said it should be supported as the Lions Club give a lot of assistance to less well off at Christmas and other times of the year.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 14th day of November, 2005.

Mayor: *Mary Gunter-Nix*

Minutes of Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14th November, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair: Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she would take the second item on the Agenda regarding promotion of the Irish language presented by Padraic O Baoill if that was in order by the members. This was unanimously agreed.

Padraic O Baoill said that his organisation was non political. He outlined the different groups he does business with as follows:-

Cumann Tráchtála/ Chamber of Commerce. Údarás áitiúil/ Local Authorities; Tógálaithe/Builders (suggesting Irish names for new housing estates); Grúpaí Liteartha, cultúrtha agus eile/ Literary and cultural groups. Ranganna do chách/ Classes for everyone; Gach scoil/ Every school; Gaelscolaíocht/ Pre-school/First and Second Level; Campaí Samhraidh/ Summer Camps; Imeachtaí don óige/ Events for Young People; Slógadh/ Drama Festival; Oícheanta Sóisialta/ Social Nights. They also get involved in Seachtain na Gaeilge organising different events. Padraic O. Baoill thanked the Mayor and the Town Council for allowing him time to brief them on the work undertaking by GLOR. Cllr. Morgan wished him every success with his venture. He said he is very familiar with his work as he is involved with Ceolthas Ceoiltoiri Eireann. Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked him for making the presentation. He left the meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 10th October, 2005 be adopted.

Cllr. Bane said that she had delivered the application form for Urban Renewal for 2006 to the planning section. She said that Deputy McHugh had helped with the drawings and putting the plan together and she would appreciate if his service could be acknowledged by the Town Council. It was unanimously agreed that a thank you note be forwarded to Deputy McHugh by the Town Clerk. Cllr. Bane asked if there were many applications for Urban Renewal in the Electoral Area. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer said he would find out for the next meeting.

Cllr. Morgan was complaining about flooding outside his house. He said that it is not a major problem to relieve the surface water drainage. He said if the channel was lowered, with a pickaxe, for a few inches it could go into the gully. He said he would like to thank the County Council for undertaking the surface dressing at Bride Street

but it did not do anything to relieve the flooding. He said that the road is subsiding because there is no foundation on Main Street or on Bride Street. He said it is difficult to work in this area with traffic during the day but if some remedial works could be undertaken until the Bypass is opened he would appreciate it. Cllr. Regan said that there is also flooding at King's garage which is only 15 feet from the gully. He does not consider it a major problem to channel it into the gully. He said that it has been a problem for the last 6 months. It comes up each time there is heavy rainfall. Mr. Raftery said he is aware of the problem but can not do anything about it until the Bypass is opened. He said that a new surface water sewer was laid by a developer from above the playground down to a narrow point on Bride Street to take storm water from a new development. A continuation of these works will continue after the Bypass has opened which would help alleviate flooding near Rus in Urbe.

Cllr. Regan referred to St. Brendan's Home and the misleading information being bandied about by Cllrs. Cannon and Maher. He said in letter received from the HSE on 8/8/05 it stated that there were 174 beds available in St. Brendan's Home but the correct figure was 142 beds. He said the present plan is to provide 80 beds. If the number of beds are being reduced the staff will also be reduced. The present staff level is 155. If staff are not replaced on retiring this will affect the economy of the town. He said his Party Leader has rebuffed Cllr. Cannon over wild statements he made about the hospital in Tuam. Mayor Gunter-Nix said the Town Council had a meeting with the HSE and it was pointed out exactly what the plan is for St. Brendans Home. She said that the top floors of the Home are no longer suitable because of Fire Regulations so that would have a bearing on the numbers permitted. She said nobody will loose their jobs. She said that there are more medical people per patient than before according to a survey. Cllr. Morgan said that there are a lot of Nursing Homes all over the county near family and family farms and patients decide where they want to go. He said the first priority is the health and safety of patients. He said that the policy is now patients are cared for in their home with the assistance of medical personnel. Cllr. Regan said that there is a waiting list of 30 persons for St. Brendan's Home and this will get longer if beds are reduced. Cllr. Morgan acknowledges that patients needing respite or such services could only be facilitated in St. Brendan's Home. Cllr. Maher said he was away and did not meet Adrian Ahern. He said that Cllr. Cannon will be meeting the Minister and John Nestor and he will ensure that no services are lost in St. Brendan's Home.

Cllr. Maher asked Adrian Raftery on the up to date position on the round about at Fitzy Corner. He said he has sent recommendations to Martin Lavelle, Senior Engineer, Road and Transportation Unit, for attention. He thinks the preferred option is traffic lights but he will have to await his decision. Cllr. Morgan said that a round about could not be constructed at this location as it would be impossible for large trucks to turn at this corner. Cllr. Bane said what is proposed is a mini-roundabout like in Ballinasloe. She said that this has been discussed for six months and no decision has been reached yet. Cllr. Tully complained about the road condition in Barrack Street. He said that Ward and Burke had tarred over a gulley and there were floods along the street especially at Latimer Lodge and the Temperance Hall because of this. He said the children walking to school could not pass with the flood across the road. Cllr. Burke said he spoke to the contractors about the condition of the road but to no avail. He had to get onto Galway to get this work done. It was done by the Loughrea Staff not Ward and Burke. He also complained about the potholes along

Barrack Street and cars getting damaged. He said that the community are fed up of this inconvenience and he wants it rectified. Cllr. Bane said she had got numerous complaints about the condition of Barrack Street. She said there is a limit to people's patience but it is wearing thin at the moment.

Cllr. Regan complained about the condition of the Bottle Banks in Barrack Street. He said it is a disgrace the way they are left time and time again. He said that the glass will be like the missiles in France if this problem is not addressed. Cllr. Burke said that the bottle banks could not be emptied by the contractor because of the roadworks. The contractor made three attempts to empty them but could not gain entry. He said that bottles and debris are left strewn around even after the bottle banks are emptied. He said he came across a person dumping at this location one night. He pointed to the notice saying take home your bottles if the banks are full. He also informed her that there were bottle banks at Emo garage. She was not aware of it. He requested that a notice go up informing people about the banks at Emo garage. Cllr. Tully asked if the Wardens were doing their job and why is this allowed to happen. He said the Wardens have the power to prosecute for illegal parking but it seems not for illegal dumping. He requested that the banks be emptied more often to eliminate this problem. Cllr. Regan said that the Council workers have to clean up the mess each time when they could be making better use of their time. He said he had forwarded the registration numbers of the culprits to the Environment section, some time ago, but no action was taken on them. The notice clearly states that people will be prosecuted for illegal dumping. Cllr. Morgan said that people will dump bottles and cans along country roads or elsewhere if this is not taken in hand. He was not aware that there were recycling facilities at Emo garage. Mayor Gunter-Nix asked if recycling facilities could be placed in the car parks as she has seen this happen in several car parks all over the country. Mr. Raftery, said recycling facilities can be put where ever necessary but the truck would need access to empty them. He said that it is proposed to have a recycling unit at Rathruddy but the Part 8 planning process will have to be gone through first. He said this will also incorporate a depot for the outdoor staff, machinery etc. He said that people just leave bottles and boxes around even when there is room in the banks. He said if Cllr. Regan can supply information on the culprits he will have it investigated by the Environment Section.

Cllr. Regan asked for an up date on the hazardous waste incident in Loughrea at the west end of the town. He said he made a complaint about a similar incident at Tynagh Road but no action was taken on it. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that investigations were ongoing at the original incident. He is not aware of any other incident. He said if Cllr. Regan produces this document or evidence he has no problem in investigating it.

Statutory Auditor's report for the years 2003/2004.

This was noted.

Fixing date for Annual Estimates Meeting.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the Annual Estimates meeting can be held on the 12th December, 2005 together with monthly meeting. Cllr. Burke asked when will the Annual Budget be circulated as they would like to have more of an input in it. The

Town Clerk said it would be circulated 7 working days before the meeting. He wanted to know if it could be circulated earlier so that the Town Council could have an informal meeting to discuss it. Mr. Cullen said he will have some proposals to put before them at the Annual Estimates meeting. Cllr. Regan said that they had a lot of requests for funding during the year and he wondered if a policy could be adopted so as an allocation could be left aside for this purpose. It was proposed by Cllr. Burke that the Annual Estimates Meeting be held on the 12th December, 2005. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Correspondence:

Cllr. Burke said that a letter had been circulated to the members pertaining to the Loughrea Swimming Pool from Deputy McHugh. It stated that the overall say rests with the local authorities and not the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. He said he is not happy with answers being thrown out by Galway County Council. He said he is 10 years on the Swimming Pool Committee and no decision has been made on it. He said it is frustrating trying to progress this matter. He said that he will be resigning from this Committee and there will be other members going with him. He said it is time that Galway County Council, Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism get around a table and iron out the problems. He said that the community have been hood winked long enough and they want to know what is happening. He asked Mr. Cullen the number of times that documents have been returned with further questions and information being requested. He would at a guess say 10 times. Mr. Cullen said that it was more likely to be 5 times. Cllr. Bane said she had requested Deputy McHugh to bring up this matter in the Dail. This letter came as a result of her representations. She said reading the letter it would seem that the County Council did not follow a certain procedure. She asked Mr. Cullen for clarity on the matter. Cllr. Regan said when you hear of the Swimming Pool Committee frustrated and threatening to resign it is time to take notice. He said that the Swimming Pool committee have worked unceasingly and there seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel. He said it is a thankless job. He said it would be a disaster for Loughrea if the Swimming Pool Committee had to step down at this stage because of red tape. He said that the Department would spend more on trips abroad than they would spend on a Swimming Pool for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said the problem, while seemingly complex, was simple enough, that it was down to money. He said the funding of €3.8 million from the Department is half of the cost of the project. He said most other Swimming Pool Authorities can not find the other half of the cost. He said that Galway County Council went down the alternative route of providing it under PPP and got criticised for it. He said if Galway County Council had not chosen this option they would have to wait another 25 years to provide the Swimming Pool. He said it is not encouraging after 10 years hard work but they can not twist the Departments arm or any ones arm. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan that Loughrea Town Council request a meeting with the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism in relation to the Swimming Pool. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Letter from Deputy Treacy informing the members on the present position of the Loughrea Regional Water Supply Scheme which is expected to commence construction in 2006.

Letter from Passage West Town Council as follows - "That this Council calls on the Minister for Health and Children to introduce regular monitoring for bacteria in all areas of hospitals and other buildings where patients are treated to minimise risks of patient infection"

"That this Council calls on the Minister for Health and Children to treat Cardiovascular Disease as a chronic illness" This was noted.

A note from Garrybreeda Playground Committee outlining the financial cost of providing this amenity.

Circular from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government dated 7th October, 2005, regarding funding by Local Authorities for attendances by elected members at Conferences.

Letter from Adrian Ahern, HSE outlining details on St. Brendan's Home with overhead notes.

Circular from Department regarding Expenses of Members.

Letter from Loughrea GAA requesting contribution to defray cost of County All Ireland Final. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she would like to congratulate the Loughrea Senior Hurling Team on their magnificent performance in Pearse Stadium on the 13th November. She said they did the town proud but unfortunately the better team won. All of the other councillors agreed with the sentiments expressed by the Mayor. It was proposed by Mayor Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Burke that funding be provided to defray costs. Loughrea Hurling Club has contested two County Finals in the last three years. They wished them well in the future.

Letter from Elizabeth Mitchell, looking for a donation for Creative Writers Group.

Letter from and explanatory booklet from Commission for Taxi Regulation. Loughrea Town Council to send in submission if they had concerns. Cllr. Burke asked if there was going to be a designated area for taxis. Mr. Cullen said that it did not concern them.

Letter from Clonmel Borough Council as follows - "That this Borough Council write to the Minister for Education and Science Mary Hanafin, T.D. requesting to make compulsory, the fitting and wearing of seat belts on school buses transporting children with special needs." This was noted.

Letter from Mid-West Regional Authority regarding conference on 17th February, 2006, in Templegate Hotel, Ennis - The Region and the NDP 2007 - 2013.

Letter regarding hosting of the Ryder Cup in 2006 and arranging for community awareness and involvement.

All of the correspondence was circulated to the members and were noted.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Bane.

"That Loughrea Town Council recommends to Galway County Council that they should implement measures to ensure that H.G.V.'s coming from the Gort Road, can no longer turn right at the Westbridge junction and travel through Dunkellin Street and Main Street, from the date the Bypass opens. H.G.V.'s should be directed, through the use of signage, road markings and publicity to turn left at the Westbridge onto the Bypass in order to travel to Dublin."

It was proposed by Cllr. Bane seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Bane said she has concerns about HGV's going onto the Main Street from the Gort end of the town once the Bypass is open. She requested that signage be erected at the Westbridge directing HGV's onto Caherlavine roundabout. Cllr. Burke said some of the Lorries could be doing business in the town and could not be prohibited from driving through the town. He asked if the status of the Main Street will be downgraded once the Bypass is open. Mr. Raftery said this can not happen until the Traffic Management Review comes up. He will check out the road status of the Main Street once the Bypass is open. Mr. Cullen said the Bye laws would have to be amended and put on display to make this change. It would be difficult to prohibit traffic going up Main Street as it is a public street. He said he does not know the status of the Main Street but it will no longer be the N. 6. Cllr. Maher said it will be less attractive for heavy good vehicles to use the Main Street once the Bypass is open. Cllr. Regan said this will not be an issue once the Bypass is open.

"A recommendation be made to Galway County Council to instruct Community Wardens to monitor Corry's Field on a more regular basis, and to take whatever measures necessary to ensure that walkers with dogs keep their dogs on leads."

It was proposed by Cllr. Bane seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Bane said that dogs are let run around Corry's Field and it is very intimidating for people using this park. She was wondering if the Community Wardens could be more vigilant in ensuring that dogs are kept on a lead and that this is adhered to. She said she had got a lot of telephone calls about this matter and it would need to be addressed.

Cllr. Morgan said his motions were not in on time and requested that he be allowed to read them. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she would agree to this, on this occasion, so as to avoid a lot of business at the December meeting.

"That due to concern expressed in Loughrea, regarding Loughrea Lake the Water Rights Order on Loughrea Lake; its capability to supply water for human and animal needs in Loughrea and surrounding district; and how this will be affected by the bringing of Loughrea Lake water to Craughwell, while water is already being supplied from Lough Corrib to within approximately two miles of Craughwell; that their Official, who is familiar with the aforesaid would attend the January Meeting of Loughrea Town Council, and explain to its members the exact and up to date position regarding this matter"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Tully.

"That a FAS or other such scheme be organised to preserve the old Church in Garrybreeda Cemetery, Loughrea; by removing the ivy and pointing the stonework"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Cllr. Morgan said that this is the oldest church in Loughrea. It dates back to 1160 and it should be preserved. He has requested that a FAS scheme be set up to do this work. Cllr. Burke said this is a worth while motion. He said FAS should not only be involved with Garrybreeda Cemetery but should expand its services to include all burial grounds in Loughrea. He said they could also paint all the seats in Corry's Field, Fairgreen etc.

"That the Gardai be requested to increase their vigilance regarding persons who continue to disregard the law regarding persons hanging out of the windows of moving vehicles, especially after sporting events".

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Cllr. Morgan said that this problem is not as bad as heretofore but he would like to see the Gardai keep up the pressure to implement the law.

AOB.

Cllr. Burke said that the road at Mount Pleasant has not been reinstated properly since the road opening licence was granted and he requested that this matter be investigated. Mr. Raftery, said that the contractor is responsible for two years after carrying out the work.

Cllr. Maher requested that the footpath at Mt. Carmel Crescent be extended on the east side, near Mt. Carmel Monastery. He said it is very dangerous for pedestrians with oncoming cars to walk on this stretch of road. Mr. Raftery said that it can not be extended as the road is very narrow and it has legal implications. Cllr. Morgan said that the Carmelite Nuns might be willing to give a piece of ground, if approached, in order to provide the footpath. It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher to ask the nuns support to provide the footpath.

Mr. Cullen said that the Bypass was scheduled to open on the 21/11/2005 but this has now been extended for a few weeks. He said that he was informed by the Director of Services, Roads and Transportation Unit, before he came to the meeting. He said no further date has been arranged.

Mr. Cullen said that the question of the Public Toilets has come up a number of times at the town council meetings. He said that the toilets could be relocated to another location nearer the town. He said he has spoken to Director of Services in charge of the playground and he is not in favour of putting the public toilets near the playground for security reasons. Mr. Raftery said he considers the corner of the fairgreen would be a suitable location for the public toilets if the members were agreeable. Cllr.

Regan said he would not be in favour of moving them any further from the town. He considers this a suitable location. Cllr. Burke said the Town Council had sent in a project under Urban Renewal for 2006 and he is hoping that the public toilets can be incorporated into the scheme. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the telephone kiosks are being vandalised at this location so it is no harm in removing them. She said she hoped the location of the public toilets would not jeopardise their submission for Urban Renewal Funding. Cllr. Morgan said that the public toilets would need to be near the town as it is mostly elderly people who use them and they could not be expected to walk too far.

Mayor Gunter-Nix circulated all present with the up to date funding for Garrybreeda Playground. She said that they held some fund raising events and there is still a balance outstanding of €3,575. She said they had got €6,000. under Amenity Grant: €650. residue from Gort Road playground; €4,000 from the Loughrea Environmental Group; €705. from fundraising; €50. contribution from Schlegal Ltd. Money supplied by Galway County is €10,000. Total cost of providing playground for Garrybreeda is €25,000. Mr. Cullen said that the Town Council, as a Corporate Body, had discretion in regard to assisting Amenity and Recreation facilities. He said he would outline proposals to them at the forthcoming Estimates meeting.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said she had attended the painting exhibition in Lakelands Nursing Home that afternoon. She would like to compliment the organisers. She said it is wonderful what the patients turned out and it is great therapy for them.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said a number of the members had mentioned that a Mayor Ball should be held and it was suggested that it take place in December. She said this would take place on a different night to the monthly meeting as was the tradition heretofore. She asked members what they thought of this idea. Cllr. Morgan said he is all in favour of a Mayoral Ball if it is organised properly. He said that the first Mayoral Ball the Town Council had was not supported by the members as they were not consulted. It was just the Mayor who had gone on a solo run. She asked members if they were interested in being on the committee to organise this event. Cllrs. Bane, Burke, Maher, Morgan and the Mayor agreed to be on the committee. They agreed to meet on the following Wednesday night (16/11/2005) to put the plan together.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 12th day of December, 2005 Mayor: *Mary Gunter-Nix*

Minutes of proceedings at the Annual Budget Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9th December, 2005, in O'Dea's Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair:

Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully,

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely Town Clerk.

Mr. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, presented the Annual Budget for the year 2006. He said a copy had been circulated to all the members on the 29th November, 2005 for their perusal. He said it is proposed to increase the rates to €2.87 which was a 5.5% increase on last year's budget.

Cllr. Regan said that they had an informal meeting on the 5th December, 2005 to discuss the proposed budget. He said it was unanimously agreed by the members that there would be no increase in rates this year. He proposed that the rates should stay at last year's rate and there be no reduction in the capital accumulated fund.

Mr. Cullen, said that some of the expenditure is statutory and it has to be included to run the town for the year. He said a small portion of it is discretionary and there was only a little room for maneuver in relation to contributions to Receptions and Presentations; Tidy Towns and Chamber of Commerce. In relation to the sum of €12,000 proposed for Amenity and Recreation he said that it can not be left in as an income and taken out as expenditure. He said one cancels out the other. He would like to use this sum to give a good finish to the playground.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the business community have suffered great inconvenience this year with the road works going on at Barrack Street and requested that the rate for the town be kept the same as last year or as near as possible to it.

Cllr. Bane said there is no point in increasing the contribution to the Chamber of Commerce if it going to be taken back again in Rates. She said that this was agreed at the informal meeting. Mr. Cullen said it is always worth while to increase the contribution to the Chamber of Commerce as they are doing tremendous work around the town. He said they provide the Lights, Tree etc at Christmas which brightened up the town.

Cllr. Tully requested that the town rate be frozen for the year and it be left the same as last year in view of the hardship endured by the business people on Barrack Street and Main Street over the year. He said this is a once off request.

Cllr. Morgan said if the planned road works for Main Street are going on next year will the same requests be forthcoming. He asked Mr. Cullen if there is any leeway to achieve a reduced rate.

Mr. Cullen indicated that if the rates did not increase at the same pace as fixed costs go up the town council would end up subsidising them for a number of years. Costs will go up but the rates will not go up accordingly. He asked for an adjournment of 15 minutes to see if the wishes of the councillors could be acceded to. He said he would look over the figures with the Town Clerk and Town Engineer. He noted that this is a once off arrangement for this year and a good will one by the councillors.

On resumption of the meeting Mr. Cullen suggested that the absolute minimum was a 1% rise on last years rate. He said that the rates would be increased from €2.72 to €2.75. He said that the savings came from reducing Receptions / Presentations from €1200 to €100, Tidy Towns from €750 to €650; Chamber of Commerce from €2,500 to €1600 and Urban Renewal zero. Mr. Cullen said that this would give a gross total expenditure €89,776.78 with income staying the same at €20,912.07 leaving a demand of €68,864.71 to be met.

Cllr. Hynes requested that provision be provided for central heating in M. Moloney's house. The Town Clerk said that there was no provision made for this item in the Estimates. Mr. Cullen said they would make a good case to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan that the revised figures be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher.

It was also resolved that the Demand be made on Galway County Council by the Loughrea Town Council for the sum of €68,864.71, for the Financial Year ending on the 31st December, 2006, and that the Form of Demand be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

This concluded the business of the Annual Budget Meeting.

Signed this 9th day of January, 2006. Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 12th December, 2005, in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Mayor: Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes
Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes:

Cllr. Regan said he would like to make a correction to the minutes in relation to the bottle banks on page 3. It stated that he had forwarded registration numbers of the culprits to the Environment Section. He would like to have this corrected to read registration numbers of the culprits were forwarded to the Environment Section some time ago. This was agreed.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted.

Cllr. Tully asked if anything can be done about the condition of the Bottle Banks. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that they intend to install cameras at this location in an effort to find the culprits and take action. Cllr. Maher asked for an up date on the proposed recycling centre at Rathready. Mr. Raftery said that an Architect is being appointed to draw up plans for the recycling centre and a depot for the Outdoor Staff. Cllr. Morgan said that the Council site at the Long Point was very unsightly and needs to be tidied up. Mr. Raftery said that all of the signs will be going to the depot on the Rathready Road when it is built. Cllr. Regan said he had reported an incident of dumping on the Tynagh Road some years ago and nobody has done anything about it. Mr. Cullen said that he was not aware of it and if he rings him with details he would investigate this further. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that Mr. Regan should leave the information with Mr. Cullen for investigation.

Cllr. Bane asked for an update on the application for Urban Renewal in 2006. She asked if the toilets would be located near the proposed site. Mr. Cullen said that no decision had been made on the Urban Renewal application for 2006 yet. He did not think that the toilets being located near the proposed site would increase or decrease the points.

Cllr. Bane asked for an update on the Traffic Management Plan and when it will be reviewed. She understood that this was to be reviewed once the Bypass was open. Mr. Cullen said that it would be reviewed by the Area County Councillors. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she had got a letter from Mrs. Mary O'Neill regarding a double yellow line outside the Hotel. She said that taxis can not stand outside the Hotel to collect passengers or drop off passengers. She said that she operates a 35 bed roomed

Hotel and it is detrimental to her business. She requested that this be removed as the Bypass is now open and the town is not as busy. Mr. Raftery said that the Traffic Management Plan will be coming up for review and this area will be considered in conjunction with other areas around the town. Cllr. Hynes said that the Traffic Management Plan will be reviewed early next year and he would make a strong case to have the double yellow lines removed at this location. Cllr. Regan said the views of the councillors should be taken into account when this plan was being reviewed.

Cllr. Tully asked why the Contractors were drilling the road and footpaths again. He thought all of the work was complete. Mr. Raftery said that they were making individual connections into the houses or businesses. Cllr. Tully asked who is responsible for this project is it the County Council or the Contractors. He said that hydrants were covered over by the Contractors and if an accident happened lives could have been lost. Mr. Raftery said that the Contractors would have to check the line for leaks and to set the right pressure in the valves. He said it is unlikely that this work will be complete before Christmas. When the Contractors are satisfied that it is in good working order the area will then be resurfaced. Cllrs. Tully said that the residents and business people were told it would take three months to complete; then it was seven months and it looks that it will now a minimum of nine months. Mr. Raftery said the Contractor had encountered a number of problems along the line like rock etc. which delayed the project. Cllr. Bane asked why the public are not informed if the water is being turned off. It has happened several times without warning. Mr. Raftery said that he has requested the Contractors to contact the Overseer or himself so as the water can be diverted and circulated to another area to minimise the disruption. Mr. Cullen, said that this matter should be referred to the Senior Engineer in Water Services Unit. Cllr. Morgan said he hopes that similar problems will not be encountered when the Main Street is reinstated. He asked Mr. Cullen if there was any word on when the Main Street will be done. He said that Minister Cullen had given a commitment to reinstate the Main Street at the opening of the Bypass and he is sure it will happen. Cllr. Morgan asked what is the status of the Main Street. Mr. Raftery said that it is a Regional road from Westbridge up to the Fairfield roundabout and is a National Secondary from the Westbridge to Caherlavine round about. Cllr. Hynes asked if the decentralisation programme was still on course and if Mr. Cullen had any information on it. Mr. Cullen said he understood that negotiations were ongoing with the Department of Transport.

Cllr. Maher said the directional signs are up wrong on the Bypass. It gives the wrong mileage. Mr. Raftery said he would inform the NRA.

Cllr. Burke said he had got correspondence from Minister Treacy regarding the Swimming Pool. He said the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism had sent further queries which needed to be answered. He said that the Swimming Pool Committee would stay on until those questions were answered. He said if there is not a decision, very soon, from the Minister in regard to funding this project the Committee will resign.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said she would like to congratulate the Loughrea Football Team on winning the Connacht Junior A Title. As agreed at a previous meeting a reception

will be arranged to recognise their achievement. She said she will inform them when the date and venue has been confirmed.

Mayor Gunter-Nix wished the Councillors, Officials and Press the compliments of the season. She said she would like to thank them for their assistance during the year.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 9th day of January, 2006. Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9th January, 2006 in the Credit Union Offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

Llathair

Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Jim Cullen, Director of Services.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she would take the third item on the Agenda, Presentation by Kieran Coyne, if the members were agreeable. This was unanimously agreed.

Presentation by Kieran Coyne, Community & Enterprise.

Kieran Coyne, Community and Enterprise, set out a Programme of Action from 2006 to 2008 as outlined in the document circulated to all members under the following headings. 1. Programme of Action for Agriculture and Rural Development; 2. Programme of Action for the Gaeltacht; 3. Programme of Action for the Islands; 4 Programme of Action for Economic Development; 5. Programme of Action for Transport; 6. Programme of Action for Arts & Culture; 7. Programme of Action for Youth, Sports & Recreation; 8. Programme of Action for Tourism; 9. Programme of Action for Social Inclusion; 10. Programme of Action for Healthcare; 11. Programme of Action for Strengthening our Communities; 12. Programme of Action for Learning;

He said most of the programmes could apply to the Loughrea area except the programme of action for the Gaeltacht and the Islands. He said it shows the different phases of the programme which will be dependent on funding to implement them. He said that the N. 6 would not specifically be included in the Programme as it is funded nationally and the programme of action relate to actions that are collaborative and can be delivered locally. He said that the programme 4 was very relevant to Loughrea as it included the roll out of Broadband to Loughrea, Athenry, Gort, Clifden and Tuam. He said that spurs would be laid along the town for businesses and householders within the next 6 to 8 months. He said the contract to tender is expected to be awarded shortly. He said that this will be a great incentive to bringing industries to the town. He said Programme 9 would be familiar to Mayor Gunter Nix and Mayor Hynes as they are members of the SIM group. Programme 10 was also very relevant to Loughrea where the issue of Youth Cafés at a number of locations around County Galway are being considered. He said they would be looking at sources of funding for the promotion and development of youth cafes in Loughrea and the County. Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked Kieran Coyne for his presentation.

Cllr. Burke said that the Youth Café Group had a feasibility study prepared for this project. He said that this was completed by the young adults in the second level colleges in Loughrea. He said that Transition Year students in the two schools would be progressing this project from now on. He thanked Mr. Coyne for his support in bringing this project to fruition. Mr. Coyne said that the Health Service Executive will do an assessment on Youth Cafes that they have already provided support to Tuam and Ballinasloe.

Cllr. Morgan asked if all of the town will be connected up to Broadband in 6 to 8 months. He asked if Main Street will be dug up for this project ahead of the major improvements work proposed for the Main Street. Mr. Coyne said that a very narrow cutting is required for the fibre for Broadband and it would give a higher grade of Broadband to the town. Cllr. Morgan said that a common sense approach should be made and leave the ducting large enough for future developments.

Cllr. Regan asked what type of ducting is around the town considering the short time frame to roll out this project. Mr. Raftery Acting Executive Engineer said there is a Broadband cable running along the Bypass and Barrack Street at the moment.

Cllr. Hynes said that Information Technology is very important now for Business, Residences, and Government Departments. He asked if Housing Estates will be provided with spurs. Mr. Coyne said schools can be connected but he was not aware that Housing Estates would have the fibre. Cllr. Hynes said that Housing Estates should be kept in mind when the next phase comes on stream.

Cllr. Hynes requested Kieran Coyne to inform the meeting on the up to date position regarding the status of the grant application for the Swimming Pool for Loughrea. He said that the SIM group had a few meetings to discuss this item in the context of Social Inclusion. He said that there were a number of questions that needed to be addressed in relation to the provision of a swimming pool i.e. impact the Swimming Pool would have in relation to Tuam and Ballinasloe; Opening hours; Access for schools and social inclusion; Determine the level of need. He said that they had returned the necessary information to the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism. He said that the Director of Services for Corporate and General Services would be dealing with the other correspondence in relation to funding. He said that Loughrea was different from Ballinasloe and Tuam because it was being provided under a PPP scheme. He said that the norm up to now has been that swimming pools have been Local Authority operated.

Cllr. Morgan said that traffic is increasing every day and it is important that a Swimming Pool be provided in Loughrea. He said that families spend a half day coming and going to swimming pools. He said that we are fortunate in Loughrea that a Private Developer is willing to put his head on the block and provide this facility.

Cllr. Burke said Loughrea needs a swimming pool and the community is fully behind this initiative. He said that each time questions are raised by the Department they are answered. He said that further issues are raised continually which is frustrating for the Committee. He said that it would seem that the Director of Services dealing with this project is not committed to bringing this project to fruition and is stalling on it again.

He said he would like to thank Jim Cullen and Kieran Coyne for their interest and help in this project. He said the Committee had public meetings and all the documents were put on public display and the community were excited about the swimming pool being provided. He said there was social inclusion from the first day the Swimming Pool was mentioned. He said they agreed to put in a hoist and ramps for people with Disability. He said it is decision time now as the Developer can not be left on the long finger any longer. He said that the Committee had visited the schools in the area and discussed the proposals with the Teachers and pupils and everybody was in agreement with the opening times. He said that it cost the Department/County Council 100% to provide Swimming Pools in Ballinasloe and Tuam whereas it will only cost 15% to provide it in Loughrea as the balance will be met by the Developer and Committee. He said that the Committee has proposed the same opening hours and the same price as Ballinasloe and he can not understand why red herrings were thrown out again over this issue. He said that the Developer is not going to loose money in fact he will probably make a profit. He said that it is time that the County Council and the Department sit down and bring this to a conclusion. He said that a meeting is arranged with the Developer and the County Council for next Friday 13/1/2006 and we would have to await the outcome of this meeting. The Committee will be resigning if the outcome of this meeting is unsuccessful. He said they would also be naming and shaming the people responsible for loosing it.

Cllr. Regan said that the sentiment of the Chairman of the Swimming Pool Committee was not very encouraging. He said reports relayed to the Town Council seems to imply that lack of dedication by Galway County Council to be the reason this project is in limbo. He said it is a sad day for Loughrea if the Swimming Pool is not provided as the Committee have worked tirelessly trying to raise funds and provide this much needed facility.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said she would not be as pessimistic as the other speakers. In fact she would be very optimistic that the Committee will achieve the goal set out. She said that Mr. Coyne had pushed this project along as quickly as possible and she thinks there will be light at the end of the tunnel. She said that Loughrea needs a pool as there is big emphasis on healthy life styles now and also a lot of Sporting Organisations in the Loughrea environs would use it if provided. She said that they would meet the Area Councillors informally on the 10/1/2006 and they would make the views of the town councillors know to them. She thanked Mr. Coyne for taking the questions and replying to them. Mr. Coyne left the meeting.

Confirmation of Estimates Meeting held on the 12th December, 2005.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher that the Estimates be adopted.

Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 12th December 2005.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Burke that the Minutes of the Monthly meeting be adopted.

Cllr. Curley said he would like to congratulate Adrian Raftery, on the works on Barrack Street. He said at last Barrack Street seems to be coming back to normal.

Cllr. Tully said the Contractors laying the tarmacadam arrived on site at 7.15 a.m. outside the Cathedral this morning but work did not commence until after 12.00 noon. He said it seemed that no preparation had been done for them. He asked if there was a time frame to complete this work or would it drag on like the original contract. He asked if the Resident Engineer is full time on the scheme as he does not seem to be around all the time. He asked if the scheme was gone over budget or was it still at contract price. Mr. Raftery said that the Resident Engineer is part time on the job. Cllr. Tully said that the whole town was out of water on the 15th and 16th December, 2005 without warning. He wanted to know how did this happen. He said an elderly couple, near the Cathedral, were left without water on the 15th, 16th and 17th December, 2005 without any explanation. Mr. Raftery said that the Contractors had turned off valves when they were connecting the new line to the system and turned off the wrong ones. There was no chance to give a warning. He said that a comprehensive report was forwarded to the Senior Engineer in Water Services Section about this matter and others arising while work was going on. In relation to the elderly couple without water he said that the County Council employees came in on the 17th December (Saturday) and reconnected them. Cllr. Tully asked if they could have a copy of the report forwarded to Water Services. Mr. Raftery said there was no problem with them seeing the report.

Cllr. Maher said that there are a lot of lessons to be learned from this project and when the Main Street project comes on stream there will be have to be better plans and a one way system introduced.

Cllr. Regan asked if all the public lighting is underground on Barrack Street or is there a stretch from the Town Hall to the Fire Station going to be left overhead. He said that it would make more economic sense to do this job now, whatever the cost, rather than start digging again to put this wiring underground. Mr. Raftery said that this did not form part of the contract.

Cllr. Burke said that the power lines go underneath the footpath not the road. This work could be done if footpaths are being replaced at a later stage. He asked if all the money was used up for replacing footpaths in the Town Commissioners area. Mr. Raftery said it was.

Cllr. Regan asked if this firm could still get another contract in Loughrea in view of their record. Mr. Raftery said there was no reason to preclude them from tendering for another job in Loughrea. He said a certain procedure had to be gone through when awarding contracts and if they met with the criteria needed to perform the job they would not be prohibited.

Cllr. Morgan said that the contractors should be congratulated on the work they have done. He said they have put in new piping for Water, Waste Water, Sewerage, Broadband and some E.S.B. lines. He said that concrete pipes were used up to now which could be easily broken but now wavin piping is used which will be a life time job. He said the Contractors ran into a bit of trouble with rock which they were not aware existed. He said that years ago explosives were used to break the rock but now the Contractors use rock breakers. He said that this was a very intricate job and time consuming. He said there were also delays with deliveries of goods which did not

help the situation. He said that power lines could not be put near the other services laid in Barrack Street because they have to be marked very carefully.

Cllr. Maher asked when the recycling centre will be moved to the Rathready Road. Mr. Raftery said that Part 8 planning process was going through and it takes 8 weeks for that to be completed. He said that there would also be a Council Depot constructed on this site. He would expect that this will happen in the next seven or eight months.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"I will propose that recommendations be sent to Galway County Council - to erect Stop signs on the Railway Road, at the junction of Railway Road and Bride Street, Loughrea; and at the junction of the Public Car Park, and Main Street; so that cars are obliged to stop at the north side of the footpaths, in both cases and not at the edge of the Dublin-Galway road".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that pedestrians find it hard to cross the street at Railway road as cars come to the edge of Railway Road at the junction with Bride Street. He said that pedestrians can not see the traffic coming with the high wall on the right hand side coming from Bride Street. He said the construction of the footpath at the riverside, under Urban Renewal, will help. Mr. Raftery said that this can be looked at when the Traffic Management Plan comes up for review. Cllr. Burke said that it is the law that traffic stops at this junction.

"That the strongest recommendation possible be made to the E.S.B. to increase power in Loughrea town, so as to eliminate the loss of power in the evenings when householders and businesses are experiencing dimming and flicking of their lights; and of electric cookers taking longer to cook than usual".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that householders are experiencing difficulty with power in the evening when they come home from work. He said there seems to be no power storage to fall back on during peak times in the evenings. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that householders should conserve energy and switch off lights and unnecessary appliances and it would reduce the demand on the power lines.

"That a recommendation be made to the E.S.B. to turn the light on the pole at the junction of Piggott Street and Main Street westwards, so as to eliminate the Black Spot at said junction, where presently it is unsafe for people getting off the high footpath at Cunnane's shop"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said it is very dark at the bottom of Piggott Street/Main Street outside Cunnane's shop and he said if the light on the pole at the junction was faced

westwards it would eliminate this black spot. He said it is unsafe for people using this footpath as it is very high and dark and people can not see where they are going.

AOB.

Mr. Raftery said it is intended to do the Danesfort Road down to the Bypass road under the Urban Public Lighting Programme 2006. This was agreed. Cllr. Tully said that the Bohercom road and Church Street would also need lights as it is very dark for people using them. Mr. Raftery said he would look at it.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the Playground Committee for Garrybreeda had organised a raffle over Christmas to fund this playground. She said there is now €1,500 left to be collected out of the €15,000 estimated cost. Cllr. Maher said that the remainder of the funding should come from the capital funding set aside in the estimates to finish this project. This was fully supported. Cllr. Morgan said it was a great achievement to have funded a second playground for Loughrea. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she would like to thank Cllrs. Maher, Tully and Burke for helping with the fund raising. She said the residents on the East side of the town had supported this development as it will facilitate the huge population in the surrounding area.

Cllr. Burke said he would like to raise the issue of planning in the Loughrea area. He said two young people want to build a house in Loughrea Area. They have purchased a site in Carrabane but can not build there because they are not from the Parish. People from Loughrea can not live outside Loughrea, eventhough, people from other parishes can come to Loughrea and live there. He said that the only houses available in Loughrea are houses in Housing Estates. He said that the Town and County Plans only seem to benefit the Developers. He said it is unfair and undemocratic that there is not fairplay for all the community. He asked Cllr. Hynes, Mayor of the County, if he could use his influence to change this matter. He said the County Councillors are responsible for the adoption of the plans. He asked where is the 1.5 miles measured from in the town to the environs.

Cllr. Morgan said any Irish Citizen is entitled to build their own house if they so wish. He said that one off houses should be allowed and Mayor Hynes should use his influence in this regard. Cllr. Tully said that each applicant should be judged on his/her own merits. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the minimum of green space is being put into housing estates at the moment. She said as children get older they would not have adequate space to play in. She says that this causes awful problems which leads to violence. She asked Cllr. Hynes to inform the meeting about the planning process.

Cllr. Hynes said he was not a planner. He said that the County Councillors are responsible for the adoption of the Development Plan. He said that the County Councillors worked through the night to finalise the County Development Plan which was adopted in 2003. He said there is new text gone into the Development Plan since it was adopted like fringe development outside the environs. He said it is an excuse to refuse planning. He said he always believed in the rights of the people. He said that the County Councillors have been at logger heads with the Planners over one off houses. He said that planning issues have been discussed several times with the Planners at the Area Meetings to bring justice to the community. He said that the

County Development Plan is being reviewed at the moment so individuals can have a say or an input in it.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said the Town Councillors could discuss this issue with the Area Councillors after the joint meeting with the Chamber of Commerce on the 10/1/2006.

It was proposed by Councillor Burke that the Planners be invited to Loughrea Town Council Meeting to discuss the ins and outs of the Development Plans. This was unanimously supported by all the members.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said she had got a note from Padraic O'Baoil in relation to grants available for the use of Irish in the town. She said it is a three in one grant. She said if the business put up €3 Glor would give them €1. She said she had not got the application form but she did not think there was any ceiling on the amount of the grant allocated.

Cllr. Burke said that he had to deputise, in December, for the Mayor and attend a Civil Defence function. He said it was to mark their 50th Anniversary of being set up. He said he would like to congratulate them on the work they carry out and are always available to attend when ever called on. He requested that a letter be sent to the relevant personnel.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed this 13th day of February, 2006. Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13th February, 2006 in the Credit Union Office, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair

Mayor: Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Members: Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllr. Bane.

Mayor Gunter-Nix proposed that one minutes silence be observed as a mark of respect to the late Joe Greene, former Town Commissioner. This was agreed.

Glowing tributes were paid by the members to the late Joe Greene. He was in office from 1967 to 1974 and ran as a non-party candidate on behalf of the traders. He was Chairman during his term of office. The members said he always held a great interest in the town. He was involved in many organisations and held key positions. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that a letter of sympathy should be sent from the Town Council to his wife Ann and family. The members also expressed their condolences with his sister Mary.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that Cllr. Burke and other members had requested an official from the Planning Section attend the meeting to discuss planning policies in Loughrea. She said that Cllr. Burke was delayed but would be coming later to the meeting so he can raise whatever concerns he has at the meeting when he arrives. She said that Liam Gavin, Senior Engineer, Planning Section had agreed to attend the meeting. She said she would take the planning issues first if the members were in agreement. This was unanimously agreed.

Cllr. Regan said that a young couple from Loughrea bought a site in Carrabane but were refused planning permission because they were not from the area. Mr. Gavin said he would not be commenting on individual cases as he was not familiar with it. He said that comes under the Urban Fringe Guidelines and the applicants would have to be in need of housing. He said it was shown on the map circulated with the dotted red line which is 1.5 miles from the speed limit or town boundary whichever is greater. Mr. Gavin said that this development would be restricted to the applicant, the applicant's family or grandchildren who can make a strong case for the development. He said there is a 15 km control zone provided for in the County Development Plan, outside Galway City, so as to prevent urban sprawl. He said that urban generated housing in the open countryside is increasing rapidly and the Planning authority would have to exercise control over it. He said that the area inside the dotted line would have a higher density of housing than outside the town area. Cllr. Regan said that an individual will not get planning permission in Loughrea town and wondered how existing Developers got planning permission for huge housing estates. Mr.

Gavin said that it was probably an old planning permission that existed before the restriction was introduced. He said one off houses would be permitted outside of the zoned area of the town, as illustrated on the map (outer planning line – solid line) if the applicant has a Housing need and was a son or daughter of the owner of the land. He said 2500 to 3000 single rural houses have been built which is 90% grant rate. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that from listening to the debate it would appear that each case would be taken on its merits. Mr. Gavin said that this plan is in being from 2005 to 2011. This will be reviewed in 2010. He said that there is sufficient land zoned residential in the current Loughrea Local Area Plan. He said the different land zoning use and zoning matrix was clearly identified on the Town Plan. Cllr. Tully asked how some properties got re-zoned. Mr. Gavin said when the Development Plan came up for review it went on public display and the councillors and the community had an input in it. Cllr. Tully asked how the lands zoned Community Facilities could be acquired as it is all in private ownership. Mr. Gavin said that the County Council would hope to acquire them by agreement, if possible, if not they had the power to acquire them by Compulsory Purchase Order. He said that they have to plan for the future. Cllr. Regan said that the lands zoned Recreation and Amenity were in private ownership so there will be a lot of land to be compulsory purchased. Mr. Gavin said that it may not all happen in this Plan but they have to make provision for the expected growth in the future. He said that the corridor for the Loughrea Bypass was reserved for 30 years before it was used. He said that the County Council will be concentrating on the Amenity Areas around the lake first and look at the other areas then.

Mr. Gavin said that there is a new initiative in planning. This is the Rural Settlement Strategy. This is a scheme for over 100 towns and villages to bring life back to them. The same rule applies as the Urban Fringe guidelines.

Cllr. Morgan asked if a business could be provided in the middle of a Housing Estate. Mr. Gavin said that the owner would have to apply for planning permission for change of use of the premises. He said residents or communities could send in a submission if they were not happy with the development or appeal it to An Bord Pleanála if granted by the County Council.

Cllr. Curley asked if planning permission will be granted north of the Bypass. Mr. Gavin said that planning will not be granted outside the town boundary.

Cllr. Tully asked if a Protected Structure or a Derelict Site could be knocked to put in a new development. Mr. Gavin said that generally speaking this would not happen. He said the County Council has a Conservation Officer employed who would look at the condition of the building to see if it could be preserved or not. Cllr. Morgan said he is delighted to hear this. He said that a Castle was knocked on a Saturday morning a few years ago which was a lovely structure and it was a crying shame.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that a frequent question asked by the public is the Taking in Charge of Housing Estates. Mr. Gavin said that Taking in Charge of Housing Estates was passed at the last meeting and there is now a procedure in place. Cllr. Regan asked if there was any way to follow the Developer and place the onus on them to make the road structure safe and provide public lighting and maintain it. He asked if the Housing Estates were checked out to see if the Developer had adhered to the

conditions and if work was carried out to the satisfaction of the planning office. Mr. Gavin said there is now a Building Control Officer who inspects Current Housing Estates to ensure that the Developer has complied with the conditions. Mr. Raftery asked if old Housing Estates were included in this document for Taking in Charge. Mr. Gavin said they were and he would send a copy to the Town Clerk with the other guidelines to circulate to the members.

Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked Mr. Gavin for attending the meeting and explaining the planning policies to the members. Cllr. Hynes also thanked him. Mr. Gavin left the meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on the 13th January, 2006.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

Grants for Footpaths in former Town Commissioner Areas.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that this was a very important document and it is a Reserved Function of the Town Council. It is handing power back to the Town Council. He said that the allocation is double what it was last year which was €500,000 so an allocation of €1,000,000 would be allocated nationally. Cllr. Tully asked what the allocation was last year for the footpaths under this scheme. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said it was €40,000. Mr. Cullen said that the Town Council would get two thirds of the cost of the approved works and the remaining one third funded by the County Council. Mayor Gunter-Nix proposed that the members meet informally on Monday 20th January at 7.30 p.m. to discuss this matter and draw up a list. She said there are a number of black spots which would need to be addressed and each member would have one or two in mind. She thinks that it would be better value to spread it around rather than focussing on one area. This was seconded by Cllr. Regan. Mr. Raftery, said he would be recommending that the Danesfort road be included under this grant for footpaths and public lighting. He said the Gort Road can not be included because it is a National Secondary Road. Cllr. Regan said that they could not agree to Danesfort road being included as there were substantial development contributions lodged with Galway County Council and that money should be used for that purpose. Cllr. Tully asked if the footpaths would be done this year and if the NRA would be allocating any funding for footpaths on the Main Street. Mr. Raftery said that a report is gone to the NRA for funding for the Main Street, but no approval has been given yet. Cllr. Regan said that the problem in Loughrea is the width of the footpaths which range from 6 to 9 feet. He said you could park a bus on some of them. He asked what length of footpaths was done last year with the grant. He asked if Notice of Motion money could be allocated from the Councillors in the Loughrea Electoral Area to provide the footpaths and public lighting at this location. Mr. Raftery said 300 metres of footpath was constructed last year. Cllr. Morgan said that the Town Councillors could make a recommendation not a decision on what will be done. Mr. Cullen said that it is a Reserved Function of the Town Council and a decision can be made by them.

Cllr. Burke joined the meeting. He apologised for being late.

Correspondence.

Cllr. Hynes said he noted in the correspondence circulated a letter from Minister for Social Welfare to Minister Treacy stating that they were relocating a full Social Welfare office to Loughrea. He said this will bring jobs, extra people, will have facilities for appeals as Inspectors will be available to deal with queries. He said that the Department of Transport would also be looking for accommodation as will the County Council for a Fire Station. He said all of those services could be incorporated on the one site. He said that the Office of Public Works was actively pursuing a site of about 4 acres.

Cllr. Morgan said that he had tabled Notice of Motion concerning lighting and inadequate power in the evening during the rush hour but had got no reply. The Town Clerk said replies had been received from the Electricity Supply Board since the agenda went out and she circulated each member with the reply. The following is an extract from their letter dated 10th February, 2006. "A significant up-grading of our medium voltage networks feeding into Loughrea is in progress and will be completed over the coming months. E.S.B. Networks will liaise with Galway County Council to further strengthen our networks within Loughrea town in conjunction with the proposed urban renewal along Dunkellin and Main Street. Major Multi Million Euro infrastructural development in both Athlone and Ballinasloe which will come on stream this year will offer ESB Networks the facility to modify the operation of our 38kV Transmission Network to improve the quality of electricity supply into Loughrea and its environs".

"In regard to public lighting at the junction of Piggott Street and Main Street our local staff will adjust the angle of the light early next week to maximise the lighting effect and hopefully eliminate the "Black Spot"."

Cllr. Regan said that extra lights are needed in Church Street for a number of years but there is no sign of providing them.

Mayor Gunter-Nix asked if there were any plans to put all the wires for ESB and Eircom underground as it would improve the visual amenity of the town. Mr. Rafferty said there was nothing in the pipeline at the moment.

Mr. Rafferty said the County Council will be digging up the street from the Boathouse to the Westbridge and from Athenry Road along Mount Carmel Crescent to facilitate the laying of ducting for Broadband.

Request from McFadden Funfair to use the Fairgreen in Loughrea from the 29th August to 7th September, 2006. Most members agreed that this event should not go ahead because of the condition the fairgreen was left in after such events last year. Cllr. Regan said if the Bond was doubled perhaps it could be considered. Cllr. Tully said that the juvenile teams train in the fairgreen and they were not able to use the facility since September. It was proposed by Cllr. Maher seconded by Cllr. Curley that this event should not be allowed in the Fairgreen this year. Mayor Gunter-Nix said if the Urban Renewal project goes ahead that this will eliminate the use of the fairgreen for such events. She asked Mr. Cullen for an up date on this application. Mr. Cullen said that there was no decision on this application but he understands that

only one project will be permitted in the Loughrea Electoral Area. There should be a decision by March.

Cllr. Burke raised a query in relation to funding for the remedial works on Main Street once the Loughrea Bypass has been completed. It states on NRA letter received from Fred Barry "these works will be undertaken by Galway County Council in 2006, the extent of which will, of course, be dependent on the level of funding available and the competing demands of resources". He said the Minister gave a commitment at the opening of the Bypass that the Main Street would be reinstated. He proposed that a letter be forwarded to the NRA to get clarity on the matter. This was seconded by Cllr. Hynes. Mayor Gunter-Nix said a copy should also be sent to Minister Cullen.

Notice of Motion from Nenagh Town Council.

Notice of Motion from Ballina Town Council.

Notice of Motion from Balbriggan Town Council.

Letter from Marie Plower on behalf of Baunoge/Masonbrook and Mount Pleasant Residents Association requesting that a development in the name of Rosemarie O'Rourke be turned down and asking the Town Council to support this matter. Mr. Cullen said the Town Council are not a planning authority so have no say in planning matters. The Residents can send in a submission to the County Council before the closing date. They can also appeal it to An Bord Pleanala. Cllr. Regan asked if there are any plans to extend or upgrade the existing sewerage facility to cater for all the development going on in Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said that they have written to the Department of the Environment for funding but have not got approval to extend the facility.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Curley.

"I would like to ask Galway County Council what plans they have to replace the toilets at the Westbridge and where they will be located"

This was proposed by Cllr Curley seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Cllr. Curley said that the toilets were removed from the Westbridge to facilitate the new building. He wants to know where they will be located now. Cllr. Regan said that the members had agreed they be placed where the telephone kiosk is at present. He said he would not agree to move them any further. Mr. Cullen said he understood that it was agreed that they would be sited near the Courthouse incorporating the Urban Renewal project. Cllr. Maher said it was agreed by the members that the telephone kiosk would be removed and the toilets placed in that area. Mayor Gunter-Nix said the telephone kiosk is vandalised and does not add to the fairgreen. She said the toilets should be sited somewhere safe in that vicinity. Mr. Cullen said they would have to await the outcome of the Urban Renewal application and look at it then.

"When do they intend to erect Stoney Brennan's Statute at Westbridge"

It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Mr. Raftery said that this will be erected soon.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"I propose that a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council that because most people in Loughrea town today do not know their neighbours; and because when one is trying to locate a person in a street or road one must go on a door to door trip in order to locate the person being sought. That Numbers be allocated to every house, which does not already have a number, throughout the town; it being then up to each householder to erect that number or not."

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that he finds it difficult to locate people even in his own business and wonders what can be done about it. He said it is difficult for An Post to deliver post if there are people of the same name in the area.

"That the Gardai be requested to frequently and regularly stop and prosecute motorists exceeding the speed limit through the town of Loughrea; the speed since the opening of the Bypass having increased to a frightening and potentially dangerous level; and that similar action be taken against those using hand held mobile phones while driving, and thereby being a danger to pedestrian and other motorists"

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said the speed through the town and around it would need to be addressed. He said it is frightening and extremely dangerous and it would need to be reduced. Cllr. Morgan said that he was coming in at Bride Street recently and a motorist overtook him in a built up area within the speed limit. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she had correspondence from the New Superintendent and there is new legislation being implemented shortly which might combat this problem. She said she would be arranging a meeting with him formally or informally in the near future.

"That Galway County Council is requested to give urgent attention to the Walks, Loughrea, which has almost lost all of its former beauty and amenity value; and that a work group is assigned to rebuild the river bank wall, a big portion of which has already collapsed.

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Hynes.

Cllr. Morgan said that a huge junk of the wall on the Walks has collapsed. He was wondering if a FAS scheme could be organised to deal with this problem. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she had a request from the Anglers Association to discuss the Walks and other matters and she was finalising arrangements with Mr. Cullen, Mr. Sheil, Anglers and herself on a mutual date. Cllr. Morgan said it is unlikely that the Anglers Association would build the wall.

AOB.

Cllr. Burke asked why the Expressions of Interest on Loughrea Town Hall was withdrawn. This was stated in letter dated 11/1/2006 from the County Council. "I am to inform you that Galway County Council is now discontinuing this process. Any further proposals in relation to this project will be advertised." He has it on good authority that the Town Hall, Loughrea is for sale. He said that the Youth Café had done a feasibility study on it and now it is not worth the paper it is written on. He said another group were in partnership with them but now it is all up in the air. Mr. Cullen said it was always the decision of Galway County Council to sell or lease the Town Hall as they had not got the funding to do the necessary refurbishment on it. He said the County Council had taken legal advice regarding the tendering process and the specific portion for community use which was open to challenge. Cllr. Curley said that the Town Hall was on the table nearly every night when the last Board met. It is time to move on and put it on the market for sale or lease as Galway County Council has not got the finances to do it up. He said the Purchaser might keep a portion for Community use. Cllr. Hynes said he is happy that the Department of the Environment and the Manager have delayed things a bit and a new notice will be advertised which will have the legal status strengthened. He hopes the text written into it will be mainly for community use with a degree of PPP.

Cllr. Regan said the windows would need to be attended to as some of them were very dangerous. Cllr. Morgan said that he and some others had put money into the Town Hall for the benefit of the Community and the people of the town want it for them. Mr. Cullen said he would inform the Town Council members if he receives any further details.

Cllr. Morgan said he had tabled a motion at the November meeting about the Abstraction Order for Loughrea Lake. He requested technical advice as the Anglers Association had concerns that the quantity of water would be greatly reduced as a result of laying the mains from Loughrea to Craughwell. He said that Craughwell could be linked into the Lough Corrib scheme as it is coming within 2 miles of it. He said he would prefer to see the water going to Kilrickle as there is no hope of this area being approved for water. Mr. Cullen said it is not the quantity of water in the Lake which is curtailing development in Loughrea it is the pumping system. He said there is sufficient water in the Lake for his life time and generations to come. Cllr. Morgan said that he was the first person to initiate the Loughrea Group Water Supply Scheme to cover all the rural areas. Cllr. Hynes said that plans have been submitted to the Department of the Environment for this area which is awaiting approval. Cllr. Burke asked when the new pumps will be installed as there is constraints on development in the town. Mr. Raftery said that a report has been done and we are awaiting approval.

Cllr. Maher said that the Meadow Court Hotel was still available for the 18th March, 2006 if the Mayor was interested in holding a Mayoral Ball. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the intention was to hold it at Christmas instead of the traditional Christmas Dinner. The members did not support the Mayoral Ball so it was ruled out. She said that the Mayor of the County might be interested in this date and the town council members would support it. Cllr. Hynes said he no plans at the moment to hold a Mayoral Ball.

Cllr. Regan said that the problem of dogs fouling on the footpaths needs to be addressed as it is a disgrace. He said that children and adults walk on the footpaths and it would be very difficult to avoid it.

Cllr. Tully said that signs would need to be erected at the Gael Scoil to slow down the traffic. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate it.

Cllr. Regan said that the Bottle Banks are constantly full. He said that the Publicans must be using it or else there is serious amount of drink being consumed in the town. Cllr. Burke said he saw a Restaurant owner putting a load of bottles into the Banks one night. He said Publicans or Restaurant owners have to be using it.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 13th day of March, 2006. Mayor: Mary Gunter Nix

Minutes of proceeding of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13th March, 2006, in the Credit Union Office, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I lathair

Mayor: Mary Gunter -Nix.

Members: Cllrs. Geraline Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllr. Michael Maher.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that Gerard McInerney, Manager of Super Value would like to address the councillors in relation to a proposal he has for the Fairgreen. She said she would deal with this matter first. This was agreed.

Presentation by Gerard McInerney - Landscaping of Fairgreen.

Mr. McInerney said this is a family business, set up by grandfather in 1891. He said they moved from the Main Street in 1987, since then have traded opposite the Fairgreen. He said he took over the management of the business in 1965. Since he has taken over the business he has re-invested profits into the business every four years. This is the first occasion that he has not followed this pattern as 6 years have elapsed since his last investment. He said he is exploring the possibility of moving out as he has no space to expand. He has been in contact with property owners in the area. He said the development in Dunkellin Street is beneficial to him but he can not ensure the future of his business as it is confined with car parking. He said he had come to make an offer to the Town Council and Galway County Council in relation to expanding his business. He said he intends to build a new supermarket on the space of the present car park. He said he would like to use portion of the Fairgreen on a temporary basis as a car park while this work is being undertaken. It will be a full sized car park. He said he knows the Fairgreen is an emotive issue with the Town Council but he would appreciate if due consideration would be given to this proposal. He understands that Loughrea Town Council had applied for Town and Village Renewal funding for this area but it was not successful. He said he is prepared to give €300,000 towards this project and also €150,000 for an all weather pitch. He said that he has not applied for planning permission for the new supermarket yet. He said he will cover the cost of the Planning Application, Lighting, Health and Safety fees etc. and whatever is necessary for the temporary car park. He will remove the soil and put down tarmacadam for the car park. When completed in about 12 to 18 months he will remove the tarmacadam and put back the soil or whatever the Town Council or Galway County Council decide. It will be landscaped again with trees or small shrubs. He said that very little has been spent to beautify the Fairgreen in his life time. He envisaged seeing people meandering through landscaped areas with prams and children on summer evenings. He will lodge the money on the first day the sod is turned. He said the building would take at least a year with planning and a year to build it.

He said he employs 50 full time staff and 64 part time staff. He has 15,000 customers per week and he wants to retain what he has in terms of growth of business in the town and increase the level of service. He said he is not aiming to increase it to 16,000 customers per week but make it more user friendly. He said he would enter into a legal agreement with the Town Council and Galway County Council and meet what ever costs were involved.

Mayor Gunter-Nix thanked Mr. McInerney for his presentation and asked the members if they had any questions which needed clarification before he left.

Cllr. Morgan said he would like Mr. McInerney to confirm that he is prepared to give almost half a million to the Town Council/Galway County Council for renting portion of the fairgreen plus legal costs. Mr. McInerney replied in the affirmative. Cllr. Morgan asked if the Town Council would be making the decision on how this area would be developed when returned to them. Mr. McInerney said he may have a few suggestions to make but the final decision will rest with the Town Council and Galway County Council.

Cllr. Curley asked Mr. McInerney if he had preliminary discussions with the planning office about this development as it all hinged around planning permission being granted for the two developments. Mr. McInerney said he had not. This was just an informative session.

Cllr. Burke asked Mr. McInerney if the final plans for the proposed development could be brought to the Town Council meeting before being lodged so as the members would know exactly what was being built. Mr. McInerney said he had no problem with this. Cllr. Burke asked when is the expected commencement date of the development - is it years or months. Mr. McInerney said as soon as plans are firmed up it would take two years. He would hope that this would happen sooner rather than later.

Cllr. Morgan said if a favourable agreement is reached with the Town Council and Galway County Council on this matter it would be half the battle. He said the planning process would take its course subsequently.

Mr. McInerney left the meeting.

A general discussion took place on this proposal presented by Mr. McInerney.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that this was a serious issue and she proposed that a decision be deferred until the April Meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Cllr. Regan said that a Public Meeting should be called and let them have an input into this project. He said the town councillors would make the final decision but they would also like some feed back from the public. He suggested this meeting should take place on Monday 27th March at 8.00 p.m in O'Dea's Hotel or in the Credit Union.

Cllr. Morgan said that Mr. McInerney is a good employer and he has never heard any bad reports about ill treatment of workers. He needs to expand and the Town Council can help him out and get rewarded in return. He said the members should think about it for a few weeks and go out and meet the people and see what they think.

Cllr. Curley said that the Fairgreen is a "hot potato" and the public should know about it. He said there are a lot of pluses but equally a lot of minuses to this proposal

Cllr. Tully said that there are rumours and stories circulating around the place since this news broke into the public domain. He said the sooner the public know the true story the better for everyone. He said he was inundated with callers asking what was going on in the Fairgreen. He said it was the duty of the members to give them the right story at a public meeting.

Cllr. Morgan said that Circus companies and others have been renting this area for a numbers of years. He said Mr. McInerney is just renting it for a longer period and giving a just reward in return. He said that the transaction would be properly and legally documented.

Cllr. Burke said that Mr. McInerney has confirmed that the plans will be brought to the Town Council meeting before there are submitted to the County Council for approval. He asked who would answer the questions raised by the public at a public meeting - is it the members or Mr. McInerney.

Cllr. Regan said that is a serious issue and he proposed that a public information meeting be held. This was seconded by Cllr. Hynes.

Cllr. Hynes said he seconded this motion because his telephone has been hopping since these proposals were presented, and filtered out into the public domain. He said he is sympathetic to Mr. McInerney's situation. Undoubtedly he is giving a quality service. He said the public are totally opposed to the proposed development on the Fairgreen. He said the members are elected public representatives and they are answerable to the people. This has been a hugely emotive issue. The people who elected us are very vigilant and are monitoring what is going on. None of the callers were in support of these proposals. We are duty bound to listen to the electorate.

Cllr. Bane said if the proposals are accurately relayed to the public they will have no fears about this development. She said if the Press can get this message out in the public arena the public will know exactly what is happening. She said that the Fairgreen is very dear to her as her Grandparents lived in the Courthouse. She said there has been no change in the Fairgreen for 200 years. She said this area is one of the precious stones in the middle of the town. She said that an offer of €450,000 to invest in the amenities of the town is on the table and the members are turning their backs on it and thinking of saying no. She urged the members to talk to people and get them to come around to this idea. She said it is a lot of money to turn down. This is a means to an end and we should keep the end in sight.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said again that this matter should be left for the month and put it back on the agenda for the next meeting. She said that the members could spread the word around in the mean time and have the true picture for the next meeting. She did

not see any merit in having an open discussion just now as it has just been presented to them. She said that Mr. McInerney had met each member individually and discussed his proposals with them.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said the Town Council own an irregular portion of the Fairgreen near the Courthouse and former Bridewell. He said it was probably an oversight when the land was formerly transferred to the County Council. The remainder is owned by Galway County Council. He said that the Town Council meeting is a public meeting and the members of the public are entitled to attend if they wish. He said this is the correct process to follow in order to get the message to the public about Mr. McInerney's proposal. He said the existing proposals demand a lot of thought and consideration before making a decision. He said that the Town Council and Galway County Council members would have to agree this proposal in principle first to facilitate this request.

Cllr. Curley said Mr. McInerney made a good presentation and he gave all the facts. He said that holding off having a public meeting for a month would not be a major issue as Mr. McInerney has not started the planning process.

Cllr. Regan said that he would withdraw his proposal to hold a Public Meeting until after that date provided it goes on the agenda for the April meeting.

Mayor Gunter- Nix agreed that it be on the agenda for the April meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley that the minutes of meeting held on the 13th February, be adopted.

Correspondence.

The Town Clerk said she had received a letter from the NRA in response to a request for clarity on the funding for the remedial works on the Main Street. Here is an extract from the letter "I am pleased to inform you that the Authority has provided €500,000 to Galway County Council this year to enable remedial works to be carried out on the Main Street, Loughrea". Cllr. Burke asked Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, where it is proposed to spend this amount of money and the length of road it will cover. Mr. Raftery said that Martin Lavelle, Road Design Section, has plans to spend it at the Fairfield roundabout as all the services have been upgraded at this location. Cllr. Burke said that the Minister gave a commitment at the opening of the Bypass that the road from the Westbridge to Fairfield would be upgraded and now he is renegeing on his commitment.

Cllr. Hynes said that the NRA has broken its promise given at the opening of Bypass. He said that substantial funding is needed to bring this street from Fairfield to the Westbridge up to the required standard. He said that the reply from the NRA was totally unsatisfactory. He said that a further letter should be sent to the NRA pointing out the level of funding required to do this work. He asked Mr. Raftery what exactly was being done at Fairfield roundabout with the €500,000. Mr. Raftery said that Road Design would be spending this money. He said that he had sent in a

comprehensive report to Roads and Transportation Section seeking a sum of €6.5 million for the remedial works. He said that some of the funding will be coming from Water Services to upgrade the water and sewerage mains.

Cllr. Bane asked if the works would be carried out this year. Cllr. Bane said that if the Town Council accept this amount the NRA might think they are happy with it. Mr. Raftery said that this amount would have to be spent in 2006 and all they could do is look for more funding.

Cllr. Regan said that major monies are needed to upgrade this stretch of road and upgrade all the services. He said it is a waste of money if the services are not upgraded at the same time.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that a copy of letter to the NRA should also go to the Minister Cullen as he had made the promise at the opening of the Bypass last November.

Mr. Cullen said that Water Services Section would be contributing to the upgrading of water and sewerage on the Main Street. He said it was up to the NRA to upgrade the roadway.

Cllr. Morgan said the Main Street is like a bog road. He said it has no foundation to it. He said there is no point in surface dressing it as it is subsiding all the time. He said it will need to be done thoroughly like Barrack Street.

Town Clerk read letter from Chamber of Commerce inviting the members and officials to the reviewing stand on St. Patrick's Day. The parade will start at 4.00 p.m from Station Road to the reviewing stand on the Main Street.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"I will propose that a recommendation be sent to Galway Council – that because Loughrea Town Hall Ltd. sold the Town Hall to Galway County Council for approximately £100,000, that is in the region of one fifth of its market value, with the expectation that said Town Hall would be renovated and developed for the benefit of the general public of Loughrea and District; and kept in the ownership of Galway County Council for the people; that if ever Galway County Council were to sell the Town Hall, that all monies over and above the sum paid by Galway County Council to Loughrea Town Hall Ltd., less any expenses incurred by Galway County Council in relation to the Town Hall, would be used by Galway County Council for the provision of facilities for the youth, the elderly, heritage, etc. for the town of Loughrea, as was intended by the previous owners to whom a moral obligation is due, having sold at the lowest possible price so that maximum benefit be to the people of Loughrea".

Cllr. Morgan proposed that if ever Galway County Council were to sell the Town Hall that the proviso be put in that it is retained for the provision of facilities for the youth, the elderly, heritage etc. Cllr. Burke said if Cllr. Morgan could re-phrase the motion to read "a recommendation be made to County Council not to sell the Town Hall at all" he would second it. Cllr. Regan suggested that Cllr. Morgan put this motion, worded differently, on for the next meeting and it would be supported. He asked Mr.

Cullen if a decision had been made to sell it. Cllr. Morgan said that the County Council own the building and it should be brought up to acceptable standard and not leave it derelict. Mr. Cullen said that the story is the same as he has said several times in that Galway County Council does not have the funding to do anything with the Town Hall. He said he has an abhorrence of seeing Derelict Sites in any town. He said this building is deteriorating more with each year that passes. He said it was always the intention of Galway County Council to sell or lease the Town Hall to a Developer/Builder with a certain portion to be retained for community use. He said that the County Council had sought legal advice on the advertisement inviting Expressions of Interests for this premises. The legal advice was to withdraw this notice. He said that it would be advertised again shortly and people would have an opportunity to bid again. Cllr. Burke asked when will the advertisement be in the papers and if it would be within the next four weeks. Mr. Cullen, said it is unlikely that it will be within the next four weeks. Mayor Gunter-Nix asked if the notice will be going to press within the first six months of this year. Mr. Cullen replied in the affirmative. He said that property value is on the increase so the County Council will not loose out. Cllr. Regan said that he mentioned at the last meeting that the windows need attention but to date nothing has been done about them. Mr. Cullen said that Mr. Raftery would look after this matter.

AOB

Cllr. Regan said that there is a car abandoned for some time at the Long Point, Loughrea and asked for it to be removed. He said there was an attempt to burn it out some time ago. Mr. Raftery said he would attend to it.

Cllr. Burke said he would like to raise some planning issues around the town but he would leave it to the next meeting. Mr. Cullen said that planning was well covered by Mr. Liam Gavin at the last meeting. He said any further concerns that the members had should be directed to the Planning Section.

Cllr. Tully said that a footpath was started at the Walks at the North Mound but only half of the area was done. He asked if it would be completed. Mr. Raftery said if further funding is made available it will be continued.

Cllr. Morgan asked Mr. Cullen if a copy of the Abstraction Order, for Loughrea Lake, was available yet as requested at previous meetings. Mr. Cullen said he had procured a copy and he would arrange to circulate it to the members.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 10th day of April, 2006. Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 10th April, 2006, in the Credit Union Office, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair.

Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix,

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllr. Hynes who was attending a County Council meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on the 10th April, 2006.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke the minutes of meeting held on the 10th April, 2006 be adopted.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that Mr. McNerney has withdrawn his proposal for use of the Fairgreen for a temporary car park and did not wish to have this matter discussed. She said as far as he was concerned this matter is now closed. She read a letter, which was circulated to the Members, Officials and the Citizens of Loughrea as follows "Recently you may have been asked to sign a petition under the impression that I intended to turn the Fairgreen into a car park. Nothing could be further from the truth. My intention was to transform a small portion from the mud patch it is, into an attractive amenity; a pleasant place to sit, a place for neighbours, visitors, young and old to linger and chat. All this at a cost of €250,000/300,000 to me and my 110 staff. I also offered €150,000 for the provision of an all weather playing pitch somewhere in the town. In return I requested the use of a small portion of the Fairgreen as a temporary car park and be legally bound to remove it within 15/18 months. I made this offer to Loughrea Town Council on the 13/3/2006. I agreed to a plan as produced by them. I also submitted the photographs, to the Town Councillors, the County Councillors and the residents in the vicinity of the Fairgreen as an example of what was possible. In the light of much opposition, and misinformation, I am now compelled to withdraw my offer".

In this context the Town Clerk said she had received correspondence from Mr. McNerney as follows "Dear Town Councillors - Thank you for allowing me to address your last meeting in March, when I offered to fund your plans for the Fairgreen and also offered €150,000 towards the provision of an all weather playing pitch in the town. I made this offer in the belief that it would bring long lasting benefit to the people of the town in return for a short term car park. In view of much opposition and misinformation I have decided to withdraw my offer. I wish you well in your endeavours to get funding for your plans for the Fairgreen in the future".

Matters arising from the Minutes.

Cllr. Curley asked if all the landowners were paid compensation for the Bypass. Mr. Raftery said that the NRA office in Galway was dealing with the compensation issue. Cllr. Burke asked why the side roads were not finished. He said the road at Cosmona was very dangerous because it has not been finished. He said there is an ESB pole left in the middle of the road at this location for weeks and has not been removed or pushed back. He said Hanley's Cross is also the same. Cllr. Tully asked if the public lighting has been finished as there are still some black spots especially around Danesfort/Caheronaun road. Cllr. Regan said that there is a Health and Safety issue at Cosmona with the way it is left. Cllr. Morgan said that the sign at the Monearnmore roundabout is conflicting at the turn for Bullaun/New Inn road. He said that no provision has been made for cyclists or pedestrians. He said that this roundabout is very dangerous the way it is designed. Cllr. Curley asked who deals with the problems on the Bypass or who can the public contact. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that Wills Brothers were gone off site for a few weeks but would be returning later on. He said Wills Brothers would be responsible if it was on the Contract. He said a design team were employed to draw up the plans for the Bypass. He said if there was no plan to provide a pedestrian walk or a cycle lane the Contractors could not put it in. He said the NRA should be contacted if it was not put in at design stage. He said the County Council staff would carry out their own study later on and would do a snagging list. Cllr. Burke said the contract is not finished so there is no point in carrying out a snagging list at this stage.

Cllr. Regan said that one window was made secure in the Town Hall but there are a number to be done. He asked if the panels could be painted in the shape of the window to improve the appearance of it. It is rather unsightly at the moment. Mr. Raftery said he would talk to the Overseer to see when the remainder of the work will be done.

Cllr. Burke said he understood that planning permission was to be frozen until the pressure in the water system was improved. He says that he has been informed that individuals have been refused planning permission yet a Developer comes along and is granted planning permission for the same land. It seems to be the planning regulations are not consistent. He understands that planning has to be curtailed if the water and sewerage system is over taxed but it should be right across the board. He asked Mr. Raftery if the local office had an input into the granting of planning permission. Mr. Raftery said that planning applications are submitted to the local office for recommendation. He says that they have recommended that planning be refused until the water and sewerage system is improved. He says a number of departments would be commenting on a planning application but the decision to grant or refuse planning is made further up the line. Cllr. Burke said if there was fire in any of those big developments there would not be enough pressure in the water to put it out. He said that young people have no hope of building their own house as all of the land is being bought up by Developers. He says not everyone wants to live in a Housing Estate. Cllr. Curley said he would have to support Cllr. Burke's sentiments as regards planning. He says it seems to be one rule for one and not for the other. Cllr. Regan said that any individual who wants to build on their own site should be allowed to do so. Cllr. Morgan said that Developers can build up to the sky while others will not be granted permission. He says that the planning laws seem to be very

difficult to understand as there is no consistency as regards planning. He wonders if Planners visit the site or is it a desktop study they carry out. He said a friend of his had applied for planning permission for a 5 bed house but planners reduced it to 3 beds. He said that planning seemed to favour applicants who have the support of expensive Architects, Engineers etc. behind them. He said he knew of another instance where an individual had applied to build a stone wall outside his home but was told to change it to a concrete one, eventhough, his neighbours walls were in stone. He said he hoped he would see the day when a legal challenge will be taken against the planning laws. Cllr. Bane asked the expected timeframe to upgrade the water system. Cllr. Tully said that they were informed by officials, last September, that there would be no major developments in the town until the water and sewerage system was up to full capacity but this is not happening. He asked how the zoning can be changed for some developments which are contrary to the County Development Plan. He asked Mr. Raftery if the big developments were tapping into the sewerage system Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, apologised for being late to the meeting but got a flavour of what was being discussed as he came in the door. He said the County Development Plan sets out policies, strategies and objectives for the town and its environs. This also includes the Loughrea Area Plan. He said this is a requirement under the Planning and Development Act, 2000. He said that a Draft of the Loughrea Area Plan went on public display last year for the community to comment on if they wished. Submissions made were discussed by the Local Area County Councillors and the full County Council. He said it is not one rule for one and different one for a Developer. He said this was never the case in the past, now or in the future. He said that planning permission is a complicated issue when one wants to build in the country as there are restrictions in place and even greater pressure on the Urban fringe of the town but other settlements centres would be less restricted. He said it is an open and participative process where individuals can object to any development. He said that Galway County Council has published a document with guidelines for the design of rural houses which very few counties can boast of. He said that it will never be the case that everybody will be happy with decisions taken on planning issues. In relation to the rezoning of lands, which is a material contravention to the Development Plan, there is a certain process to be followed before the planning permission is granted. He said the decision is made by the County Councillors by resolution. In relation to listed buildings he said decisions can be made to retain, restore, modify the building. He said that professional experts would make the decision on the best option. He said upgrading the water system is being considered by the Department of the Environment. Mr. Raftery said the big developments were putting their own treatment system on site and would tap into the main sewerage system when upgraded.

Correspondence:

Letters from the NRA and Noel Treacy in response to representations from the Town Council. Extract from letters: "€500,000 allocated in 2006 - further funding will depend on the outcome of land acquisition negotiations and compensation payments and budget left over".

Cllr. Burke said the NRA had a fair idea how much compensation would come to for land acquisition for the Bypass. He said he was led to believe that money was allocated for the remedial works for the Main Street independently of compensation. He said that this was also reiterated by the Minister at the opening of the Bypass last

November. Cllr. Maher said that they had recommended that the NRA not be allowed to open the Bypass until sufficient funding was made available for the remedial works on the Main Street. Cllr. Regan said that the town council made it clear long before the construction of the Bypass that money was required to upgrade the Main Street once the Bypass was open. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that they would keep the pressure on to secure the necessary funding. Cllr. Bane said that they would have to lobby the local politicians. Cllr. Burke said that they had already done so. Cllr. Morgan said that all of the services would have to be upgraded at the one time. There was no point in doing piece meal work. Mr. Cullen said that the €500,000 would be spent this year. He said there was no question of not taking this funding. He said they would have to look for more to carry out the remedial works on the Main Street. He said if further funding was made available from the NRA the County Council would take a chance and upgrade the other services and hope that the Department of the Environment would recoup them. He said it is more cost effective doing a complete job at the one time. Cllr. Tully asked why the road is ending at the Westbridge. There are parts of the Atherry Road/Galway Road in need of upgrading as well. Mr. Raftery said that the road from the Westbridge to Caherlavine is maintained by the NRA as it forms part of the N. 66. since the Bypass was opened.

Notice of Motion from Ballinasloe Town Council – “That all councillors would lobby T.D.’s to pressurise the Government to implement a “Household Waste Collection Voucher”, (similar to that of fuel allowance). This supplementary allowance would be available to all elderly people living on low income to assist them with the ever increasing Waste Collection Charges” The Town Council fully support this motion.

Notice of Motion - Monaghan Town Council. This was noted.

Notice of Motion - Ennis Town Council. This was noted.

Letter from Mary O’Neill, O’Dea’s Hotel, Bride Street, Loughrea. Extract from letter New footpath along the river wall at Station Road, Loughrea; concerns over the height of the wall making it accessible for people to sit on it and a danger of falling into the river. Cllr. Burke recommended that a meeting be set up by the County Council with Mrs. O’Neill to resolve this problem. Mr. Cullen said that the Senior Executive Engineer would discuss remedial works with Mrs. O’Neill as soon as possible.

All of the above correspondence circulated to the members.

AGM of Chamber of Commerce being held on Tuesday 11th April, 2006 at 6.30 p.m. in O’Dea’s Hotel.

Letter from Pat Sweeney, Westbridge, Loughrea, in relation to G. McInerney’s proposal at the Fairgreen. This was handed to the Town Clerk at the meeting and was not circulated to the members. This was a 3 page document and it was agreed to circulate it to the members afterwards.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Regan.

“I will call on Galway County Council to put in place a public toilet immediately”.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. Regan said that public toilets should be put in place immediately at the Westbridge. He said that business toilets should not be used as public toilets. He said he knows many people with medical conditions and the toilets should be sited near the Westbridge as it would be more convenient for them. Mr. Cullen said that toilets were to be included in Urban and Village Renewal Project where telephone kiosk is sited now. It now transpires that this project was not successful and recommends that they be sited near the telephone kiosk in the corner. He said he would run it by the planning section and let them decide the best location and begin the Part 8 planning process. This will give the public an opportunity to voice their opinions on the location of the toilets. Cllr. Burke proposed that they be sited near the Courthouse and Pound as the other site is too open and there is no privacy. This is also at a junction and a bus could not pull up at a busy location. This location would be nearer the playground and the Court services as well and it would serve two purposes. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Mayor Gunter-Nix said there were two proposals on hand and a vote would have to be taken.

For Cllr. Regan’s motion - Have toilets near existing Telephone Kiosk or
For Cllr. Burke’s motion- Have toilets near Courthouse/Pound site.

For Cllr. Burke - Burke, Tully, Maher, Curley, Bane, Morgan, Gunter-Nix - 7
Vote carried.

Cllr. Regan’s motion defeated.

“I will propose the Loughrea Town Council write to Loughrea Swimming Pool Committee to call a public meeting regarding Swimming Pool”

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan
As there was no seconder to this motion it was not debated.

“That Galway County Council be requested to give urgent attention to the flooding of water on road between the Greens”.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Cllr. Regan said there were lots of floods in recent times at the Fairgreen and children were drenched walking to school. He said there are gullies blocked and this matter needs to be addressed straight away. He said that every time there is heavy rainfall the road gets flooded and it has to be closed to traffic. Cllr. Bane said that this is an ongoing problem which seems to have got worse since Ward and Burke came on the scene. Cllr. Maher said that the gullies are blocked with tar. Mr. Raftery said they would have to look at the work carried out by Ward and Burke as they seem to have interfered with the gullies. He said that he would be discussing this matter with the Resident Engineer on the scheme. He said he had a snag list drawn up which will need to be addressed by the Contractor. Cllr. Tully said that the same problems seem to be turning up along the scheme. He said the Resident Engineer did not appear to be on site all of the time. Cllr. Regan said that there is flooding now outside the Temperance Hall which was never there until Ward and Burke started work on Barrack Street.

AOB.

Cllr. Maher said it was coming into the growing season and wondered if the Council Staff would be cutting the grass in the amenity areas and the burial grounds. Mayor Gunter-Nix said she saw an advertisement in the local paper seeking temporary staff for the Loughrea Electoral Area. Cllr. Maher said they would need to be trained in the use of machinery so as the grass will be cut and picked up. Mr. Cullen said there were not permanent posts but seasonal ones.

Cllr. Maher said that a number of lights need replacement around the town. He said he would do up a list and leave them into the Town Clerk for attention. Mr. Raftery said that the maintenance money for lights is very small and it does not cover any more than replacing bulbs.

Cllr. Maher said that Caheronaun was in need of lighting as it was very dark. Mr. Raftery said this location was on this year's Public Lighting Programme.

Cllr. Morgan proposed a minutes silence in memory of the late Toddie Byrne, who was born in Loughrea where Supermacs business is now. He said he was a former County Councillor and served from 1967 to 1999. He requested that a letter of sympathy be sent to the family. Cllr. Curley supported this gesture. He said that the late Toddie Byrne was heavily involved with Juvenile Hurling and did a lot of good work down through the years. Mayor Gunter-Nix associated herself with the sympathy and suggested that the Town Council also remember the late Cllr. John Mannion who had passed away in the last few days.

Cllr. Bane said she would like to congratulate the Chamber of Commerce for putting on the St. Patrick's Day Parade. She said it was a great success. Mayor Gunter-Nix said it was one of the best parades ever and it involved the local children and great credit is due to the Chamber of Commerce for undertaking this project. Cllr. Morgan said he would like to thank Brenda Winters for her trojan work in co-ordinating this project.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 8th day of May, 2006 Mayor: Mary Gunter-Nix

Minutes of proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 8th May, 2006, in the Credit Union Office, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.**I Lathair.**

Mayor: Cllr. Mary Gunter-Nix.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on the 8th May, 2006.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke the minutes of meeting held on the 8th May, 2006 be adopted.

Correspondence.

Letter from Thelma McFadden requesting the use of the fairgreen from the 29th August, to 6th September, 2006 for a funfair. She asked that the decision taken at the January meeting be rescinded. A general discussion took place and it was unanimously decided not to allow this event or any event to use the fairgreen for a funfair or circus because of the condition the ground was left in last year. They said the decision was taken at a previous meeting and they would stand by it. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services and Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer agreed that a decision was taken for a good reason. They suggested that perhaps O'Dea's Car Park, at Station Road could be used as an alternative venue.

A request from Elizabeth Mitchell, Springpark, Grange, Loughrea for financial support for the Loughrea Creative Writing Group. The writers are local people under the guidance of Liam Nolan. Cllr. Burke said that no funding was available this year to any group as the budget was reduced so as to keep the town rate down to the minimum. The members said that unfortunately they could not give financial help to this group this year.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Tully.

"I will propose that a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council, that all appropriate signage concerning road safety, to include speed limits and warning signs, be erected on all roads adjacent to all schools in the townland of Loughrea"

It was proposed by Cllr. Tully seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Tully said he has received representations from several people regarding the new law on speed limits around school areas in relation to road safety. He said the law is in but signage is not up yet. Mr. Raftery said that the Council Staff has carried out an

assessment of schools, and have drawn up a priority list for special speed limits. He said that no work can be done until funding is made available. He said that the funding would have to come from the County Road fund, if no support is received from central funds, which would reduce the budget for other works. Mr. Cullen, said the signs are very expensive and had to meet specific criteria. Cllr. Tully asked if "Children Crossing" signs could be erected on the approach roads to the schools so as motorists will be aware that there are schools in the vicinity. Mr. Raftery said he would cost the request.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan

"That the offer of €450,000.00 made in good faith jointly to Loughrea Town Council and Galway County Council, towards the development of public amenities by Gerard McInerney, in exchange for the use of the east end of the Green as a car park for a period of 18 months be acknowledged and that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr. McInerney accepting his reasons for subsequently withdrawing his generous offer".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. ~~Burke~~ Maher *re*

Cllr. Morgan said if someone makes an offer to do something for the town, whether it is accepted or not, we should acknowledge it and write to accept it or if not accepting it give our reasons for withdrawing it. Cllr. Regan said he would not personally be associated with this letter as Mayor Gunter-Nix said the matter was closed at the April meeting and Mr. McInerney did not wish to have it discussed further. I accepted the ruling of the Chair and the other members should do like wise.

"That a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to move the bus stop line at the entrance to St. Raphael's College at least one metre to the west, because drivers coming from the west can not enter the College gates in one turn which in turn delays other traffic".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said this is a very dangerous junction and motorists coming from the town have to go outside the bus to drop off passengers at St. Raphael's College. Cllr. Regan said the occupier of an adjoining building has planning permission to demolish it which might widen the entrance. He said the Town Engineer could examine it at stage and see if there is still a problem with visibility.

AOB

Cllr. Maher asked if the Council Staff will be cutting grass in the amenity areas and graveyards in Loughrea. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she had got three quotations back in March for the Environmental Group and a decision is awaited. She said that the County Council Staff had advertised for seasonal staff and wondered if anybody had been appointed yet. Mr. Raftery said that all of the application forms were forwarded to Human Resources and he expected that an interview board would be set up shortly and a panel formed. He said that the extra staff was being recruited mainly for the completion of Road Works Programme. It was proposed by Cllr. Burke seconded by Mayor Gunter-Nix that Mr. Gerry Glynn be appointed to cut the grass in

the two cemeteries for the season. Cllr. Bane complained about the state of the drain in Corry's Field which she considers to be a health hazard. Mr. Raftery said that an investigation was carried out at this location last October and it did not pose any risk to the environment and it was not hazardous.

Mr. Cullen said that €12,000.00 has been provided in the estimates for improvements to the playgrounds. He said that he was shocked with the vandalism taking place at this location in a short space of time. He said it is very disheartening for the people who made such an effort with fundraising, whatever about the public bodies. He said that a programme of works will have to be put in place in order of priority. He said there is no question of vandalism winning out. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the members had a meeting with Superintendent Walsh and they discussed wrecking of Urban Renewal area and also the playground areas. She said it is awful to see people from our own town wrecking the recreational facilities being established for the benefit of the town and surrounding areas. Cllr. Burke said that the facility should only be open during day light hours. Cllr. Regan said that we need to make an example of the thugs hanging around our town who are vandalising our property. Somebody knows who they are and it should be relayed to the proper authorities.

Cllr. Regan asked if there was any plans to extend the graveyard at Mount Pleasant or if the County Council had a land bank in this area. Cllr. Regan said that there is a vein of rock running through a portion of this graveyard and the County Council should be looking at acquiring land for an extension in the future. It is not an emergency at the moment but it something that should be kept in mind.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the Loughrea Environmental Group had the first clean up of the season on the 6th May, 2006 but only two people turned up to help with the clean up of the town. She asked if any of the members would like to lend support to the group to come along to the County Council offices any Thursday night between 7 and 8 p.m. Cllr. Regan asked where the street sweeper is or if it has been used by the County Council. He said that a local business man had part sponsored this machine but it has rarely been used since it was purchased. He said it seems to be more times broken than in use. He said that a shovel and barrow is not very professional looking in this day and age. Mr. Raftery said it was under repair a number of times. He said that they had plans to trade in this machine and purchase a bigger one.

Cllr. Burke asked when Garrybreeda Playground will be opened as the Credit Union had sponsored some equipment and the community did not get to use it yet. He said that it would need to be up and running for the summer season. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she was speaking to the Senior Executive Engineer and a safety audit had to be undertaken before it could be opened. She asked if the Safety Audit was complete. Mr. Raftery said that the final report was not to hand yet. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the barriers would also need to come down.

Cllr. Maher said that the Urban Renewal Project was a very inferior job. He said that the paving stone for the visually impaired was not put down even. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the litter bins put in place were pulled out of the ground even though there were set in concrete. She said that it was not very professional job and asked who is answerable for it. Mr. Cullen said that the job was supervised by the Forward

Planning Section of the County Council. He said that he has already spoken to that section about the matter.

Cllr. Regan said that "Cars for sale" are parked at various locations around the town and asked if the owners were paying a fee the same as other motorists. Mr. Cullen said that owners were obliged to pay the appropriate fee the same as any other person within the prescribed parking times. He said if the names or the registration numbers were left into the Town Clerk's office that action would be taken on them. Cllr. Maher asked if the pay and display machines were making money and how much had been collected to date. Mr. Cullen said that this was discussed at the Area Meeting recently and an expenditure and income data was done on it since it was installed. He said that he would arrange to circulate it to the Town Councillors.

Cllr. Tully said that there is loads of litter left again around the bottle banks. He asked if the cameras were working and if any prosecutions were taken. Mr. Cullen said that they had a number of successful prosecutions in Court recently. Cllr. Tully asked when the Recycling Centre on the Rathruddy road will be ready for use. Mr. Cullen said that they had advertised the Part 8 for the recycling centre but now they will have to advertise it again as they had not included the Council Depot. Cllr. Tully asked if all the materials dumped at the Long Point will be removed once the centre is open. Mr. Raftery said that all of the materials would be removed from the Long Point.

Cllr. Burke asked if any progress had been made with the public toilets at the Fairgreen. Mr. Cullen said that it will have to be advertised under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations but he did not expect it to be on for the May meeting. Cllr. Burke said it would need to be in place for the tourist season.

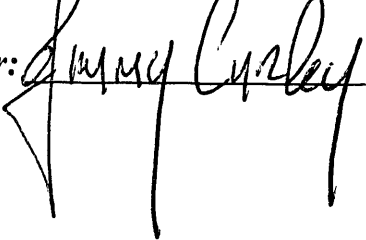
Cllr. Hynes apologised for being late to the meeting which was due to an official engagement in the County Council. He said he was asked by a number of residents to raise the matter of the review of the traffic management plan in Loughrea. He said that residents find cars parked obstructing their entrances especially on the Gort and Old Galway roads and in the Mart area. He said the Traffic Management Plan will have to be reviewed as a matter of urgency. Mr. Cullen said issues such as cars causing a nuisance by parking in certain areas could be looked at straight away. He said that some issues can be addressed through straight forward measures which do not require publication. He said the members will be familiar with the hot spots around the town and where amendments will need to be made. He said that this matter will be on the agenda for the next meeting and any concerns that the members have can be brought to the Roads and Transportation office for approval. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that the members would meet in the Credit Union Office on the 15th May at 7.30 p.m to discuss this issue and draw up a list. This was unanimously agreed.

Cllr. Burke asked if there were any plans to take two bad bends off the Gort Road, near the Lakeshore and also put in a new footpath. Mr. Raftery said that a plan was prepared locally for this area and it was forwarded to An Taisce and the NRA but it is not top priority with the NRA and no funding has been received to carry out this work. Cllr. Burke said that the residents in this area are living in fear of a serious accident at this location. He asked if there was a low cost accident scheme which

could be used for this area. Mr. Raftery said that they had looked to get EU co-financed monies for this area and Earlspeak Junction but were not successful. They will submit those roads again next year to see if funding will be made available. Cllr. Burke said that trucks are still coming up through the Main Street even though the Bypass is up and running. Cllr. Hynes said that the County Councillors had a recent meeting with Fred Barry, of the NRA and he brought this matter to his attention together with the link road from the Gort Road to Caherlavine roundabout. He said if funding was made available for those projects it would alleviate trucks going up the Main Street as they could go straight on to the Bypass. He said that Mr. Barry did not consider it a priority and it does not merit a link road until 20 years hence. He said that Loughrea will not take No for an answer and he requested that a letter be forwarded to Mr. Barry to emphasise the urgency of those roads. Cllr. Burke said that there are no facilities for pedestrians at any of the roundabouts. He said that there is an accident waiting to happen. He said that there are barriers up and elderly people can not get over the barriers to avoid a car. Mayor Gunter-Nix said it is particularly dangerous at the Cosmona road as a lot of young people walk to the Rugby Pitch, Golf Club and the Athletic Club.

Mr. Cullen said that the Town Hall had come up for discussion a number of times previously and that he had said he would advise the Town council when it was to be advertised. He said that it will be advertised probably before the next town council meeting. He said that 10% will be retained for community use. Cllr. Morgan said once it is sold it is no longer public property. He said that the town councillors who voted 7-2 against funding for this building would have to take responsibility for it going into private ownership and should be surcharged. Mayor Gunter-Nix said that Youth facilities are needed in the town and she hoped that this might be included in any of the tenders. She said what ever happens that it has to be a living building and not go into a derelict site.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 12th day of June, 2006. Mayor: 

Minutes of proceedings at the Annual Meeting of the Loughrea Town Council held in the Credit Union offices, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea on the 12th June, 2006.

I Lathair

Mayor: Jimmy Curley

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Mary Gunter-Nix, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Pat Gallagher, County Manager, Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Meeting opened with prayers.

Mayor Gunter-Nix welcomed Mr. Pat Gallagher, County Manager to the meeting.

The Mayor said that she was approaching the end of her term as Mayor of Loughrea. She expressed her thanks to the Town Councillors and also to Jim Cullen Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely Town Clerk and all the staff of the Council for their assistance during her term of office. She said she enjoyed the year and her first official appointment was the re-opening of Gort Road playground. The next one was the Pride of Place competition. Meeting the Galway Senior Hurling team who had competed in the All Ireland Final. Meeting the Loughrea Senior Hurling County team who were narrowly defeated by Portumna. Meeting the Loughrea junior football team who were Connacht champions in that competition and later went on to compete in the Final in Croke Park. Attending a Birthday Party for 100 year old lady. Attending the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Attending the Fleadh Cheoil and presenting trophies to the junior competitors. Attending the re-opening of Garrybreeda Kiddies Playground on the 9th June, 2006 which was her last appointment.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, thanked Mayor Gunter-Nix for a very good year. She was very fair and impartial with her decisions and she carried out the office with dignity and efficiency.

Election of Mayor for 2006/2007.

Mayor Gunter-Nix said that she would take nominations for the position of Mayor. Cllr. Curley was proposed by Cllr. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Michael (Mogie) Maher. Cllr. Regan was proposed by Cllr Hynes and seconded by Cllr. Morgan. A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Cllr. Curley - Cllrs. Bane, Burke, Curley, Gunter-Nix, Maher, Tully - 6 Votes.

For Cllr. Regan - Cllrs. Hynes, Regan, Morgan

- 3 Votes.

The Mayor declared Cllr. Curley elected. Mayor Curley then took the chair.

Mayor Curley thanked his proposer and seconder and the members who had voted for him. He said that it was a privilege and an honour to be the Mayor of Loughrea. He said that he would work for the community and in the interest of the community during his term. He said that he looked forward to a progressive year and working with the members for the good of the town.

Election of Deputy Mayor for 2006/2007.

Mayor Curley said that he would take proposals for the position of Deputy Mayor.

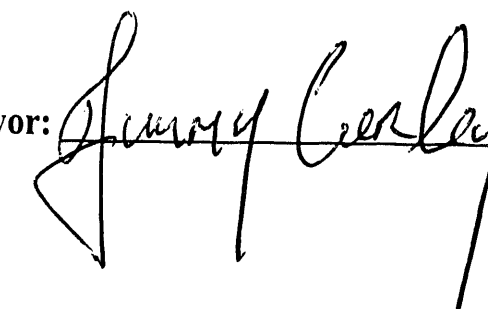
Cllr. Maher was proposed by Cllr Gunter-Nix, seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

As there were no other nominations Mayor Curley declared Cllr. Maher to be Deputy Mayor

Cllr. Maher thanked his proposer and seconder.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 10 day of July, 2006. Mayor:



Minutes of proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 12th June, 2006, in the Credit Union Office, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair

Mayor: Jimmy Curley

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Mary Gunter-Nix, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Pat Gallagher, County Manager, Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on the 8th May, 2006.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke the minutes of meeting held on the 8th May, 2006 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Maher said he had seconded Cllr. Morgan's Notice of Motion in relation to thanking Mr. McInerney for his generous offer of €450,000.00 and not Cllr. Burke. He wanted this matter corrected.

Cllr. Morgan asked Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, about the Town Hall. He said in 1998 the Directors of the Town Hall handed over the town hall for public use with a portion to be used as a multi purpose room for groups wishing to hold meetings as well as agencies holding conferences etc. He said the remainder was to include Galway County Council, Loughrea Town Commissioners and Loughrea Heritage Company. He said the Heritage Group had put funding together and had done a business feasibility study for the Town Hall, which was fully supported by the then County Manager Donal O'Donoghue. The Town Commissioners rejected a plan to use the Hall as an Area Office, accommodation for the Town Commissioners and a one stop shop for State Agencies in 1999. The Loughrea Heritage & Development Company Ltd. abandoned their plans because of this. The County Council bought it subsequently in November, 2000 at one fifth of the value on the understanding that it would be used for the community. He said the seven shareholders sold it to the County Council at way under the market value. He said a written agreement was drawn up which was morally binding that it would be for community use. He said that the advertisement said for sale by tender unless otherwise sold. He asked if this was a mistake or does it mean if the right person comes on the scene it will be sold to them. He circulated a copy of the advertisement to all of the members.

Cllr. Hynes said he was 26 years a member of Loughrea Town Council thanks to the people of Loughrea. He said the Town Hall was purchased in 2000 for £100,000.00 for the benefit and use of the public at large. He said Galway County Council, through a public notice sought Expression of Interest from the community. He said 20 to 30 Groups had sent in submissions on the use of the Town Hall but officials said that it did not meet the criteria as set down in the guidelines. He said he read and examined the submissions and he formed the opinion that it would meet the requirements of the public at large and that it should be retained for public use. He said that in December, 2004 a planning notice was advertised by a Developer/Investor for commercial use of the Town Hall. He said the Town Hall was purchased out tax payer's money. He proposed that the invitation to tender be withdrawn until public consultation had taken place with the Community. Cllr. Morgan seconded this proposal.

Cllr. Burke said he would like to make some observations on the advertisement for sale of the Town Hall. He said that Mr. Cullen had stated that 10% would be retained for Community use but this is not stated on the advertisement. He said that some months ago that Mr. Cullen had said that the advertisement seeking Expressions of Interest was flawed on technical and legal grounds and it would have to be re-advertised. He said that he is Chairman of the Youth Development in Loughrea and they had spent €6,000.00 on a feasibility study for the Town Hall in order to take children off the streets. He said that the children had picked the Town Hall themselves as a Youth Centre. He said that school children come into Loughrea early in the morning on a bus and do not leave until after 6.00 p.m. in the evening and they have no place to go outside of school hours except the pub. He said that the Galway Youth Federation would be prepared to take the top floor of the Town Hall but would not be in a financial position to tender for this building. He said that the Galway Youth Development Association had the promise of one million euro but this would not be sufficient to purchase the property. He said that Ballinasloe, Tuam and Gort had set up very successful Youth cafes but Loughrea just leave them hanging around the street. He said it was pointless for them to put in a tender as they would not have the funds up front. He said there is funding available from the Department of Children but they would have to lease or purchase the building first.

Cllr. Regan said he would like to welcome Pat Gallagher, County Manager to the meeting. He said that Cllr. Hynes was Mayor of the County for the last year and no discussions had taken place in that time about this premises. He said officials come and go but the councillors have a mandate from the community and they are answerable to the people who elected them. He said that he is not happy with the contents of the Plan for the Town Hall. He appealed to Mr. Gallagher to re-consider this decision and put it back in the public arena for open discussion. Loughrea is crying out for a place for youth.

Cllr. Bane said we should focus firmly back on the Town Hall so it does not get into private hands. She said she is not interested in what happened in the past with this building its future use is what concerns her. She said that the 10% for community use seems to be gone out the window. She said it is like selling a house and keeping a room in it. She said it would appear that the Developer who has got planning permission would have the first shout. She also requested that the tender be withdrawn and the Community be given one last shout to see if they can come up with a viable proposition. The town genuinely want this property kept in the community.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the youth of the town need a permanent home and take them off the streets. This is very essential that this be provided so as to discourage drinking habits as the pub is only place the youth can go to. She said that Loughrea genuinely needs youth facilities in the town. She too requested a last chance to progress this matter. She said she had visited the facility in Ballinasloe with Cllr. Burke and she was very impressed with it. She said she would be very glad to see a similar one in Loughrea.

Cllr. Tully said he agreed with the sentiments expressed. He said the sum of €2.5 million is not an exorbitant sum anymore and people should not be frightened by it. He said the Community need the facilities and they should be provided. He said that the Council had purchase the building very cheap and they could give something back to the Community.

Mr. Cullen said it has been on record over the years what the Community think it is common knowledge at this stage. He said there was a feasibility study done for several uses for the Town Hall and the consultation process was held in O'Dea's Hotel and the Community gave their opinion. He said there were lots of suggestions but no funding was forthcoming. He said that the County Council had paid £100,000.00 which is the equivalent of €127,000.00 which was the going rate for property at that time. He said it is a listed building, in deplorable condition and will deteriorate more if something is not done with it. He said it was purchased by the rate payers and it was not cheap and there is a debt still owing on it. He said the

Groups interested in this building should request the documentation from Rooney Auctioneers and they will see for themselves what the requirements are. He said there are different forms of sale – lease whereby Community interest is insured. It has been a derelict building for the last 40 years and he hopes it will not remain derelict for the next 40 years. He said there is no question of withdrawing the advertisement for tenders. He said the 7 Area County Councillors and the 30 County Councillors will be making the decision on this building. The Developer who has planning permission on these premises does not have the first shout. He said this is a tax designation area and development has to commence in 2006. He said that no individual or group can prejudge the tender process system.

Mr. Pat Gallagher, County Manager, said the approach being taken by Galway County Council to try and seek a response from the public for this building is the best way forward. He said that it is a tax designated area which has some benefits to individuals, groups or community and it is the final phase of this scheme and work has to commence this year. He said that this yielded good results in other areas in the county and worked very well. He said that the Youth Group should get their bid in and it would be considered with all the other tenders.

Cllr. Hynes asked if Mr. Cullen had sought legal advice in relation to withdrawing of tenders. He said that he will be getting on to Peter Feeney, Chairman of the Electoral Area Committee and request that a meeting be convened as a matter of urgency. Cllr. Regan said that this meeting should take place as soon as possible.

Cllr. Maher said that the state of the cemeteries and the green areas are still causing major problems in Loughrea.

Cllr. Regan said he was Caretaker of the cemeteries in Loughrea and his job is to allocate graves, collect fees and open the gates when a funeral takes place. He said that the two cemeteries in Loughrea were the worst kept in the County.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she is a member of Loughrea Environmental Group and they have funded the cutting of the grass in the cemeteries but they will not be able to sustain this practise in the future.

Cllr. Bane said that there is no wheelchair access to Mt. Pleasant cemetery which is in breach of the Disability Act. She said that the gate to this cemetery is closed 95% of the time unless somebody is cutting grass or there is a funeral.

Cllr. Hynes said there has been a FAS scheme operating at the Cathedral over a number of years and this should be extended to include the cutting of the grass in the two cemeteries in Loughrea.

Traffic Management Plan.

Cllr. Burke said that the members had a meeting on the 15th May, 2006 to discuss this matter and it drew a list of hotspots as follows:-

Gort Road - Moll's Boreen and Coy's Boreen.; Double yellow lines on the Lakeside of this road (Fairgreen).

Galway Road - Paid parking one side and yellow line on the other side.

Barrack Street. - No parking allowed outside Michael Burkes.

Abbey Street/Mt. Carmel Road - From Carmelite Abbey car park to Frank Flynn's house double yellow lines.

Bride Street – extend paid parking from Eamonn Murphy's shop to Ros- En -Urbe.
Set down facility for customers outside O'Dea's Hotel.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix requested that in addition to the above that the road from Mt. Carmel to Dr. Maloney's surgery be reviewed and suggested that Dolphin Street and Mt. Carmel Crescent be made two way. She said that it is very dangerous as it is as motorists go up this street out of habit.

Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that there is a file open with submissions from the public and some of those areas will be reviewed when the Traffic Management Plan comes up for review. Mr. Cullen said that some of those areas might only need a simple adjustment which might not necessitate it going on public display.

Annual Financial Statement.

Annual Financial Statement for the year 2005 was noted and adopted.

Correspondence

An invitation for all the members and Officials to the Raising of the Green Schools Flag at Gaelscoil Riabach, 1.00 p.m. on 15/6/2006. Cllr. Burke said he would like to congratulate the County Council on receiving the Blue Flag again this year. He asked why the members of the Town Council were not invited to the launch in Salthill this year. Mr. Cullen said it was a great benefit to the town and he was delighted to see Loughrea retain it. He said that the invitations are issued from the Department of the Environment. It was proposed by Cllr. Burke that the Town Clerk write to the Department of the Environment and ask for the members to be included in the mailing list. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Mr. Cullen said there could be a flag raising event for Loughrea. Mayor Curley agreed to this.

Letter from Deputy Treacy dated 12th May, 2006 regarding grants for Metal Bridge and Dalystown Demense Bridge.

Letter from Deputy McHugh stating that there might be a possibility of a natural gas supply being made available to serve the town of Loughrea. Cllr. Bane that this is something positive for the town and it would give the people a choice of energy.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce about monthly meeting and outlining agenda.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"That the appropriate Government Minister be notified that the present practise, at elections, of taking a number of votes from the top of the pile and distributing these instead of going through all the papers, be discontinued immediately, as the present method is unconstitutional, because the Constitution protects the right of the person voting, and that voters votes must be distributed strictly according to the way the voters cast their votes"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said that he does not agree with the present system of distributing surplus votes when candidates reach the quota. He said the votes are taking from the top of the pile and not gone right through the ballot papers. He said it could be the difference between somebody loosing a seat and gaining a seat. He requested that a letter be written to the relevant Minister to change the present practise. Cllr. Regan asked if the electronic system would eliminate this practise. Mr. Cullen said it would be done differently.

"That Galway County Council be requested to give an undertaking to maintain all their Public Parks and two cemeteries in Loughrea Town, with special emphasis on our most neglected park – The Walks."

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that the grass areas in the town are a disgrace with the height of grass in them. He said that some months ago a local businessman had offered €450,000 for the fairgreen for a temporary use of it as a car park for 12/18 months but it was turned down by selfish people. He was sorry the Town Council did not get this funding and he would not have put it into a bandstand or such things but into the maintenance of Corry' Field and such like places. He said he knows other emergencies arise and Staff have to be pulled out of the green areas to deal with them. He said that this work should go to tender because it is the only way it will be dealt with.

Cllr. Maher said that the maintenance money for the upkeep of those areas is very small and not in keeping with 2006.

Mr. Cullen said he would agree with the members that the burial grounds need maintenance but in a lot of areas the local community make a commitment and cut the grass for the season and it is kept under control. He said that there are 225 burial grounds in County Galway and the County Council does not have the resources to keep them maintained. He said that it is difficult to use a mower in some of them and a strimmer has to be used which makes it more time consuming. He said that they are working on an idea to have access at all times in the cemeteries. He said that some of the green areas are in the Town Council ownership and some funding will have to be left aside when the Estimates are being framed.

"That a recommendation be made to Galway County Council to acquire a piece of ground on the east side of the entrance to Bohercom, as the present entrance compels drivers from the Dublin Road to go to left of centre of the road, go past the entrance and turn facing south-east in order to enter Bohercom."

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said a piece of ground should be acquired from Liam Kelly, Bride Street, Loughrea, in order to make the entrance to Bohercom more accessible. He requested the Town Engineer to look at it and see if this will solve the problem. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate it and see what can be done.

AOB.

Cllr. Burke asked when the Bypass will be finished. He said the roundabouts at Caherlavine, Cosmona and Fairfield are a disgrace. He said there is only one machine and dumper left on the job and no staff. He said a truck went through the signs at Monearmore roundabout, coming from the east of the town, and went across the green area but luckily nobody was killed or injured. He said there have been several accidents since it opened. He asked if a Health and Safety Audit has been done on it as it is his opinion that all of the Safety Regulations seem to be breached during the construction of the Bypass. He said that the E.S.B. pole has been removed at Cosmona but the area is still in a very dangerous condition. Mr. Raftery said he would get on to the Resident Engineer on the site and the NRA. Mr. Cullen said the Contractors will finish up the Bypass. They are still on site. He said there is always some tidying up to be done once it is open.

Cllr. Regan said signage was to be erected indicating Loughrea Town Centre but to date this has not been done. He said commercial life is loosing out as traffic just continues on the Bypass and are not aware of the town. Mr. Raftery said the Contractors were supposed to erect the signs but the manufacturers went out of business. He said the County Council will erect the signs when they receive the necessary resources.

Cllr. Bane said the Chamber of Commerce are launching a publicity campaign for business in the town coming up to Race Week and she asked that the signs be erected before then.

Cllr. Regan said that two planning applications were turned down by An Bord Pleanala for out of town commercial developments. He said it is a disgrace that one Body in the town could have such clout. He said there is room for everybody and a bit of competition would be no harm. He said this was the same group which held up the Bypass for 20 years. Cllr. Morgan said that it was funding that held up the Bypass.

Cllr. Burke said he would like to congratulate Cllr. Gunter Nix on the re-opening of Garrybreeda Playground by An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern T.D. on the 9th June, 2006. He said a lot of credit is due to her as Chairperson of the committee. He said it was a great success and he thanked all who helped with the fund raising. He said this is a kiddie's area which caters for children up to the age of 7. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she would like to thank Cllrs. Burke, Maher and Tully, for their assistance in helping with the fund raising and bringing this project to a conclusion. She said she had requested the Council Staff to put up "Children at Play" signs as there is a big population of young children in this area which motorists may not be aware of now. She said she would like to thank the local County Council Staff for putting in a huge effort so as to have the place looking well for the big occasion.

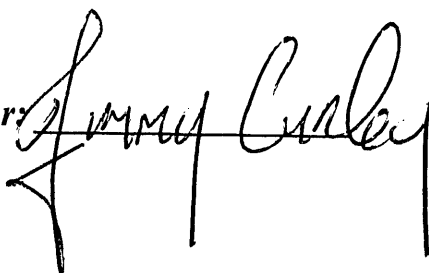
Cllr. Regan said that drinking on the streets and parks are gone out of control. He said some years ago the Town Council had brought in bye-laws but they were never implemented. He said if this problem is not addressed soon nobody will want to come into the town. Cllr. Maher supported this matter and said that drinking is also taking place at the Long Point and this matter will have to get attention once and for all.

Mayor Curley thanked the County Manager for attending the meeting.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 10th day of July, 2006.

Mayor:



Minutes of proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 10th July, 2006, in the Credit Union Office, Dunkellin Street, Loughrea.

I Lathair.

Mayor: Jimmy Curley.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Mary Gunter-Nix, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayer. A minutes silence was observed as a mark of respect to the three young people from Loughrea who were killed in an accident, in Craughwell, on the 9th July, 2006.

Mayor Curley said that he would take the presentation by David Conerney on Stoney Brennan first followed by Catherine Hynes's presentation on Mount Pleasant cemetery, Loughrea, if this was agreeable to the members. This was unanimously supported by the members.

David Conerney - Stoney Brennan.

David Conerney said for many years the story of Stoney Brennan has been told in Loughrea. I was very intrigued about what happened and the matters surrounding his death so I started writing poetry and stories about him. I have put a plaque together with the words and song on a C.D. and I propose that it be presented to the people of Loughrea and that it be erected at the Westbridge. He suggested that it be put up outside Morrissey's near the flower bed on the turn off for the Gort Road. Cllr. Hynes thanked him for his research and workmanship on the plaque. Cllr. Burke said it was about time the town had a song and words about Stoney Brennan and he wished him every success with his venture. Cllr. Morgan said that the town council would look favourably at the erection of the plaque in the Westbridge area. Mr. Conerney thanked the Town Council for allowing him to address them.

Catherine Hynes - Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

Catherine Hynes said she wished to address the meeting to highlight the need of families in relation to the care, maintenance and access to Mount Pleasant cemetery. She said there is willingness there for people to care for their individual plots if access is available. She said this facility should be available all the year around and not just for Cemetery Sunday. It should be seasonal hours to include Saturdays and Sundays. Keys are an issue at present, as 90% of people work between the hours of 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m Monday to Friday. Outside of those hours the Caretaker requires 24 hour notice which is not acceptable or fair to the people. I do not accept the County Council's reasons for not having the gates open 24/7 as it is up to the Caretaker to ensure that no vandalism happens in the cemetery. People can not bring peat moss, flowers or water into the graveyard because the gates are closed.

Ongoing management and care needs to be properly planned, implemented and co-ordinated, to ensure that maintenance of the graveyard is to an acceptable standard. She said that since she has raised this matter with Galway County Council and other representatives she was unhappy with the feedback.

Another issue is the Burial Ground Register which should be kept in a public place not in the Caretaker's private house. There should be access to this register by the public at all times. She said the Committee wanted access to the register so as they could maintain the graves where there is no one left to look after them. She asked what the Caretakers duties are.

Cllr. Morgan said that Burial Ground Register just shows the names and addresses of the people buried in the cemetery and does not contain any sensitive material and is a public document and should be accessible. The original document should be retained in the local office and a copy given to the Caretaker.

Cllr. Bane said that Catherine Hynes deserves a lot of credit for doing something that the elected representatives could not achieve. She said that a public meeting was held which was well attended, which showed that there is a willingness there to get out and do some work. She can not understand why the Burial Ground Register is not available in the office.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that Loughrea Environmental Group have done a lot of work there over the years. She said that the County Council Staff cut the grass regularly but there are now more demands on them with roadworks and other regulations pertaining to roads that they do not have the time to give to this matter. She said that Loughrea Environmental Group held gate collections last year and did other fund raising and got a contractor to cut Garrybreeda and Mount Pleasant burial grounds.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that funding was made available this year but he would not guarantee it for next year. He said that there are 224 burial grounds in the County and Galway County Council could not possibly maintain them through public funding. He said that burial grounds are a community facility and modest grants are made available to help to defray some of the cost. He said that the community would usually take care of them all over the County. He said that the Town Engineer and himself would look at the access and see what can be done. He said that the Register for the burial ground is a very important document and is held in the custody of the Caretaker.

Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that the water supply is not suitable as it belongs to an adjoining farmer and it is going through land. It would not meet the needs during the summer. He said that he would speak to the Contractor developing across the road from the cemetery and see if he could use his supply and put a tap inside the wall for use in the burial ground. He said that he is looking at the access and the best way to approach it.

Cllr. Burke said that Garrybreeda burial ground was in a mess as apparently the Register is gone missing. He wondered if somebody could do a thesis or similar research to find out the names of those buried there.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that she was a member of the Loughrea History Project and she is sure that Joe Forde and his team would be more than capable of doing this job. She said that this is a FAS trainee programme. She said that he has a project running at the moment and would probably not be in a position to undertake it until 2007.

Cllr. Hynes said that he was Chairman of this committee and if correspondence is sent to him he will have it discussed at a committee meeting. He asked for proposals to be set out in the letter.

Confirmation of minutes of Annual Meeting held on the 12th June, 2006.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that the minutes be adopted.

Confirmation of minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 12th June, 2006.

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Maher the minute of the monthly meeting be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Maher asked for an update on the Traffic Management Plan. He asked if the amendments requested by the members will be implemented. Mr. Raftery said there is no date set yet to review the Traffic Management Plan. He said from a local point of view we have spotted anomalies which we will be addressing. There is a file open on all the submissions received and they will be dealt with in due course. Cllr. Maher asked what has the pay and display yielded to date. Mr. Cullen said that the details would be circulated.

Cllr. Burke said that, as a result of a public meeting in relation to the Town Hall, that a working Committee has been set up. He said that there are great ideas and commitment out there but also some stumbling blocks. He said no matter who gets the Town Hall, the council are being unfair by putting it up for tender. He said the County Council should look at an application by a genuine group and look favourably on it.

Cllr. Bane said that the town councillors would have to lobby the 7 Area Councillors to pick the tender that is best for the Community.

Correspondence:

Letter from AMAI giving details of the annual conference in Cavan.

Letter from McFadden's requesting the use of the fairgreen from the 18th July to 27th July, 2006. A general discussion took place on this matter and it was eventually decided to allow the funfair in the fairgreen beside the Courthouse side, provided a substantial deposit is lodged with Galway County Council.

Letter from NRA stating the position on reinstatement of Main Street and also footpaths at the roundabouts. Mr. Raftery stated that work on the bypass will be

completed within two weeks. He said there have been a number of accidents at the roundabouts and the contractor is addressing this problem and resurfacing it.

Letter from the Department of the Environment. Money allocated for footpaths in former town commissioners areas. Cllr. Burke asked when work will commence on those footpaths. Mr. Raftery said it would be started after the summer holidays. He said that they had requested €120,000.00 but only received €73,000.00.

An invitation to the re-opening of Portumna Workhouse by Mary Harney T.D.

A nominee for the People of the Year Award. Cllr. Gunter-Nix proposed Sr. Clare Carty in St. Martin's Day Centre. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley. Cllr. Gunter-Nix to supply information to the Town Clerk about this centre.

An agenda from the Chamber of Commerce for a meeting on the 11th July, 2006.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Tully.

"I request that Galway County Council give an undertaking to notify residents and public representatives, whenever dangerous substances are to be taken from lands in the Loughrea area and to place notices where this is to be done and the type of substances involved".

It was proposed by Cllr. Tully seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Tully said that he had numerous telephone calls and representations from Baunoge residents regarding this matter. He has requested that notices be placed in the public press and at the area involved if such material is being removed in the future.

Cllr. Regan said he had taken photographs of the site which is above Mount Pleasant burial ground on the left hand side of the road. He said he reported this matter to the County Council over five years ago. He has requested a certificate be sent to the members of Loughrea Town Council from the County Council giving a guarantee that the site is safe.

Cllr. Hynes said it is nothing short of a scandal that an unauthorised dump was allowed on those lands and that toxic waste was extracted from it recently without notifying the residents in the Baunoge area.

Mr. Cullen said that when it came to attention that this material was being removed, from private land, it was fully investigated. It was removed by a registered contractor to an authorised site and every thing was done in a correct and authorised fashion. Any member of the public who contacted the County Council were fully briefed by the Environment Section as to the procedure, as were the public representatives. He said that the removal was done in a compliant manner with the Acts and regulations governing it.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"I will propose that a recommendation be sent to the Minister for Justice that a number of gaols be provided with only a chainlink wire around them to hold persons, who have been convicted for lesser crime; and that any person who goes over the fence, or goes outside without permission be placed in one of the present prisons; thereby reducing overcrowding and leaving space in our overcrowded prisons for those convicted of more serious crime".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan. This matter was not discussed as the motion was not seconded.

"That a recommendation be sent to the Minister for Health that the highest standard of respect and consideration be given to all patients in hospitals and nursing homes public and private, by personnel dealing with said patients".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan. This matter was not discussed as the motion was not seconded.

"That Galway County Council be requested to examine the current system that deals with telephone queries from the general public; with a view to improving same, and reducing the confusion experienced by callers. Further, that all departments be supplied with lists that will accurately define the functions of other departments, so that frequent complaints by callers who say that they have been sent from department to department, only to be sent back to a department that had earlier sent them on to some other department".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said it is very confusing for the public and especially the elderly to conduct business in Galway County Council. He said that there should be a person available, who is familiar with the various departments, to deal with the public queries and forward them to the proper section.

AOB

Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked was there any plan in place to repair the fencing or replace the equipment at the Gort Road Playground with the money provided in the Estimates. She asked if a costing had been done and what is the expected cost of doing this work. She asked if the equipment was under guarantee. Mr. Raftery said that he had got three quotations for the signage and would be ordering them shortly.

Cllr. Burke said that signage was to be provided directing the different age groups to the different equipment in the playground. He thought signs for 0 - 5; 5 - 10; 10-15 were to be erected. He asked if the Porto-loos would be erected at this location again this year until the public convenience is ready. Mr. Cullen said that the only toilets that would be erected were the automatic public convenience at the fairgreen. He said it is going through the statutory planning process at the moment.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix requested signs be put on the diving board at the Long Point to warn drivers not to bring cars to the water edge or onto the diving board. She said that there is an accident waiting to happen if this practise continues. She also mentioned that dogs are being allowed in the grass area at the lake and they are fouling on it. She asked if this area could be monitored and prosecute the predators.

Cllr. Burke asked about the Recycling Centre at Rathruddy and if it will be open before the end of summer. Mr. Cullen said that it is unlikely to be open this year as there is construction work to be done at it.

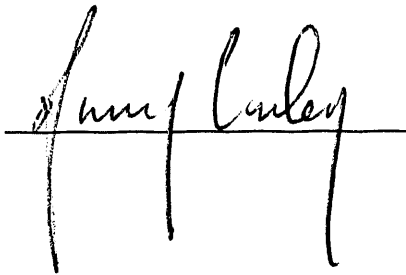
Cllr. Burke said that the members were invited to the launch of the East Galway Bus Tour Promotion recently and Gort, Athenry, Dartfield, Turoe etc. were mentioned on it. He said that St. Brendan's Catholic Cathedral was one of the finest historical structures in the County but it was not mentioned. He said the Loughrea Lake was another fine amenity and was not referred to either. He requested that a note be sent to Eimear Dolan pointing out those omissions. Cllr. Maher said he has already spoken to the relevant personnel about this matter.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked for an update on the Regional office, (formerly Teagasc office) and the expected date of the staff moving into them. Mr. Cullen said he thinks the tender process is over and they are being examined by the Consultants. He expects once this process is over that the contractor will move in quite quickly after that.

Cllr. Morgan said that the town council should object to an unauthorised development at Dolphin Street at the back of Morrissey's dwelling house. He asked if planning was required for this development. He said that this is the only remaining working moat in Ireland and it is preserved. Mr. Cullen said that the town council should not get involved in a matter such as this as they are not a planning authority. He said if the members want to object to this development they can do so of there own right and not involve the town council. Cllr. Maher asked if railings could be put along the walks in order to prevent people from falling into water after the discos. Cllr. Morgan said that a wire fence could be erected.

This concluded the business.

Signed this 11th day of September, 2006. Mayor:



Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held in the Credit Union offices Dunkellin Street, Loughrea on the 11th September, 2006.

I Lathair

Mayor: Cllr. Jimmy Curley.

Members: Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Mary Gunter-Nix, Pat Hynes, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

Officials: Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Meeting opened with prayers.

Confirmation of Minutes:

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke that the minutes of the 10th July, 2006 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Maher asked what the pay and display contributions had yielded since it was implemented in 2004. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the Income in 2005 from Pay and Display was €430,000.00; Operational Costs was €250,000.00 and total Capital expenditure was €1.34 million. He said that 50% of the surplus will be ring fenced for improvement works in Loughrea such as roads and footpaths and the Main Street. He said that contract documents are being prepared to improve all the services from the Westbridge to Station Road. He said it was never expected that the NRA would grant 100% fund for the whole job. He said the County Council will be working in consultation with the businesses.

Cllr. Regan asked what works were going on in Station Road car park as there seems to be a section of the area being developed. Mr. Raftery, Acting Executive Engineer, said that a co-location unit will be erected at this area as part of the Broadband project. He said that Part 8 planning process is complete for a permanent porto cabin unit at this site. Cllr. Regan asked if the County Council will be receiving an annual subscription for this unit. Mr. Cullen said no as the County Council are a party to this process.

Cllr. Bane asked when the signs, showing the different age groups allowed on certain play facilities, will be erected at Gort Road playground. Mr. Raftery said that Ann Mallaghan had placed an order for the signs but she has now moved to another section and will not be dealing with Loughrea anymore. He said there seems to have been a mix up in the order and he will have to investigate the matter and see what signs have to be re-ordered. Cllr. Maher asked if the damaged equipment will be replaced in the playground. Mr. Raftery said the Town Council was dealing with three suppliers as one item from each was damaged. Two pieces of equipment has been replaced and the third piece is in stock awaiting replacement. He said the gates put up on this playground kept being knocked down and had to be replaced by two stronger ones which are more secure. He said the grass will also have to be sorted out as it did not take in places. He said that a fence will have to be erected around the playground. He said it would cost €120.00 per 130 linear metres. He said there would need to be 120 - 130 metres erected at this area. Cllr. Maher said that the fence near the lake is ready to fall and would need to be replaced before an accident happens. Cllr. Burke said he had requested, several times, that the playground have opening and closing times as otherwise it will be impossible to combat vandalism. He said if the Gardai see people abusing the equipment they can take action if there is a notice up stating the times. He said until this is done the equipment will have to be replaced again and again. Cllr. Morgan asked if the equipment is insured against damages. Mr. Cullen said that there was public liability insurance in case of an accident but not for damage to equipment. He said vandalism is costly and expensive but it can be got over. He said the entire project was funded by the Town Council and Galway County Council and it was a very successful project and it gives immense enjoyment to the community.

Audited report on Accounts of Loughrea Town Council for year ending 31st December, 2005.

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke seconded by Cllr. Maher to approve the documents as presented.

Correspondence.

Letter from McFadden's Funfair requesting the use of the fairgreen from the 14th to the 18th September, 2006. This was agreed in principle. Cllr. Regan requested that the Bond of €5,000 be reduced to €3,000. Mr. Cullen said this is not a function of the Town Council to stipulate what the Bond should be. The decision will be made by the Town Engineer.

Letter from National Disability Authority in relation to the Adoption of the Barcelona Declaration.

Memo from the Association of Garda Sergeants looking for support for the Diary/Yearbook 2007. A decision was made at the adoption of the estimates that no donations would be given to anybody in order to keep the town rate as low as possible.

Letter from Baffle requesting subscription for the upcoming Baffle festival to be held at the October bank holiday weekend. It was unanimously agreed at the estimates meeting in December last that no funding was available to any group this year.

Letter from Garda Siochana in relation to Loughrea Bye-Laws 2002 with an enclosure from the Connacht Tribune dated 14/7/2006 with a ruling made by Judge Reilly in relation to the Bye-Laws adopted by Ballinasloe Town Council. Cllr. Burke asked if the signs will be erected at all the approach roads to the town or if they will target specific areas in the town under the Loughrea (Regulation and Control of the consumption of intoxicating substances in public places) Bye-Law 2002. Cllr. Gunter Nix said that she does regular litter picks around the town and she knows where the problem areas are. She said if the signs were put up at source of purchase the same as "I.D. over 18's only" that it might deter people from drinking in the parks, cemeteries etc. around the town. Cllr. Hynes said he agreed with Cllr. Gunter-Nix that the signs should go up where the consumption is taking place. Cllr. Burke proposed that the signs should be erected in a number of languages around the town. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane. Cllr. Regan asked Mr. Cullen if he had any suggestions as to where they should be placed. Mr. Cullen said that he understood that the Bye-Laws did not specify locations and he suggested that the Town Clerk write to the Council's Law Agent to seek legal clarification on the situation.

Training Seminar for Councillors in Walter Raleigh Hotel from 28th September to 30th September, 2006.

NOM from Edenderry Town Council "That the Government provide more funding for the upkeep of our country roads so as they can be made safer for motorists"

"In the interest of safety on our roads, that the use of loose chippings be discontinued and for a better and safer road surface to be used"

"Training areas for learner drivers in order that they can experience in a controlled atmosphere, road hazards such as potholes, a slippery surface or fog"

Reply from Dick Roche, T.D. in response to NOM raised by Cllr. Morgan in relation to the counting of votes at the local elections.

All correspondence circulated to the members.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce setting out agenda for meeting on the 12/9/2006.
Newsletter outlining activities during summer.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

(i) "That a recommendation be sent to the Minister for Justice that a number of gaols be provided with only a chainlink wire fence around them; for persons who have been convicted of lesser crimes; prisoners who leave the proposed prisons, without permission to be returned to a high security facility. That due to the high number of deaths which have taken place in our much overcrowded jails that serious consideration be given to this recommendation, which would greatly reduce the present high prison costs"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said that three weeks after this motion was shot down because nobody seconded it, a number of people died tragically in prisons because of overcrowding. He said that prisoners, who commit minor offences should be held in an area without high walls and if they breach their freedom they be deterred in high risk security areas. Cllr. Burke said that he could not agree with this motion. He said if someone breaks the law they are put into jail. He said that Cllr. Morgan wants to send them to a holiday home if it is a minor offence and to a walled in jail if the offence is more serious. He proposed that all predators be jailed and the Judges decision be upheld. Cllr. Regan said he did not believe in taking up prison space with low risk prisoners, and that is why he seconded this motion. He said it is very costly for the Department of Justice to run the prisons and there is also high security needed. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she agreed with Cllr. Burke. She said it is a poor reflection on the judicial system if the Judges decision is not adhered to. She said that normally the Judge would ask the offender to do community service if it is a minor offence. She said there could not be a two tier prison system. She said that people are in jail because they have broken the law. A vote was taken on this motion because of disagreement of councillors to the motion. The result of the vote was –

For Cllr. Morgan's motion - Cllrs. Morgan, Regan. - 2

For Cllr. Burke's motion - Cllrs. Tully, Burke, Gunter-Nix, Bane. - 4

Cllrs. Hynes and Curley abstained.

Cllr. Morgan's motion defeated.

(ii) "That a definite sum is included in the October estimates of Loughrea Town Council for the proper maintenance of Corry's field and other parks in its care"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that funding will have to be set aside for Corry's field and all the parks around the town in order to maintain the green areas. Mr. Cullen said he would look at this area when framing the estimates and see if specific funding can be made available for the parks.

(iii) "That the Superintendent of Loughrea Garda District be asked for an explanation as to why the law regarding seat belts in cars is not being enforced in Loughrea where young persons can be seen sitting on car windows, with their legs in the cars and the remainder of their bodies holding onto the top outside of said cars. Also, why when children are being put in mortal danger sometimes by persons who are not parents of those children; do the Gardai neglect to prosecute those who put the lives and limbs of children in extreme danger?"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Morgan said he had tabled a motion a few months ago regarding this matter but to date no action has been taken on the matter. Mayor Curley said he had received a letter from Superintendent Enda Walsh in Loughrea Garda Station dated 1st September, 2006 regarding this matter. This was in response to meeting between Town Councillors and the Superintendent. Here is extract from this letter

" 1). A letter has been sent to Mr. Frank Burke, Chairman of the County Board of the G.A.A., pointing out the dangers inherent in such practices, requesting that all underage team managers be advised of the dangers. It was also pointed out to him that the drivers of the cars could face prosecution.

2). All Garda members in Loughrea District have been instructed to take action whenever such behaviour comes to notice."

Cllr. Tully said that all sporting groups should be targeted not just Frank Burke's association. He said there are other sporting groups who win also and the children hang out their heads in moving cars. Mayor Curley said there is 6 point penalty in place for such behaviour and this should put an end to this practise.

A.O.B.

Cllr. Burke asked if there are plans to clean the gullies around the town, especially at St. Laurencefields, so as to avoid flooding. He said the gullies are blocked with rubbish. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter.

Cllr. Burke asked for an update on the tenders submitted for the Town Hall. He said he thought he would have a reply from Mr. Cullen before he left the meeting. Mayor Curley said that the County Council Area Meeting had taken place earlier in the day to discuss this matter and others on the agenda. He said he attended the meeting as the representative of the Town Council. He said four tenders in total were submitted and they were being assessed by an independent body outside the County Council. He said no decision was made at this meeting. He said a further meeting was arranged for Friday afternoon at 3.00 p.m. to discuss the Town Hall. He said a decision will have to be made before 19th September, so as it will be on the agenda for the full County Council meeting in September. Cllr. Burke said that this is one of the most important decisions for Loughrea and nobody has information on it. He said the tax designation will expire on it at the end of the year. He asked Cllr. Hynes if he had anything further to add to Mayor Curley's comments. Cllr. Hynes said that his sole and only interest is the use of the Town Hall is for the benefit of the people and not for other entities (business, commercial etc.). I am not interested in what designation is on it tax or otherwise. I am not happy that the people are not getting what they are justly entitled to or are demanding. I will make up my own mind on Friday. Cllr. Regan said that a special meeting should be called to discuss the Town Hall. He asked if there was any discussion on the 10% retention for the community. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that at the public meeting with the County Councillors, they gave a commitment to keep the town councillors informed on what was happening with the Town Hall. She thinks the elected representatives should have the information before it is leaked to the media. Cllr. Burke requested that the town councillors be allowed to attend Friday's meeting as observers because of the importance of this issue. They have a mandate from the people and are answerable to the community. Cllr. Bane said that the town councillors have a right to be present at this meeting. Mayor Curley said he would make representations on their behalf to the Chairman of the Area Committee and would inform them of the outcome.

Cllr. Maher said that there is no sign for Portumna along the Bypass. Mr. Raftery said he would look at it. He said once you get to Fairfield roundabout there is a sign.

Cllr. Maher asked on an update on the public toilet in the fairgreen. Mr. Raftery said that the planning process had gone through and the contract was signed for the construction of the toilets, at the corner of the fairgreen, across from the Courthouse.

Cllr. Maher asked if any new staff had been recruited since the advertisement was on the paper. Mr. Raftery said a panel has been set up which will be operative for the next 12 months. He said most of the grant jobs had been finished for this year except the Tynagh/Loughrea road. Cllr. Regan said that he remembers 20 years ago and there would be at least 20 staff out maintaining the town but today there is just one with a barrow and shovel. Cllr. Bane said that extra staff will have to be recruited as the County Council will have to look after the maintenance of the bypass. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the town has expanded and also the cost of maintaining all the green areas has increased so it is difficult to maintain it with current staff level. She asked if the contractors could cut the grass at the roundabouts and along the road before they move on. Mr. Raftery said he would check it out.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed this 9th day of October, 2006. Mayor:

