

Cllr. Bane said she had attended a meeting on the 11/2/2008 in relation to the organising of the St. Patrick's Day parade. She said that Cllrs. Gunter-Nix, Maher and Curley were organising this event with other communities in the area. She asked if the County Council insurance would cover this event. The final plans are not finalised yet but it will probably be from Station Road to the Westbridge. The theme is "Spraoi agus Spóirt". She expects that some floats will enter but she would not expect a huge amount. Town Clerk to check it out with the Insurance Company. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that all the help available is needed to patrol the areas, with the Gardai, to ensure the smooth running of it.

Cllr. Hynes asked if the new Fire Station will be provided by the County Council in the near future or is there a time scale for it to be constructed. He said the existing site is totally unsuitable. Mr. Cullen said that he is no longer dealing with the Fire Services. He said he spent four years trying to find a suitable site but had not been successful. He said that the Director of Services for Corporate, Cultural and General Services is dealing with it now.

Cllr. Curley asked if any developments have taking place in relation to the transfer of Residents from the Moyross Housing Estates in Limerick. Cllr. Regan said that this was a stunt by Cllr. Burke for political gain. He said if any member has confidential information they should discuss it with the Mayor prior to the meeting. Mayor Maher said he checked this matter out with Frank Gilmore, Director of Services Housing, and he said that Galway County Council was not purchasing them. Cllr. Hynes said that this was a practical joke and Cllr. Burke fell for it. Cllr. Morgan said that Cllr. Burke was set up by the person that gave him the information and then would not stand by him. Cllr. Burke said that he had no reason to give this information to the Mayor. He did not say that it was Galway County Council who was purchasing them. He said that all members have equal rights and the Mayor is there to conduct the meetings and see that Standing Orders are adhered to. He said that his integrity and honesty was under question by some members. He said he was giving the information by an auctioneer on the 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2008 in good faith. He felt obliged to bring this item out in the open so as it could be confirmed or denied as it was circulating around the area for some time. He said he had got a lot of compliments for highlighting this issue and clearing the air before it did untold damage.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Loughrea Environmental Group intends to apply for the National and Local Tidy Towns competitions in 2008. She said that they have not entered any competition since the Pride of Place competition in 2005 when she was Mayor of the town. She said volunteers are badly needed in order to keep the town and environs in pristine condition in order to reach their goal and do well in the competitions. She said they meet once a week for about an hour and do litter pick. She said they called a meeting recently and have recruited new members but they still want more. She hopes that the County Council Staff will continue to pick up the bags of litter when collected as happened heretofore. She said they will be doing an advertising campaign on the local papers and the parish newsletter. She said she is glad to see the gates on the Walks closed at night which might curb vandalism. Cllr. Regan asked if the small mechanical sweeper will be back on the streets in 2008. He said this was partially sponsored by a local supermarket owner and was hardly ever seen sweeping the street. Mr. Raftery said that it was under repair and was not very

satisfactory. He said that they are seeking quotations for the purchase of a larger one for the electoral area. Mr. Cullen said that the County Council were very grateful to the local supermarket owner for co-financing this machine. Cllr. Morgan asked if the Council had somebody to operate the machine if they got it in the morning. Mr. Raftery said this would not be an issue. He said the Council will pick up the bags of litter when picked as usual. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that litter has become a huge problem and she said the Loughrea Environmental Group will be visiting the schools looking for help and also making them aware of litter and the disposal of litter. She said all the area around the schools is full of litter. She said the transition year students could take on this project and collect the litter.

## 2. CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from I.D.A. in response to a query from Cllr. Burke in relation to the amount of land remaining in the Industrial Estates in Loughrea. This was discussed under matter arising from the minutes.

Letter from the HSE on the capital project for St. Brendan's Home and the number of beds provided there. Here is extract from letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2008. "I wish to confirm, yet again, that the HSE plans to develop the number of beds for which we have been given approval i.e. 2 x 40 bedded units = 80 beds".

Letter from Fiona O'Loughlin, Special Olympics Ireland, dated 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2008 as follows:- "We would be delighted if you would work with us on this celebration of 30 years of Special Olympics. I will contact you in the coming weeks to get an indication of your enthusiasm to be involved with this community celebration".

Letter from Chamber of Commerce with agenda for meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008 at 6.15 p.m. in O'Dea's Hotel, Loughrea. 1. Major fundraising has to be organised to pay for Christmas Lights. 2. Rose Selection: 3 Amendment to Constitution and have it updated.

Local Government Act, 2001 – Part 15 - Ethical Framework for Local Government Service. Forms circulate to all members which should be returned before the last day of February, 2008.

AMAI Spring Conference in Trim, Co. Meath. Two delegated nominated will attend.

## 3. Notice of Motion - Cllr. Tully.

(i) "I will call on Galway County Council to employ sufficient numbers of maintenance staff in order to maintain Loughrea public areas and facilities to a high standard."

It was proposed by Cllr. Tully seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Tully said that the number of people employed by the County Council has reduced considerably over the years and have not been replaced. He said he was informed by a Minister recently that the embargo in Local Authorities is lifted. He



asked when the recruitment process will begin. Mr. Cullen said he is not aware that the embargo is lifted. He is trying to recruit staff and he is informed that it is still in place. He said that there is not sufficient funding to pay staff. Mr. Raftery said that Budget changes from year to year and they do not know what grants will be available in 2008. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said this matter should be raised at the upcoming AMAI conference.

(ii) "I call on Galway County Council to install CCTV cameras on the Walks in order to keep this amenity area monitored".

It was proposed by Cllr. Tully seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Tully said that there is broken glass and cans strewn along this area. He said if CCTV cameras were placed along this area it might alleviate the vandalism and stop the hooligans. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she walked along this area, before she came to the meeting, and she would like to complement the County Council staff on how well it was kept. She said it had been swept by the mechanical sweeper and it was perfect. Cllr. Morgan said he would like to thank the County Council for responding to his notice of motion, tabled at a previous meeting, requesting that the Walks be swept at the same time as the town is being done.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.**

(i) "That vehicles other than buses who park in the Bus Bays be prosecuted, so as to ward off the total chaos which would result in buses having to park on the roadway".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Cllr. Morgan said that vehicles are parked in the bus bays and loading bays resulting in buses parking on the roadway causing chaos. He said the Community Warden or the Gardai should issue tickets and prosecute them.

(ii) "That traffic lights be provided at the Westbridge junction.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. Morgan said as stated during the meeting traffic lights are very necessary at this location for the smooth flow of traffic.

(iii) "That the street light in Piggott Street, Loughrea, which is 17 paces from the light at the junction of Piggott Street and Barrack Street, be moved to a position half way between said junction light and the third light in Piggott Street which is 87 paces from the second light".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan requested that this matter be investigated. Cllr. Burke said this street is in a terrible state with flooding outside the Boxing Club. He said this would need to be done as soon as possible. He said that this area was used widely during the

refurbishment of the Main Street and he understands that it would be reinstated once the work was complete. Mr. Raftery said he would look at it.

**Any Other Business.**

Cllr. Bane said the Lions Club were holding a mile walk around Corry's Field in April to raise funds. She asked if there would be any objection to this and if the Town Council's insurance would cover them. Mr. Cullen said it would be checked out with the insurance company when they have a definite date.

Cllr. Regan said that Kelly Street needs to be surface dressed as there is a valley on the road with all of the heavy traffic using it during the refurbishment of the Main Street. It is very dangerous and would need attention.

Cllr. Burke said that the development plan will be coming up for review in April. He said that multi-national companies should be allowed in to the town to create a bit of competition. Cllr. Morgan said who objected to them coming into the town. Cllr. Burke said there were objections by the retailers. Cllr. Morgan said if out of town shopping centres are created it will demoralise the town centre.

Mr. Raftery said they would be installing an alternative floatation system at the Diving Board in the Long Point area. This system is widely used in Spain.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council held on the 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

Signed this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2008 Mayor: Michael Maher



**Minutes and proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2008, in Loughrea County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.**

**I lathair**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Michael Maher.

**Members:** Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Pat Hynes, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Thosnaigh an crinniú leis an paidir.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted.

**Matters arising from the minutes.**

Cllr. Regan asked if the Health Executive Service had come back regarding the number of beds to be provided at St. Brendan's Home, Loughrea. Mayor Maher said that 100 beds will be provided. There will be 20 respite beds. He said there will be no loss of beds or jobs in St. Brendan's Home. He said that a representative from the Health Executive Service had spoken to the staff and outlined the project to them. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that people are living longer and most of them are able to stay in their own homes and do not require institutional care. She said that the proposals were outlined to them by letter which was read for them by the Town Clerk at meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2008. Cllr. Hynes said that there are at present 123 beds and it is now proposed to reduce this to 100 beds. He said this will result in job losses. When staff retire they will not be replaced as is happening in the County Council presently. He said there should be a casualty receiving unit set up to deal with emergency services when this new project comes on stream. Cllr. Curley proposed that J. J. Keane be invited to the next town council meeting to discuss this matter and let the members know exactly what is happening. This was seconded by Cllr. Burke. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the St. Patrick's Day parade will take place at 1.00 p.m. on the 17/3/2008. It will start from Station Road and continue down the Main Street to the Westbridge and then onto the Courthouse. She said there will be stewards needed to marshal the area if anybody wishes to volunteer. The reviewing stand will be at Millennium House, Westbridge, Loughrea. Cllr. Bane said that they propose to have bouncing castles on the fairgreen and asked if this was acceptable to the members. There was no objection by the members. Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer, said once insurance is lodged with the local office indemnifying Loughrea Town Council and Galway County Council for

any damages there was no objection. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services agreed with this.

Cllr. Tully said he wants to thank Galway County Council and Loughrea Town Council for appointing the school warden and he hopes she will be there as long as the last school warden.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the Loughrea Tidy Towns group will be starting cleaning up the town from the 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 to the end of the summer. They intend to enter all the competitions both national and local and are looking for volunteers to help pick up litter and clean up the town. She said they will target the schools and the owners of derelict sites to see if they can improve the appearance of the town. This might help to increase the marks for the town when inspections take place during the summer. She said the Main Street and Barrack Street have been refurbished since they last entered the competitions. She said the Group made a visit to Westport recently and met with several groups involved with tidy towns and other communities in the area to see if they could pick up any ideas and try and improve on their markings. She said Westport was in pristine condition and it was all down to the voluntary groups and the County Council who worked tirelessly to achieve this standard.

**2. CORRESPONDENCE.**

Letter from Billy O'Reilly, Loughrea Tennis Club, Gort Road, Loughrea, requesting a meeting with Loughrea Town Council to discuss improvement works to the tennis club as follows:- New roof for our club house; Construction of a mini tennis court for our junior members; Provision for flood lights for the third court; Training equipment for our junior members; Security System. Cllr. Regan said a decision will have to be made on who the Town Council members meet. Mayor Maher said he had no problem meeting with the Tennis Club when they have given sufficient notice.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce giving information of meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 in O'Dea's Hotel at 8.15 p.m.

AMAI Newsletter.

Letter from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd. saying Annual General Meeting being held on the 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2008. Cllr. Curley will attend as a delegate of the Town Council.

Newsletter from Road Safety Officer, Loughrea.

**3. Notice of Motion - Cllr. Maher.**

1. "I propose that Galway County Council take down the cameras at Barrack Street where the bottle banks were situated and erect those in Station Road to monitor the bottle banks in this area"

It was proposed by Cllr. Maher seconded by Cllr. Morgan.



Cllr. Maher said that the cameras need to be put up beside the bottle banks to stop littering at this area. He said the cameras at the Fire Station should be relocated to Station Road car park. Cllr. Regan asked if the bottle banks could be moved over to the other side of the car park so as people can not throw boxes over the fencing into the river. Cllr. Burke said that the bottle banks need to be properly set in concrete in order to keep the place tidy and put in CCTV cameras in order to take prosecutions. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said there would need to be a big sign at this area informing them of the regulations and the penalties incurred if they do not adhere to it. Mr. Raftery said that the Council has put down ducting for the CCTV cameras along by the river beside the bottle banks. He said this will incur extra expense re-locating them to the opposite side of the car park.

2. "I propose that Galway County Council carries out a Geology Study on the lands adjacent to Mount Pleasant Cemetery to ensure the land is suitable for a burial ground. This cemetery is almost full to capacity and an extension is urgently required".

It was proposed by Cllr. Maher seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Maher said that an extension to the Mount Pleasant burial ground is urgently needed. He said that there are not many spaces left in this burial ground as some of the ground is very rocky and not suitable. Mr. Cullen said that 6 acres of land has been zoned for community use in this area. He said they will put plans in trail to acquire land for an extension to this burial ground so as it will be ready when it is needed. Mr. Raftery said that trial holes were dug at this location and he understands that the land is suitable. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Loughrea Environmental Group always did litter picks, paid to get the grass cut and then applied for the grant which helped to defray some of the cost. Mr. Raftery said he would be putting the grass cutting out to tender very soon before the growing season begins.

3. "I propose that the Health Executive Service re-introduce Deaths, Births and Marriage Certificate office for Loughrea. This service is no longer available to the people of Loughrea or the hinterland of Loughrea".

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

Cllr. Maher said that people have now to go to Galway City to purchase the above certificates. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she has provided an office in her family home to facilitate this service for years. In November 2007 new legislation was introduced and marriages have now to be registered in Galway. She said there was no point in continuing with this service when she could not issue all certificates. She said she spoke to the Superintendent Registrar about this matter during the day and he said that they are looking at setting up an office in the Health Centre on Main Street, Loughrea. She said that all certificates are also available in the Health Centre in Ballinasloe.

#### **4. Notice of Motion - Cllr. Gunter-Nix.**

1. "That Galway County Council in consultation with Loughrea Town Council re-visits the matter of Loughrea Town Hall, with a view to regeneration of the building for use by the Community of the town".

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

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the Town Hall has been talked about over the years and nothing has happened with it. She said it will become a derelict site if something is not done with it very soon. She asked if Galway County Council could give any assistance if a private company was interested in it. She said everybody wants to see it up and running and use made of it for the community. Mayor Maher said that he knows a consortium who is interested in refurbishing the Town Hall. Cllr. Burke said he had two bids in the last time the Town Hall was advertised for Expressions of Interest. One was in the name of the Credit Union and the other was Brian Shaughnessy for a Youth Café in the town. He said they were not successful in their bids. He said he would like to see an area set aside for the Youth Federation from who ever takes over the Town Hall. Cllr. Hynes said the tax payers own the Town Hall. It was purchased from the Directors of the Town Hall at under market value for the benefit of the community. He said up to recently it was used for the enjoyment and merriment of the community. Mr. Cullen said he is not responsible for the Town Hall that it is Kevin Kelly. He said lack of funding is the problem with the Town Hall and the jig saw can not be completed until this is secured.

2. "That the gates leading to The Walks be locked at night to reduce (or prevent) the vandalism and anti-social behaviour which is a common feature there for some years".

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

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that a lot of new staff has moved into the town and it would be nice, if they could take a stroll through The Walks at lunch time or in the evening and avail of this wonderful amenity. She said she is glad to see The Walks gates closed at night and asked if the pedestrian gates could be closed in order to combat vandalism. She said a number of lights had been vandalised along this area recently and will have to be replaced incurring extra expense on the ratepayers. She said CCTV cameras will need to be put up soon in order to stop this practise.

3. "That the broken railings at the Park in Garrybreeda be replaced, to prevent serious injury to the children who use the Park".

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

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she tabled a notice of motion at a previous meeting regarding the state of the railings at Garrybreeda. She said she would like to see a wall, or a railing and wall, erected at this location before there is a serious accident. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter and see if funding can be found to carry out the work requested.

#### **5. Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.**

1. "That diagonal markings, in a south east to north-west direction, be provided on the car parking area opposite Supermac's, Main Street, Loughrea, as cars, at present, backing out from there are crossing the centre line of the road and interfacing with the west east traffic".



It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Mayor Maher.

2. "That an adequate loading bay be provided on the north side of Main Street, Loughrea, as requested on several occasions by Loughrea Town Council".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Already discussed at joint meeting concerning issues on the Main Street (Town Council and Area Councillors) earlier in the day.

3. "That the Loughrea Gardai be requested to implement the law in regard to driving while using a mobile phone, as such a practise is common in Loughrea, where one can often see persons driving around street corners; some in vans, some with children in their cars, with a mobile phone in one hand and using the knee and the second hand while turning the steering wheel".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that the use of mobile phones while people are driving is getting out of hand. He said the Gardai will have to implement the law and stamp out this practise. He said a bus driver was using a mobile phone in Loughrea recently while driving risking the lives of passengers.

**Any Other Business.**

Cllr. Burke asked if Piggott Street will be surface dressed in 2008. He said there is bad flooding outside the Boxing Club on Piggott Street. He said that this street was used by Maddens when the Main Street was refurbished. Mr. Raftery said that it was not on the Roads Programme for this year. He said the footpaths will be refurbished out of the funding allocated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for former town commissioner areas. Cllr. Burke said that drainage or maintenance will have to be done at this location as people are getting drenched going in and out the door. This door will have to be replaced because it has rotted with the flooding.

Cllr. Regan said that Kelly Street also needs attention as all of the heavy traffic was diverted onto this street when the Main Street was being done. This street is now subsiding and needs attention.

Mayor Maher said that he met the representatives supplying the product for the swimming pool at the diving board, Loughrea and he made a presentation to members of Loughrea Town Council, Area County Councillors, and people from the sailing club and the anglers association to let them see at first hand what was being provided. He said under the procurement process other companies will have to be asked to tender for the pontoons. He said the material is made of heavy duty rubber and can be put together like a jig saw. He said bits can be added to it all the time as required. He expects those should be in place in the not too distant future. Cllr. Hynes said that this should enhance the area and increase the tourists visiting Loughrea. Cllr. Burke said the pontoons seem very impressive but wanted to know if the diving board at the Long Point will be

repaired or will it be replaced. Mr. Raftery said the diving board will be replaced with the pontoons not concrete. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the month of April is the National Spring Clean month. She urged everybody to get involved in this campaign and try and get the litter off the streets and the approach roads to Loughrea. She said that we should get the Youth Clubs and school children involved to help with removing black spots around the town and the environs of the town.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2008.

Signed this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2008. Mayor: Michael Maher



**Minutes and proceeding of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2008 in the County Council offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

I lathair.

**Mayor:** Cllr. Michael Maher.

**Members:** Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Pat Hynes, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Thosnaigh an crinniú leis an paidir.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Burke and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted.

Mayor Maher asked if the deputation from Loughrea Tennis Club would be taken first and then they would continue with the agenda as set out. This was unanimously agreed.

**DEPUTATION FROM LOUGHREA TENNIS CLUB.**

Mr. Robert Keary and Mr. Billy O'Reilly made a presentation to the Town Council members giving a brief description of the plans for the tennis court over the next number of years. He said that a new roof was required for the clubhouse, construct a mini court for junior members, provide floodlights for the third court, provide training equipment for younger members and generally make the whole area secure. He said they had estimated that it will cost in the region of €37,000.00 and they will have to raise 30% of this amount themselves before they can avail of any grants. They have applied to the Minister for Arts, Sports & Tourism and also applied for lottery funding. He asked if the County Council would be carrying out any works along this area that would tie in with their plans in order to avoid duplication. He said that the Town Council/Galway County Council were working at the Playground at the moment and he was interested to know if they would be doing any work on the fencing at the Tennis Court which would reduce their costs. Also if there were putting in additional lighting along this area it might enhance the tennis court. Mayor Maher thanked Mr. Keary for his presentation. He said he would talk to the personnel in Community & Enterprise and see if any monies could be made available for those works. Cllr. Curley asked if the works as outlined would require planning permission. Cllr. Hynes said that he would talk to the Director of Services in Cultural and General Services and see if any funding could be made available for those projects. He said that they should forward a copy of their bank statement to Frank Dawson to see if there could be funding made available. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the Tennis Club should be congratulated on their plans and for putting a project together to improve this much needed facility in the town. She said it should be given every support possible to

improve this facility and she hoped the County Council members would try and push this project for the benefit of the town. She said that the project could be carried out over a three year period or longer as it is very ambitious. Cllr. Regan said that a "Race Night" should be organised by the committee as this seems to be a very popular way of raising funds. Cllr. Morgan said that he was one of the people who set up the Tennis Court in its present location. He said that Loughrea Town Council has leased it to the Tennis Club for a very nominal sum. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said he would like to congratulate the Tennis Club on their plans but unfortunately the Town Council could not give them any financial assistance. He said they were going in the right direction seeking funding from the Minister for Arts, Sports & Tourism and the other bodies. He said that they should write to his colleague Kevin Kelly and see if there could be a cross over with funding while the walk way around the lake is being done. He wished them luck with their fund raising. Mr. Keary thanked the Town Council for receiving them. They left the meeting.

**Matters arising from the minutes.**

Cllr. Curley said he would like to thank the town council members and the rest of the committee for putting on the St. Patrick's Day parade at very short notice. He said it was a great success and certainly it was as good if not even better than previous years. All the members supported this.

Cllr. Regan asked if any reply was received from the Health Executive Service in relation to the capital project for St. Brendan's Home. The Town Clerk said she had written to Mr. J.J.O Kane and invited him to the meeting but he was not available. Cllr. Curley proposed that Ms. Pryia Pendergast be invited to the next meeting or to an informal meeting to discuss this issue. This was seconded by Cllr. Burke. Cllr. Hynes said that they are paid officials with tax payer's money and should come to a public meeting. Cllr. Burke said that an informal meeting would be more informative than a public meeting as they have found in the past. Cllr. Morgan said that the Gardai always meet the town council members in private and the Health Board should be treated the same way. He said the Town Council can not demand that they come to a public meeting. He said that the Health Executive personnel should be invited to a meeting at a time and date suitable to both parties. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that an informal meeting might be more successful as the Health people might not be available for the next meeting either and this matter could be going on for months.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if any reply had been received in relation to the Town Hall from Kevin Kelly. The Town Clerk said she had got a reply and this matter has not changed since the members of the County Council turned down the tenders submitted requested under Expressions of Interest. He was not aware of any consortium or syndicate interested in the premises. Mr. Cullen said if the town council members know of a group who are genuinely interested in the premises they should submit their plans to Mr. Kelly and it will be looked at. He said that they would need to have their eyes open when costing the refurbishment of the building. Any project submitted will have to be self financing as there are no funds available for the development of this property.

Cllr. Burke asked if the diving board will be ready for the summer season. Mr. Raftery said that the County Council had got funding from Fáilte Ireland in 2007 with



a roll over to 2008. They are seeking further funding to complete the job and if successful they will get one contractor to put in the floating pontoons and finish the work. He said that this will be subject to Part 8 of the Planning & Development Act, 2001. Cllr. Regan asked who will be opening and closing the gates or if individuals will have keys. Mr. Raftery said that who ever is opening and closing the toilets will also be opening and closing the gates. He said it is very impressive but the illegal dumping on Council property beside it takes from it. Mr. Raftery said that the County Council is looking for a new depot for Council Staff and the material will be removed when this is found. Cllr. Morgan said that the wall is too low and people have no problem dumping materials over it. Cllr. Curley asked if there are any plans to widen this area at Earlspeak. Mr. Raftery said that E.U. co-financed funding was approved previously to help progress a survey and design for this area. Details of land purchase or start of construction is not known yet.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that there is a lot of illegal dumping in Corry's Field. She said the Tidy Towns group had cleaned up the area but on a re-visit they found that bottles had been broken and broken glass was strewn all over the area. She said the Tidy Towns group meet every Thursday night and Saturday afternoon for about an hour. She said that volunteers are badly needed. They meet at the Fire Station and decide what area to do the litter picking. Cllr. Tully said that the Walks is littered with cans in the stream and on the grass verge and in the drains.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if there is any record of flats or houses let/rented in and around the town. She said that they seem to dump domestic and other rubbish outside their premises or leave it beside the litter bins for collection. She asked if the Community Warden could find the culprits from the contents of the bag and enlighten them of the facilities available for refuse collection. If this practise continues then a prosecution should issue to them. It seems to happen on a regular basis. Mr. Cullen said that the local authorities had a register of properties for letting under the 1996 Regulations but new legislation had come in 2004 and the PRTB (Private Residential Tenancies Board) has now responsibility. Local authorities are still responsible for enforcement of the regulations in relation to rent books and standards of private rented accommodation. He said the County Council had purchased new bins and they will be erected as soon as possible.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the provision of a mobile sweeper for the town. He said a local business man had co-funded a sweeper but it was rarely used. Mayor Maher said that chewing gum is becoming a big problem on the footpaths in the town and he asked if this could be kept in mind if a new sweeper is being purchased. Mr. Raftery said there is no funding provided for the purchase of a mobile sweeper. He said that they had got brochures from a number of companies and had done research on the most suitable one. The sweeper will be for the Electoral Area of Loughrea when funds are provided. He said the County Council hire a sweeper every two weeks to sweep the town, walks and the approach roads to the town. Mayor Maher said that the provision of a sweeper should continue to be pursued.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from the Garda Drug Unit, Galway inviting the community to a public meeting in the Temperance Hall on the 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2008.

Letter from Loughrea Tidy Towns seeking a meeting with public representatives and officials in relation to a plan/report from Mr. Donaldson, Consultant booked by Tidy Towns group, to guide them over the next three years in relation to the National and Local competitions. They would like to discuss this matter informally and get approval from the members and officials before taking it to a public meeting. Mrs. Winters or Mrs. Fullard to inform town clerk when available and arrange for a meeting.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce stating that the traders are having a promotion week around the 1<sup>st</sup> May and requested permission to have bouncing castles in the fairgreen beside the Courthouse and opposite Super Value from 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2008. They will supply details of insurances for Galway County Council and Loughrea Town Council. Mr. Cullen and Mr. Raftery said there was no problem once insurance is submitted indemnifying Galway County Council and Loughrea Town Council. This was also agreed by the members.

Letter from Alan Rushton, Event Director, Tour of Ireland, 92/93 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2 in relation to the International Cycle Race in association with Failte Ireland in August, 2008.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Cllr. Bane asked if the playground will be open for the summer season or what works have been done in it. Mr. Raftery said that the walls have been erected, the drainage works are complete and the reseeding will be done soon. Cllr. Bane asked when the equipment will be replaced. Mr. Raftery said that there was no money available to purchase or replace the equipment. Cllr. Bane asked what amount had been spent on the playground to date. Mr. Raftery said a budget of €60,500.00 from the County Council and €10,000.00 from the Town Council was allocated. Cllr. Bane asked why did the equipment deteriorate so fast if it was being monitored by County Council personnel on a weekly basis. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if there was a guarantee with the equipment and if it could be replaced by the companies supplying it. She said the playground looks well but she considers the replacement of the equipment is very important. She said children will not appreciate the other works undertaken in the playground. Mr. Raftery said the equipment was vandalised and the County Council will have to replace it. He said he sent in an estimate to Kevin Kelly to replace the equipment but to date no funding has been forthcoming. He said there is no funding available for the maintenance of the equipment or the playground. He said he will send a reminder to Kevin Kelly and he will have a report for the next meeting.

Cllr. Burke asked what is the present position in regard to signs in relation to the Drinking bye-laws adopted by the Town Council some years ago. Mr. Cullen said that the Town Council had sought legal advice from the County Council's legal team



on this matter. The advice given was that the signs were not necessary to implement the bye-laws. Cllr. Burke said that he attended an AMAI meeting recently and the view was that one sign in the English language, in all public areas, was sufficient to comply with the regulations. He said this was the practise in other towns that adopted Drinking By-Laws. Mr. Cullen said that there was no provision to erect signs in the Town Council area in this year's budget.

Cllr. Regan asked what is the current position with the provision of a Swimming Pool for Loughrea. He asked if the County Council and the Swimming Pool Committee had reached agreement with regard to funding from the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism. Mr. Cullen said he is not dealing with it but he understands that the County Council are awaiting the final agreement from the State Solicitor in relation to the project. Cllr. Bane said it is painfully slow and asked if Town Council could meet with the Minister and see if any progress can be made to advance it. Cllr. Burke said the funding is available and the Swimming Pool Committee expected a letter confirming this shortly. Mr. Cullen said that perhaps a letter to the Deputies for the area might be the quickest option. It was agreed that the Town Clerk write to the deputies for the area and clarify the matter in relation to the present status of the Swimming Pool.

Mayor Maher said he would like to congratulate the Vocational Education Committee for setting up the Literacy classes at the Haverty Adult Education Centre at Abbey Street, Loughrea. It is a great opportunity for people who had to leave school early or were unable to attend school. It is a great service for the people of Loughrea and the hinterland of Loughrea.

Cllr. Morgan said that the footpaths are damaged at the river going down by O'Dea's hotel and asked if this matter could be given attention. It was part of the Urban Renewal Scheme done by contractors. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter and see what has to be done. He said he would have to check it out with planning section as they co-ordinated the scheme.

Cllr. Bane asked what is the hold up with finishing the Gort Road. It is left in a very dangerous state. Mr. Raftery said that he has written to the NRA to seek funding to do another stretch of the road in towards the town and approval is awaited. He said they will do temporary remedial works to ensure that the area is safe pending sanction of funding.

Mayor Maher said that Pat Sweeney, Athenry Road, Loughrea had requested permission to erect a cut stone seat in the park at Mount Carmel Crescent in memory of his late mother. She was a nurse for the area and gave invaluable service to the community over the years. Cllr. Morgan said that this area has plaques erected to various musicians and he considers it a nice idea to have a seat for the late Mrs. Sweeney. He said a lot of people use this area and they have no where to sit except the wall.

This concluded the business of the Town Council meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2008.

Signed this 12 day of May, 2008. Mayor: Michael Maher

**Minutes and proceeding of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.**

I lathair.

**Mayor:** Cllr. Michael Maher.

**Members:** Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Mary Gunter-Nix, Pat Hynes, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies were received from Cllr. Curley for his non-attendance at the meeting.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr Gunter-Nix and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted.

**Matters arising from the minutes.**

Cllr. Bane asked if the playground equipment will be in place for the summer season. Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer, said that Go Play had put in some equipment and the remainder will be put in by Wooden Delights later on in the year. It is expected to finish it by the 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2008. Cllr. Bane asked if the finger post signs will be erected at the car park so as visitors will know where to find the car park. She said these were removed when work commenced. She asked if flower beds will be put in at the playground. Mayor Maher said that he had met Kevin Kelly, Director of Services, Cultural and General Services and was assured that equipment would be replaced this year because of the vandalism to the playground but it will not happen in the future. He said that there is no provision for maintenance of the playground or replacing the equipment. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the message should go out loud and clear that this equipment had to be replaced after a few years because of vandalism and if it happens in the future prosecutions will issue on the culprits.

Cllr. Regan said there was a lot of work done at the Long Point and he does not want to see it vandalised again. He said at 5.00 a.m. on Monday morning wheelies were being done around this area and he requested that this matter be addressed. He said it is coming into the Blue Flag season and the inspections will be taking place regularly and this practise is unacceptable. Mr. Raftery said that a Manager's Order was done authorising the closure of the gates at 10.00 p.m. from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September, and at 7.00 p.m. from 1<sup>st</sup> October, to the 31<sup>st</sup> March. He said he will have a crew at the Long Point erecting barriers and other jobs that need to be done this week. They will stay on site until the work is complete. Cllr. Burke asked if the diving board will be repaired and if it will be ready for the bathing



season. He said it is very dangerous in its present state. Mr. Raftery said that he has sent a comprehensive report on the works required to bring the Long Point up to an acceptable standard and is awaiting approval. He said the concrete had deteriorated over the winter months with the bad weather eroding it and cars' parking on the pier over the years has also contributed to it. He said this will not happen in the future once the bollards are put in place. He said the small diving board will be repaired and the floating pontoons will be erected as soon as possible if funding is available. He said the two piers will be linked by the pool which is constructed on high quality plastic blocks that float on the surface of the water. It will be anchored to the floor of the lake and an inner shallow pool can be constructed for small children. He said they can be taken out in winter and stored safely for the next season. Pieces can also be added to it as required. He said that planning will not be required for the floating pontoons. Cllr. Burke asked if tenders could be advertised now so that a company will be ready to start the work if the funding comes for it. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if funding could be provided out of the Town Council fund or if a loan could be raised until approval is granted. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that funding could not be taken out of the Town Council funds. He said the work will not be done if the funding is not made available. Mayor Maher said he spoke to Frank Dawson, Community & Enterprise and he is optimistic that funding will be made available.

Cllr. Regan asked if a meeting was arranged with the Health Service Executive and when will it take place. Mayor Maher said that he had arranged a meeting for 7.00 p.m. on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 in the Meadowcourt Hotel with Ms Pryia Pendergast. The Town Clerk said that Mr. J. J. O'Kane had made contact with her and he said he was available to attend an informal meeting with the members on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2008 at 2.00 p.m. in the Council Offices. The members requested that Mr. O'Kane attend the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> May if possible. If not they will go along with the meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2008. The Town Clerk said she would ring him and see if he is available to attend the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 with Ms. Pryia Pendergast. She would inform them by telephone if the meeting was taking place.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the proposed Swimming Pool. He said that it is talked about for 10 years and Loughrea seems to be no nearer providing a Swimming Pool. He requested that a letter be sent to Deputy Kitt, Minister of State, requesting that the Minister for Arts, Sports & Tourism advance this project as soon as possible. Cllr. Hynes asked what is the delay in providing this much need facility for Loughrea. He proposed that a letter be sent to the Secretary General of the Department of Arts, Sports & Tourism asking the present position of the Swimming Pool and a time frame to provide it. This was seconded by Mayor Maher. If the information is not forthcoming the next option will be a request under the Freedom of Information Act. Cllr. Bane said that Deputy Treacy made an announcement during the election campaign last year that the swimming pool would be provided in the very near future. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said that a decision is still awaited from the Department Arts Sports and Tourism.

Cllr. Tully asked if any progress has been made in relation to providing a mechanical sweeper for the Electoral Area of Loughrea. Mr. Raftery would seek quotations and see what service can be provided.

### Correspondence

Letter from AMAI regarding motions from Annual Conference 2008 – Sligo. under the following headings:-

1. Sustainable Energy Projects/Policies suitable for Local Authorities.
2. Maintaining the correct balance between development and our archaeological and built Heritage.
3. Local Government Reform.

Submissions to be in before the 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.

Cllr. Burke said that Local Government Reform is very important and he proposed that the members hold an informal meeting to discuss this matter. This was seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix. He said he had a copy of the submissions received and he would give them to the Town Clerk to do copies for all the members.

A note from the Loughrea Chamber of Commerce giving notice about an Information evening / Roadshow in the Meadow Court Hotel on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 from 6.00 p.m. – 10. p.m. in relation to starting up/ running a small business. This is being co-ordinated by Galway County & City Enterprise Board in association with Loughrea, Ballinasloe, Clifden and Gort Chambers.

A letter from Rehab requesting nominations for the People of the Year awards. It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Hynes that Joe Burke be nominated for the award. Cllr. Morgan said that he has kept the traditional music alive and was a staunch member of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann. He has archived all his albums letters, and records to the NUIG library. He is world know and is a legend among the community.

Annual General Meeting of Loughrea Chamber of Commerce in O'Dea's Hotel, which will be held at 9.00 p.m. on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2008.

### Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

a) "That a recommendation be sent to the Government to abolish the law called "Squatters' Rights", and to declare ground, etc. not owned by any person to be the property of the State and thereby for the benefit of all the citizens of the State.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Cllr. Morgan said if a person has not paid a rent for property over a statutory number of years they are entitled to claim the property through the Courts under "Squatters' Rights". He recommends that a letter be sent to the Minister for Justice from the Town Clerk to change the law in relation to this matter.

Cllr. Regan said he could not agree with this proposal and totally opposed it. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane.



Cllr. Regan said that this is a complicated matter and the town council members are not in a position to adjudicate on it. He said the Courts would make the decision on such matters. Cllr. Bane said this matter was out of their jurisdiction and she would not feel confident enough to comment on it. She is not in favour of putting it through or supporting it. Cllrs. Gunter-Nix and Hynes said it is the Courts decision and not town council members.

Mr. Cullen said there was a counter proposal submitted and a vote would be taking on Cllr. Morgan's notice of motion first and see the outcome.

**To abolish the law called "Squatter Rights"**

For the motion - Cllr. Morgan. - 1

**To leave the law as it stands -**

Cllrs. Bane, Regan, Hynes, Gunter-Nix, Maher. - 5

Cllrs Tully and Burke abstained.

Motion carried to leave the law as it stands.

b)"That a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to have all abandoned cars and other such objects, removed as soon as they are discovered, as experience has shown that such items are vandalised. It is now established in the minds of vandals that said abandoned objects are there for their pleasure – the latest example is a wrecked car on Caheronaun Road, just adjacent to the By-Pass"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that cars are abandoned for weeks in and around the town and nobody takes action to remove them. He said cars were set on fire around his area and it was very frightening for residents living there. Cllr. Bane said she rang the Gardai when a car was abandoned in another area and the car was removed immediately. Mr. Cullen said there is a legal procedure to be followed to remove a vehicle. The abandoned vehicles have to be advertised giving a number of weeks to remove them. He said the Environment Section has removed vehicles previously and the owners said they were not abandoned.

c).That a recommendation be sent to Galway County Council to have chain and bollards fence on The Green, Loughrea, put in order, without delay, keeping in mind that this fence while marking off the public park gives a better greater view of the grass than a stone wall."

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan.

This proposal was not seconded.

Cllr. Burke said that the members have agreed, at a previous meeting, that a wall should go around the fairgeen.

**Any Other Business.**

Cllr. Burke asked if the pedestrian crossing will be provided at Barrack Street/The Cathedral this year. Mr. Raftery said that he had applied for discretionary funding and is awaiting approval. He said road design will be doing the plan when approval is given.

Cllr. Burke asked if the legal transaction is complete in relation to Fitzzy's Corner and if Galway County Council is in ownership of the site. Mr. Cullen said he is not dealing with it and would check it out with the Director of Services, Roads & Transportation Unit.

Mayor Maher asked when the seat will be erected in memory of Nurse Sweeney in Mount Carmel Park (Musician Park). He said the family are anxious to finalise this matter.

Cllr. Regan asked if there is an up date on the provision of traffic lights at Westbridge. He said at the joint meeting of Town Council/Area County Councillors Mr. Lavelle said a decision would be made in about 6 weeks. This meeting was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2008. He asked if funding was secured for this job from the National Roads Authority, if not, will the County Council be funding it. Mayor Maher said that he was informed that funding was available from another fund. Mr. Cullen said the Council might be able to fund it out of the Disability Action Programme but were still awaiting confirmation.

Cllr. Burke said the footpaths on the Main Street were too narrow outside Supermacs. He said that a wheel chair user almost slipped off the path at this location when meeting pedestrians. He said it is also a bus bay and people are waiting around this area for buses. He said this was never a problem prior to the Main Street being refurbished. He said somebody made a big mistake when constructing the footpaths and it will have to be addressed. Mr. Raftery said the Main Street is done in line with County Council regulations. Cllr. Burke also mentioned the open channels running along the footpath on the Main Street which should be covered over with serrated steel to make them safe. He said this is done in Ballinasloe and is more user friendly. He asked if those matters could be investigated and see if any improvements can be made for the public. Mayor Maher said that the bus stop is just a temporary arrangement. He said he was informed that the Traffic Management Plan will be reviewed soon and those matters will be sorted. Cllr. Regan pointed out that Mr. Lavelle said at the joint meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 that he had no staff to do this work so how can this matter be undertaken now. He said the design, for the Main Street, was wrong from day one. He said he hopes that the County Council is not going to do a quick fix with the Traffic Management Plan and rush it through. Cllr. Hynes said he agrees that the channels running along the footpaths on the Main Street are not wheelchair friendly and people have found it difficult to access them. He suggested that the County Council go back to the National Roads Authority to seek funding to correct the mistakes. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if a snag list was compiled when the job was complete and if the contractor is contractually obliged to carry out those works



Cllr. Tully said he had got several complaints about loose manhole covers around the town but particularly the two at the Westbridge end of the town outside Garretts Public House and Sweeney Travel Agents. He said they need to be re-set. Mr. Raftery said that a firm were contracted to do this work last year. He said he would investigate the matter and come back to them.

Cllr. Morgan asked if anything can be done in regard to the footpath running along the river at Station Road and if there any plans to carry out remedial works on it. Mr. Cullen said he has been in contact with the Forward Planning Unit about those issues as this project was carried under Urban Renewal funding.

Cllr. Hynes asked if a pedestrian way could be constructed along the boundary of the proposed Swimming Pool site to facilitate residents in Laurencefields Meadowbrook area of the town. He said the new bus stop is planned for this area, opposite the Lough Rea Hotel and it would make it more accessible for bus goers. Mr. Cullen said it is a perfectly good idea but he can not give a commitment because of contractual issues with the developer. Cllr. Burke, Chairman of the Swimming Pool Committee said when all the site is handed over to the developer it will be looked at favourably.

Cllr. Bane asked if any staff had been recruited since the last meeting to carry out much needed work in the area. She said the public need to know that there is a staff shortage and they might make less demands on the County Council work force. Mr. Cullen said that it is not manpower it is the lack of funding to meet the demands of the public. He said it is right across the county not just in the Loughrea Electoral Area. He said the Quality of Water, Waste Water Management etc. has become a big issue and in future there will be less funding for roads. He said unless there is a big increase in commercial rates or central funding increase the allocation the picture will not change much in the future.

Cllr. Burke asked if the County Council had any projects under Community Employment Schemes and if they could cut grass in the Burial Grounds or empty the bins more frequently during the summer months. Mr. Cullen said the rules have changed in relation to those schemes over the years and the County Council is not eligible to do those works under that scheme. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the community spirit has faded around Loughrea. She said if the community got more involved with litter picks the problem may not be as bad. She said the Tidy Towns group meet every Thursday and Saturday at the Fire Station and would welcome volunteers to help keep the town clean and neat. She said it is left to a handful of people to try and combat litter around the town.

**Fix date for Annual Meeting.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix the annual meeting will take place on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 at 7.30 p.m. followed by the monthly meeting. This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2008.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 2008

Mayor:

*C. Bane*

**Minutes and Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9th June, 2008, in the Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**Chair:** Mayor Burke.

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

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

Apologies for Adrian Raftery for his non-attendance at the meeting.

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, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk, for their assistance during his term of office. He said it was a great honour for himself and his family to be Mayor of Loughrea. He said he enjoyed the year and he hoped he represented the town well and did his best for it. He said the Main Street was refurbished and back in business again during his term of office. He said he met different community groups with a view to carrying out improvements around the town. All of the other members wished him well in the future and said that he had carried out the duty of Mayor very fairly and was very impartial. Mr. Cullen thanked the Mayor for a very good year which he did very professionally. Imelda Deely, Town Clerk also thanked Mayor Maher for his assistance during the year.

**Election of Mayor.**

Cllr. Regan proposed Cllr. Bane for the position. This nomination was seconded by Cllr. Hynes.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix proposed Cllr. Burke for the position. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

**For Cllr. Bane - Cllrs. Regan, Bane, Hynes, Morgan. - 4 Votes.**

**For Cllr. Burke - Cllrs. Gunter-Nix, Burke, Maher, Tully, Curley. - 5 Votes.**

The Mayor declared Cllr. Burke elected. Mayor Burke then took the Chair.

Mayor Burke thanked his proposer and seconder and the members who had voted for him. He said he looked forward to a progressive year. He said it was an honour and a privilege for him and his family to be Mayor of the Town of Loughrea. He said he was 19 years in public life and this was the second time he held the office. Some of his priorities for the year will be the Town Hall refurbished or some use made of it



before it deteriorates any further. Members and officials congratulated Cllr. Burke on his success. They looked forward to working with him for the betterment of the town. Cllr. Bane thanked her proposer and seconder and the members who had voted for her.

**Deputy Mayor.**

Mayor Burke said that he would take proposals for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Cllr. Curley was proposed by Cllr. Maher. This was seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

As there was no counter proposal Cllr. Curley was elected Deputy Mayor.

Cllr. Curley thanked his proposer and seconder.

This concluded the business of the Annual Meeting.

Signed this 14 day of July, 2008. Mayor: *Gerald Burke*

**Minutes and proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.**

I lathair.

**Mayor:** Mayor Burke.

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

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

Apologies were received from Adrian Rafter, Executive Engineer, who was unavoidably absent.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Cllr. Morgan and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted

**Matters arising from the minutes.**

Cllr. Maher said he had raised the matter about the pedestrian crossing at Barrack Street and not Cllr. Burke and wanted an amendment made in the minutes. Cllr. Maher asked if funding is available for this project. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said he would check this matter out with Roads and Transportation Unit and he would have an answer for the next meeting.

Cllr. Bane said she would like to thank Galway County Council for completion of the playground at the Gort Road. She said motorists are parking on the link road between the Gort Road and the Fairgreen. She said that the motorists are now parking outside the flower beds which narrows the road further. She asked if the Traffic Management Plan will be reviewed soon. She said cars are parking illegally along the Old Galway Road and on the footpaths. She asked if the Community Wardens could take action with the culprits. Cllr. Maher said that an area meeting will be taking place on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 in the County Council offices, Loughrea and the Traffic Management Plan was on the agenda. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said there is a car park down at the Tennis Court and it was free of charge to park there and motorists should avail of this facility

Cllr. Hynes said that he looked at the planning documents for the proposed Swimming Pool and he did not observe any pedestrian way, on the plans, to serve the residents of Meadowbrook/St. Brendan's Court etc. to the N.66. The Chairman of the Swimming Pool said that the Developer would look at this matter favourably. Mayor Burke said it is not on the plans at present but the Developer would look at it when all the legal matters pertaining to the contract are complete. He said he has no objection in principal to the idea but it would have to be approved by the Gardai and Galway County Council.



Cllr. Regan asked if funding is available for traffic lights at the Westbridge and a timeframe to erect them. Cllr. Maher said that a request was sent to the Roads Authority for funding for lights in four towns and Loughrea is one of the successful ones. He said he would raise this matter at the Area Council meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.

Cllr. Hynes said that the wheel chair access ability was an issue not resolved on the Main Street. Cllr. Maher said he has requested a steel plate be put over the channels to see if it would improve it. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the steel plate would collect litter and might stop the flow of water during heavy rain. She said that the footpath at Mob Hill /Dunkellin Street was very rough and a danger to older people using it. Mr. Cullen said that he would check out the matter with Martin Lavelle, Senior Engineer, who co-ordinated the scheme.

Cllr. Morgan again referred to the Urban Renewal works undertaken at Station Road and the number of defects at this location. Mr. Cullen said that he had asked the Planning Unit to address those matters.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that it was great to see grass cut in Mount Pleasant burial ground by the Council Staff and she hoped that Garrybreeda will be the next area. She said that the Loughrea Environmental Group have maintained the burial grounds over the last number of years but funding was getting scarce and the grant was not able to cover it. Cllr. Maher said that he had arranged for the Carrabane Foroige groups to cut the grass at the burial grounds in Loughrea. He said they have insurance cover to work in the burial grounds. Cllr. Regan said that in rural parishes FAS workers do work in burial grounds and it should be looked at. Mr. Cullen said there are more demands on maintenance monies and it is difficult to keep up with all the amenity areas. He said FAS scheme regulations have changed and is no longer applicable to burial grounds.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

Submissions to the AMAI for Annual Conference in September, 2008.

Details of proposed International Cycle race to be held in Loughrea from the 27/28 August, 2008 with letter and map detailing the route. Cllr. Maher said help is needed for stewarding to host this event. Chamber of Commerce have agreed to do some work but any help will be greatly appreciated. He said some business people are not happy with some streets being closed. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the joint meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2008 agreed in principal to host this event. She would consider it very beneficial to the town and the hinterland of the town. Mayor Burke said that agreement is already reached it is just a matter of finalising the route which they have now got from Michael Sheil, Acting Senior Executive Engineer, Loughrea. He said another meeting will be held to smooth out any other problems. Cllr. Regan said that the message should go out from the Town Council that Loughrea want to host this event. Any business that comes into the town is welcomed. Cllr. Bane said she was not at the meeting and did not know the route until she got the notice with the agenda. She said that disruption should be kept to the minimum as there are some small businesses around the finishing route which can not be closed off.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce giving details of meeting on the 10 June, 2008 at 6.15. p.m. in O'Dea's Hotel, Loughrea.

Letter from Colman Shaughnessy and Joseph Loughnane regarding commemoration ceremony for people who lost their lives in World War 1. He wishes to put up a plaque in a public area in their memory.

Request from Chamber of Commerce for Associated Membership fee for 2008.

#### Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

"I will propose that the diagonal markings in the car parking area on the south side of Main Street, Loughrea, opposite Supermacs, running north-east to south west, BE REVERSED. It being my opinion that it must be illegal to back out into the oncoming traffic. My recommendations means that a vehicle would drive on to the flow of traffic in the same way as cars go on to a main road from a side lane".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan.

This resolution was not seconded so it was not discussed.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Mayor Burke asked if funding was received for footpaths in former town commissioner areas. He asked what areas will be done with this amount. He said that the town council members had nominated a number of areas in early January for this allocation. Cllr. Regan said that funding was allocated for three or four areas in the town. Mr. Cullen said he did not know what areas were being done but he knows the funding has been allocated. This will have to be matched with similar funding from the County Council.

Cllr. Maher asked if the bottle banks will be moved to the other side of O'Dea's Car Park as bottles are blowing into the river. He requested that the cameras be erected at this location to prevent illegal dumping. Cllr. Bane said that she had a letter from B. McDermott stating that the recycling centre in Rathready will be scaled down or abandoned because of funding. Mr. Cullen said the cost of developing this land would be very expensive because of the nature of the soil. He said that it will have to be looked at again to see what development can take place.

Cllr. Regan said he welcomed the Blue Flag to the Long Point again this year and he hopes it will be respected. He requested that the area on the Woodford side of it be cleaned up. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that there is a lot of drinking taking place at the amenity areas and asked if the signs could be erected to prevent this happening. Mayor Burke said he hopes to meet with Superintendent Walsh shortly and he will discuss this matter with him. He suggested that the members have an informal meeting with him to discuss this issue and any other matter pertaining to the town. This was agreed. Cllr. Regan suggested that a test case should be taking with the Drinking By-laws in force and see if they will stand up in Court. Mayor Burke said that the Gardai were consulted before the By-laws were adopted and this matter was not raised at that stage. He said they would await the outcome of the meeting with the



Superintendent and see what transpires from that meeting. If a test case is needed to clarify this matter then the Town Council should go with it.

Cllr. Maher said he would like to compliment the Council Staff for keeping the Fairgreen in such good condition but he would like to see the edges strimmed and manicured.

Cllr. Tully asked if the pillar at the Mart can be removed as it is causing an obstruction. He asked if it is County Council property or if it belongs to the Mart Committee. Mr. Cullen said he would have to check the file and see which property the pillar stands in. He knows there was an exchange of property during the construction of O'Dea's Car Park. He will investigate this matter.

Cllr. Tully said he is glad to see some of the manhole covers have been attended to and he hopes it continues around the town.

Cllr. Tully said that two large lorries park near the By-pass near the Droim na Coille, Danesfort Road area and they are causing a nuisance. Mayor Burke said it was private property.

Mayor Burke said that the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is holding meetings around the country to discuss the forthcoming Green Paper on Local Government Reform. He said this was taking place in the Hilton Hotel in Limerick on the 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2008 for western counties and expenses would be paid for by the Department of the Environment. He advised the members to attend.

This concluded the business of the Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.

Signed this 14 day of July, 2008. Mayor: Gerald Burke

**Minutes and proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2008 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

I lathair.

**Mayor:** Mayor Burke.

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Michael Sheil, Senior Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayer.

**Deputation - Loughrea Anglers Association.**

Mayor Burke said that two representatives from the Anglers Association would like to address the meeting regarding issues around the town. He asked if this matter could be taken first. This was agreed by the members. Mr. John Maher, Secretary and Mr. Dermot Harrison, Chairman addressed the members.

Johnny Maher, Secretary Loughrea Anglers Association said it was set up in 1938. He said the Fisheries do not own the lake but have a right to fish there. He said the lake is renowned for its trout fishing and they hope that will always be the case. He said they are very proud of the lake and like to maintain it in good condition. He said a number of people have gathered on Tuesday evenings working at different points to improve it. He said care should be taken that lifebelts are not taken at the Long Point as this could be serious if an accident happened. He said that they bring visitors out in the Lake with their own boats in case of spread of zebra mussel. He said it is important that access along the slipways at Long Point, Council Offices and Corry's Field always remain clear in case of an emergency.

Dermot Harrison, Chairman of the Anglers Association said they had great admiration for the lake but were concerned at the amount of litter, bottles and cans being dumped in some of the rivers exiting the lake. They would like to work with the County Council to prevent possible pollution and said they had the labour if the Council is prepared to work with them to enhance the environment. Concern was expressed at effluent emanating from a pipe into one of the rivers in the town and this is now to be investigated by the Council. Also storm water is entering the river at Latimer Bridge from a developer in the Cross Street /Baunoge area and this causes silt to accumulate which is detrimental to fish life.

They said they have three major events in the year. They are held at the May Bank Holiday, June Bank Holiday and August Bank Holiday and visitors come from all over the country to those events. It is held on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. They said a number of people had parked on Courthouse road on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2008 and went fishing. On their return they found that tickets had been issued by the Community



Warden for non display of parking tickets. They have requested that some leniency be shown on the Saturday of Bank Holidays as it is embarrassing for the local anglers to find visitors ticketed.

Mayor Burke said he would like to compliment them on their initiative. He said if the Anglers prepared a plan for three or five years and presented it to them they could look at it and see what can be done jointly. Cllr. Maher said there is no restriction with parking along Courthouse road when the Courts are sitting and no tickets are issued but the anglers seem to get different treatment. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she is a member of the Tidy Towns Group and they pick up litter, bottles, cans etc. and they would be interested in working with the Anglers/Fisheries with a view to keeping the town tidy. She said she like the anglers is very proud of the lake and the environment. Mr. Cullen said he would like to compliment the Fisheries on the good work they are doing. He said the Lake is sampled regularly and the water is in compliance with the Directives for drinking and bathing water. He said they work with the EPA to maintain the high quality of water enjoyed by the people of Loughrea.

Mr. Maher and Mr. Harrison thanked the members for receiving the deputation.

The deputation left the meeting.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Annual Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting be adopted.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Bane seconded by Cllr. Tully and agreed that the Minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted.

**Matters arising from the minutes.**

Cllr. Bane said she thanked the County Council at last months meeting, for finishing the playground on the Gort Road, but unfortunately she has a complaint to make about the basket swing in the playground nearest the Courthouse. Cllr. Maher said that the chains should have a coating of plastic in the interest of Health and Safety because a child could put the chain in its mouth and get choked. This would also strengthen the chain and it would not break as easily. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that 5 adults were sitting on this basket chair during the week which probably de-stabilised it. She said adults frequent this area during the night and the equipment gets vandalised. Mayor Burke said that the Town Council had an informal meeting with Superintendent Walsh and he assured them that the Gardai would patrol the area. He said if this could be made secure and signs erected with the opening times of the playground that it would make it a lot easier for the Gardai to implement the law. Mr. Sheil, Senior Executive Engineer said the playground is inspected weekly. He said the equipment in the playground is state of the art and is manufactured to the highest standard. He said that the equipment could be taken away immediately or else be left and have it repaired by the manufacturers. The County Council has made contact with the Company who supplied it and they are due to visit the site in the next

few days. He said the playground is an amenity area by day but is vandalised by adults at night. He said they would look at making it more secure but unfortunately it requires funding which is not available.

Cllr. Maher said the Bottle Banks have still not moved as requested by him. He asked if there is a time frame to do this work or if it will be done this year. Mayor Burke said that he had spoken to Mr. McInerney, Environment Section, about this matter and he said he is looking at the best option for the banks. Mr. Sheil said he is in discussions with Mr. McInerney and it is hoped that a decision will be made shortly.

Cllr. Maher asked if the pedestrian crossing will be provided at Barrack Street outside the Cathedral this year. Mr. Sheil said that €35,000 has been provided for this job out of Disability Funding and it is hoped to have the work done soon. He said the final design has to be worked out with Road Design Unit in County Hall. Cllr. Maher said that he was informed at the last Area Meeting of the County Council that the traffic lights will be provided at the Westbridge this year. Cllr. Regan asked if the footpaths on the Main Street will be changed this year. Mr. Cullen said Mr. Lavelle and Mr. Dolly had inspected the Main Street and are compiling a report for the NRA for approval.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the proposed Swimming Pool. Cllr. Maher asked if the swimming pool is for public use or private use as mixed messages are going around. Mayor Burke said that the contractor will be moving in on the site once the new Hotel is complete and he expects that will be in the next few weeks. Cllr. Bane asked if funding has been secured for this project or if there was any feed back from the local politicians on meeting the Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism. Mayor Burke said he had spoken to Minister Kitt, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Deputy Treacy regarding this matter but they have not come back with a definite date. He said Mr. Jim Cullen had been a tremendous help in trying to push this project forward with the Swimming Pool Committee. The Town Clerk said she had written to all of the deputies, in the local area, but had not received a response. Mr. Cullen said all queries had been fully responded to and a decision is still awaited from the Department. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the Swimming Pool Committee should also be congratulated together with officials who stuck with the project to try and bring it to a successful conclusion. She said the Swimming Pool Committee are an excellent voluntary group and have given tremendous effort to the project.

Cllr. Tully asked if the pillar protruding at the entrance to the Mart is County Council or Mart property. Mr. Cullen said looking at it he thinks it is Mart property but he is having a search done by the County Council legal team. He also asked if the lorries can be removed from Droim na Cille Housing Estate, Loughrea.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she had attended the July meeting of the Chamber of Commerce and she was asked by them to inform the members of the upcoming Dinner Dance on the 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2008. This will take place in Lough Rea Hotel and Spa, Athenry Road, Loughrea. There will also be "Who wants to be a thousandaire" to raise funds for upcoming projects around the town.



**Correspondence.**

Letter from Pdraig Fahy, Beechlawn, Ballinasloe, and others regarding Loughrea Street Market. They have requested a meeting with the Town Council members regarding this issue. This was agreed by the members.

2008 Tour of Ireland Route which will be held from 27<sup>th</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2008. Cllr. Curley said he was at the launch of this event and he thinks it will be very beneficial for the town. It will be great publicity for the town and it will be shown on television all over the world. It will bring business to the town and the new Hotel which will be up and running by then.

Letter from Colman Shaughnessy and Joseph Loughnane regarding commemoration ceremony for people who lost their lives in World War 1. Mayor Burke said the committee want to erect a plaque on the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, in their honour. He said Galway County Council has also erected a plaque in their memory on the wall of County Hall. Cllr. Gunter-Nix suggested that the plaque be put on the entrance to Garrybreeda burial ground as there are people buried there already who lost their lives in other wars. Cllr. Maher said if the committee want to erect the plaque at the Council Offices he would support it. It was agreed to erect the plaque at the Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea. Mayor Burke said it is proposed to have a Remembrance Day at Loughrea Cathedral on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 with the unveiling of the plaque.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Tully.**

(a) "That Galway County Council set in motion a process that will allow for a committee to be set up to help with the upkeep of the graveyards in the Town"

It was proposed by Cllr. Tully seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Tully said he understands the Burial Ground Committee has disbanded and he is wondering if a committee can be formed to look after the burial grounds in Loughrea. He said the Tidy Towns Group has done a lot of work over the years but funding is not available anymore to maintain it. Mr. Cullen said he would refer the matter to the Environment section of the council.

(b) "That Galway County Council ensure that illegal parking on pathways in the town is punished by whatever parking laws are in force."

It was proposed by Cllr. Tully seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Tully said that this is a huge problem at the west end of the town and on some of the side streets especially Abbey Street. He said no tickets are issued for illegal parking on pathways. Cllr. Bane said the members met Superintendent Walsh recently and he said there is no lining on the road and the Gardai can not take action with illegal parking at Old Galway Road. She said that lorries are parked near dangerous junctions and are not ticketed. It should be the same rule for everybody.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Gunter-Nix.**

(a) "That the stone seat at the top of the Mound on The Walks be removed by Galway County Council."

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

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said this is an eye sore with all the graffiti on it and leads to anti-social behaviour. She said that nobody can sit on it. If two seats were put at the top of this area it would be more beneficial. Cllr. Regan said he disagrees with this motion and thinks it should be left there. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane. A vote was taken on the motion which resulted as follow -

To remove the seat - Cllrs Gunter-Nix, Tully, Morgan - 3

To retain the seat - Cllrs. Regan, Bane, Maher, Curley - 4.

Mayor Burke abstained.

Motion defeated.

(b) "That litter bin be provided at The Walks in an effort to control the litter problem there"

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that litter on the Walks is a huge problem and requested an extra bin be placed there. Mr. Sheil said he would look at this matter and see if one can be put there.

c). That Loughrea Town Council support the proposal to establish a "No Name Club" in the town"

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

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she spoke to the Development Officer and she has agreed to attend a public meeting in the Temperance Hall on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2008 at 9.00 p.m. to enlighten the public about this matter. She said that people from the surrounding areas could be invited to come on board and set up this club.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.**

(a) "That the public Car Park in Main Street and Barrack Street Loughrea be designated as short stay ( max 2 hours) car parks".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said that cars are allowed to park in Main Street and Barrack Street car parks for €3.00 per day. This prohibits genuine shoppers from doing business in town. He said that Station Road should be the only long stay car park. Cllr. Regan said he



did not agree with this arrangement as people working in town have every right to park in Main Street and Barrack Street car park. Mr. Cullen said the By-Laws might have to be changed if this was implemented. He would check it out with legal section of Galway County Council.

(b) "That the damage done to the grassed area leading to the North Mound in the Walks, Loughrea, (a public park) be restored by removing the tracks made by heavy machinery across the lawn".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Burke.

Cllr. Morgan said that there are huge tracks on the green area of the Walks at the top of the Mound. He asked if the roller could flatten it down as it is dangerous as it is.

**Notice of Motion - Mayor Burke.**

(a) "That the grass verge on the Tynagh road be removed so as to widen the road."

It was proposed by Mayor Burke seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Mayor Burke said the Tynagh road is very dangerous and motorists have to go up on the path if they meet a big lorry. He said if the grass verge was removed it might give a bit more space. Mr. Sheil said that there is not enough space to widen it adequately and it would not be economical to do bits here and there. He said there is also the danger of damage to the wall which could fall if the grass was removed

(b) "That the grass on the roundabouts and by-pass be cut before the Galway Races."

It was proposed by Cllr. Burke seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Mayor Burke said the by-pass and roundabouts along the route are very overgrown and requested that they be cut before the Galway Races. He said there is about one metre cut around the roundabouts and wonders if it will be complete before the Races. Mr. Sheil said that is all that will be cut. Cllr. Bane said that the Chamber of Commerce had proposals to put in a piece of sculpture and flowers/shrubs at the roundabouts. She asked if this was going ahead. Mr. Cullen said that it is very restricted what can be done at roundabouts. He said the NRA has regulations which have to be adhered to. He said if such structures restricted visibility or is a distraction to motorists that the County Council could be held liable if an accident occurred.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Bane.**

(a) "That this Board request Eircom to either remove completely, or maintain to a high standard, the payphone situated at the corner of the fairgreen. It is in continual disrepair and does not function".

It was proposed by Cllr. Bane seconded by Cllr. Curley.

(b) "That the pumphouse situated on Coy's Boreen be cleaned up and maintained".

It was proposed by Cllr. Bane seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Bane said the pumphouse on Coy's Boreen is very dilapidated and would need attention.

**Any Other Business.**

Mayor Burke asked if any further work is being done on the Gort Road as it is left in a dangerous condition. He said the fence is damaged and he wanted to know when it will be fixed. Cllr. Morgan said that the pipe line is blocked and he asked if it can be opened. Mr. Sheil said that no further work will be taking place on the Gort Road as no funding was approved for this area in 2008. He said they can apply again next year to see if it will get approval. He said they will surface dress a small portion to make it skid resistant.

Cllr. Maher said the pedestrian gate from Main Street car park to the Walks is locked on a Saturday. He requested that this be left open as the public use it as a short cut. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that children crawl under it and it is dangerous.

Cllr. Maher asked if Fitzy's corner will be demolished before the children return to school in September. He said that they will have to see if planning permission is required to demolish it. They will attend to it as soon as possible.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that sign for the Cathedral seems to be removed from the Main Street and she was wondering if it could be reinstated. She said a new sign might be put up instead like the other Failte Ireland ones. She said some of those signs have fallen down and need to be put back up.

The Town Clerk said that McFaddens had made contact with her regarding the annual circus in the fairgreen starting around the 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2008. The members agreed to let it go ahead. Mr. Sheil said that some times the ground got damaged if the weather comes wet. Cllr. Regan said that McFaddens get it reinstated by a private contractor if it gets damaged. Mr. Sheil said he would look at it when the bond is received and formal application is made.

This concluded the business of the Town Council Meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2008.

Signed this 8<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2008. Mayor: Gordon Burke



**Minutes and proceedings of monthly meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 in the County Council offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.**

**Mayor:** Gabriel Burke.

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

**Officials:** Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Jim Cullen who was unavoidably absent from the meeting.

The meeting opened with prayer.

**Confirmation of minutes of monthly meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Tully and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted.

**Deputation - Casual Trading Loughrea.**

Mayor Burke proposed that this item be taken first. This was unanimously agreed.

Mr. Padraic Fahy, Beechlawn Organic Food, Woodlawn, Ballinasloe, Mr. Paul Lawless, Foods of Athenry, Kilconieron, Loughrea, spoke to the members.

Mr. Paul Lawless said that he would like to work with Loughrea Town Council in the development of a Local Food/Farmers Market that will be a leader in this exciting new field. He said they have been working with the local "Leader" company GRD and Galway County Council and Government Agencies with a view to progressing this matter. He said Trevor Sargent T.D, launched the Local Farmer Markets on the 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2008. He said there is a spin off for the Local Community and Local Retailers as a result of money being spent at Local Markets. He said that studies have shown that for every €10 spent at a Farmers Market results in a net income of €24 for the local community. He said the Government said in 2006 that they would be promoting the development of "Farmers Markets" within the term of the 2007 – 2013 NDP/LDP. He said the Government set a target of 175 markets within the plan, at the time but to date only 129 such markets were listed on the Bord Bia web site.

He said what they would like to see from Loughrea Town Council is the following matters -

***A location in a prominent position with high footfall and good passing trade:***

***Facilities for a minimum of 12 traders:***

***Toilet and Hand Washing Facilities available near the location:***

***Power availability and a Covered Trading area.***

He said they operate the market from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. every Thursday. He said at present 3 traders have licences even though 8 stalls are operating. He said the others have applied to Galway County Council but the cheques have been returned to

them. He said the present cost to them is €5,800 per year. He said the number of spaces has been reduced since the refurbishment of Barrack Street and Main Street. He said there were designated trading bays near the Fire Station and King Street but they no longer exist. He said some of the traders have to occupy private property to do business. He said that cars park in the trading bays at present and they find it difficult to set up the stalls. He recommends that a Market Committee be set up embracing Town Council members, Chamber of Commerce and Galway County Council and any other agencies interested in being involved. He said that 13 pitches were recommended on the Development Plan for Loughrea but this was not implemented.

Mayor Burke thanked the deputation for outlining the situation. He said that Loughrea Town Council has no say in licences but they can send a recommendation to Galway County Council to address those matters. He said the members had a special meeting to discuss designated areas for trading some time back and a recommendation was sent into Galway County Council that Main Street car park was the most suitable for this purpose. He would welcome setting up a market committee where all interested parties could sit around a table and progress this matter. It is working very well in other areas of the County. He requested Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer, to see if this recommendation was approved by the County Council members. He also asked him to check out why only 3 licences were granted by Galway County Council. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said if the Main Street car park was used, as recommended, that it would be one day a week and would not be too inconvenient to motorists. It would be safer and easier for the customers and retailers. Cllr. Morgan asked if the products on sale at the market are produced locally. Mr. Lawless said that most of the products come within a 10 mile radius of Loughrea. Cllr. Maher said that a submission had been forwarded to Galway County Council stating that Main Street car park was the most suitable area. He said the members had walked all over the town to find an area suitable for casual trading and most of them agreed with Main Street car park. Cllr. Bane also agreed that a Market Committee be set up.

The deputation thanked the members for receiving them and left the meeting.

**Matters arising from the meeting.**

Cllr. Curley asked for an update on the provision of a Swimming Pool for Loughrea. He said the local community had raised funds for the Swimming Pool over 7 years ago and there is no sign of it progressing. He asked Mayor Burke if he had any information as Chairman of the Swimming Pool Committee. Mayor Burke said that he understands the County Council and the Attorney General are still in correspondence. He said the Developer is ready to move in on the site as soon as the legal matters are finished. Cllr. Maher said that he was informed by the Director of Services for Cultural and General Services that all the information requested by the County Council has been forwarded to the Attorney General. Cllr. Regan said the members of the Town Council are left in the dark about this matter with no senior official available to answer their queries. He said if the Manager for the Town of Loughrea is not available to attend the meetings then a deputy senior official should be present. Cllr. Bane said that Deputy Treacy announced before the last General Election that the Swimming Pool was imminent but to date there seems to be no concrete evidence of this happening. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that all the members are anxious to see the Swimming Pool provided in Loughrea as are the community. She



said that Loughrea waited 35 years for the Bypass to be constructed and she hopes that the Swimming Pool will not turn into the same saga. She said that a letter be sent to the Director of Services involved in this project to get first hand information from him. Cllr. Curley proposed that the Deputies and Senators from the area be invited to a meeting on the 15/9/2008 to discuss this issue. This was seconded by Cllr. Regan. The Town Clerk requested to arrange this meeting.

Cllr. Regan said that Lorries are hauling materials for the construction of the N.6 East to Ballinasloe road through the Main Street and asked that it be stopped. He said the Bullaun road is also in a bad state with trucks travelling in convoy hauling stones from the quarry to the N.6. Mr. Raftery said that they had agreed haul roads with the N.R.A. He said they can not stop trucks going through the town when they are paying road tax. Cllr. Tully said the Department of Transport have weight restriction in force and asked if they could implement the law. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the trucks are using Mt. Carmel Crescent, Loughrea and two trucks collided there recently when they both met at the Bullaun Road side. Mayor Burk said that By-Laws would have to be introduced to restrict Lorries using the Main Street and would have to be done under the Traffic Management Plan. He also said the Bullaun Road is in a dangerous condition and walls knocked with the vibration of the heavy loads of materials being transported for the construction of the N. 6 and they are also cutting in on the grass margins.

Cllr. Tully said that the pillar is still protruding at the entrance to the Mart. He asked if the legal personnel had established if the Mart Committee are in ownership of the pillar. He wants this information for the next meeting. He also mentioned that cars are parking on the footpaths at Galway Road prohibiting wheelchair access and buggies. He asked that the Community Warden take action. He wants to know how many tickets were issued by the Community Warden over the last three months for illegal parking. He wants this information for the next meeting. Cllr. Maher said that cars are constantly parking at Abbey Street on the footpath and never get tickets. Cllr. Bane said that there is a blind eye shown to a lot of the illegal parking around the town. The issuing of tickets around the town is not consistent.

Cllr. Maher said that the Bottle Banks need to be moved to the opposite side of Station Road car park. Mr. Raftery said it would cost €10,000 to put the cameras at this location. He said there is no funding for the job. Cllr. Tully said if a sign could be put up to deter people from leaving rubbish at this area. He asked if there is a problem with emptying the bottle containers or why there is so much debris left around the area. Cllr. Regan said that signs will not deter people from dumping at the Bottle Banks. He said there was constant rubbish left around the Bottle Banks when they were sited at Barrack Street even though it was in front of the Garda Station and there were cameras in place. Mayor Burke said that he spoke to T. McInerney about this matter and he said he was investigating it to see if they can be moved. The bottle banks are emptied as required. He said often people do not even look to see if the bottle banks are full they just dump their box or bag of bottles beside them.

Cllr. Maher asked if road widening would be taking place at Fitzzy's Corner this year. He asked when it is intended to demolish this house or if it will require planning permission. He brought up this matter at the last meeting and expected an answer at this meeting. Cllr. Morgan said the County Council has purchased the premises and it

may be 5 years before it can be demolished. He said Cllr. Maher could received this information himself from the relevant personnel in the County Council offices but he has to bring it up at the Town Council meeting to get media attention. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she is 15 years in the Town Council and she has suggested that joint meetings take place informally with the County Council Area members to make progress on matters like this issue and others. She said it has happened a few times in her political career and they were very successful.

#### AFS 2007.

It was proposed by Cllr. Regan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix that the Annual Financial Statement be adopted.

#### Correspondence.

Letter from Galway County Council stating that no further funding is available for Loughrea Playground.

Letter from Noel Callanan stating that the Triathlon Club were holding an event in Loughrea on the 13<sup>th</sup> & 14 September, 2008.

Letter from Galway County Council giving details of European Mobility Week and listing a programme of events arranged around this week. The theme of the programme "In Town without my Car" It stated that no cars will be allowed on the Main Street on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2008 to facilitate this event. There will be a carnival held on the street with the theme "Pedestrian Paradise". It will be a fun day for all the family.

Letter from Joe Loughnane and Colman J. Shaughnessy about Remembrance Day for people who lost their lives in World War 1. This will take place at 12.00 noon on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 in Loughrea Cathedral followed by unveiling of the stone plaque outside County Council offices in their memory.

Letter from AMAI stating that the Annual Conference was taking place on the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 in the Sligo Park Hotel. Cllr. Maher said that he is a delegate from Galway County Council to this event and he asked if any member wished to attend instead. Mayor Burke asked for nominations for this event but nobody expressed any interest. They said it would be a saving for the Town Council if just one member attended. Mayor Burke said he will be attending as the delegate from the Town Council.

#### Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

(i) "That the Stoney Brennan carved stone head be placed in the wall behind the flower plot at Morrissey's corner, Westbridge, Loughrea".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan. There was no seconder for this proposal.

Mayor Burke said that he had the approval of the members to plans for Stoney Brennan. in the disused Pound beside the Courthouse. He said some funding is



available for this park from a local business man. He said that he had a letter from the Director of Services, Cultural and General Services stating that this area would have to be decommissioned by the Department of Justice before anything can be done. He said Cllr. Maher was to discuss this issue with Minister McDowell in the hope of getting this matter moving. Unfortunately this did not happen so he proposed that this matter be referred to the present Minister for Justice Dermot Ahern and Kevin Kelly to see if it can be brought to a successful conclusion.

(ii) "That the property known as Moylan's Commercial Hotel, Main Street, Loughrea, be surveyed when offered for sale, as a site for a much needed car park. This property extends from Main Street, to the Town Moat at the Walks and has a second entrance off Abbey Street, Loughrea".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan. There was no seconder for this proposal.

(iii) That speed signs be erected within the town of Loughrea where cars and other vehicles are driven at high speeds and terrorising pedestrians".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Any Other Business.

Cllr. Bane asked what work is being done at the Long Point. Are the slabs a permanent feature and will they be made secure in the water. Mr. Raftery said when the water level reduces in the Lake the slabs will be grouted. Mayor Burke asked if the slabs will be removed when the work is done. Mr. Raftery said that they will be left there and covered over with topsoil in case it is needed again as the slabs are very heavy.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that a fund raising function "Who wants to be a thousandaire" will be held in Lough Rea Hotel and Spa on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 to raise funds for Loughrea Together. It comprises of Loughrea Tidy Towns, Juvenile football club and Chamber of Commerce. She had tickets for the event for anybody who wished to purchase them afterwards.

Cllr. Morgan said that the parking on the Main Street is still chaotic and he asked if anything can be done about it. Mr. Raftery said that the design of the road was done by Martin Lavelle and had nothing to do with the Area Office. He should take up this issue with him.

Mayor Burke said that there are 4 or 5 Industrial units built at Caherlavine who have water connections from a private group water supply scheme. He said the unit who supplied the water to the developer can not continue this practise as the Developer has 14 or 15 people employed and will have to close down if this is not regularised. In order to fulfil planning conditions the applicant said he had access to water from a private supply. This was a temporary arrangement until he got a connection from the mains or else drills a borehole. Galway County Council wants to take this scheme in charge but can not do so until this developer gets his own connection. Mr. Raftery said this will have to be reported to the planning unit so as the Enforcement Officer can investigate it.

Mayor Burke said he would like to congratulate Olive Loughnane on being placed 7, in the 20 k walk, in the World Olympic Games in Beijing. He would also like to congratulate the Loughrea Volley Ball Team who secured gold medals in the Community Games in Mosney. He said this was the last year for Mosney to hold the Community games so it was a historical occasion. He said they should be invited to the next Town Council meeting in recognition of their achievements. Cllr. Regan proposed that they be presented with scrolls to mark the occasion. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane. Cllr. Morgan said he had no problem with doing scrolls for the participants and will do them free of charge but he thinks it is gone out of hand. It was agreed that Olive Loughnane and the Volley Ball team be invited to the next Town Council meeting.

Mayor Burke said representations were made to him back in July about posters being removed around the town by Galway County Council. He said one was from Turoe Pet Farm who said they had spent a lot of money on advertising during the year. The posters were removed coming up to Race week which was very bad timing for them. He said if the decision was made to remove all posters including Auctioneers ones he has no problem with it but it seemed that only some here and there were removed. He asked who authorised the removal of the posters. Mr. Raftery said he was away at the time and was not aware of it. He would investigate this matter for the next meeting.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2008.

Signed this 13 day of October, 2008. Mayor: G. Burke



**Minutes and proceeding of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 in the Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I lathair.**

- Mayor:** Cllr. Gabriel Burke.
- Members:** Cllrs. Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan, Sheamie Tully.
- Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

Apologies for Cllrs. Bane and Hynes who were unable to attend the meeting.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted.

**Matters arising from the minutes.**

Cllr. Regan asked if the statement by the Traders at the last meeting is fact i.e. that three licences are only issued to the Traders. Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer, said he made enquiries about this matter and some of the Traders seem to be trading illegally. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that the County Council is at present reviewing all the Casual Trading licences in the County to ensure that they are operating within the terms of the licences.

Cllr. Regan asked if there were any further developments with the Swimming Pool. Mayor Burke said that each member had been circulated with all the relevant correspondence. Mr. Cullen said he is not dealing with it but he understands that all the information requested by the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism and the Attorney General had long been provided.

Cllr. Tully said the Community Wardens had targeted the areas requested by the members at the last meeting and have issued tickets to people illegally parked at the Westbridge/Galway Road area. He said he was harassed by people who received tickets saying it was his fault that this area was targeted because he had raised it at the Town Council meeting. Cllr. Regan asked if the Traffic Management Plan will be reviewed soon. Cllr. Maher said this issue was discussed at the last Area County Council Meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2008. It was said that the Traffic Management Plan is expected to be discussed at an Area Meeting in November. Mr. Cullen said it would be brought before the 7 Area councillors first and the town council members will be consulted subsequently.

Mayor Burke raised an issue about a Developer who has connected into a group water supply scheme in the Industrial Units at Caherlavine Loughrea. The person who allowed the temporary connection to be made to this Developer is going to disconnect

it because it is affecting his business. Mr. Cullen said it was a matter between the relevant parties and not for the council.

**Establishment of Joint Policing Committee.**

Mr. Cullen said that a request had come from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to make arrangements for the early establishment and operation of a Joint Policing Committee (JPC) for every city/county/borough/town local authority in the country. He said two JPC's have already been established in the county on a pilot basis. They are in Tuam and Ballinasloe. He said committees will be set up nationally. He said Loughrea Town Council committee will comprise of 9 town councillors, 3 members of the Oireachtas, 3 representing the community and voluntary sector, 2 Garda officers nominated by the commissioner and 2 officials nominated by the County Manager. Total number on town council committee is 19. He said the Cathaóirleach of the committee will have to be decided by resolution of the members. Mayor Burke said he welcomed the setting up of this committee and he hoped it will be successful in combating vandalism around the town. He hopes all the members will give their full co-operation to the committee and that it will reach the goals set out. Mr. Cullen said the guide lines should be read carefully as there is a lot of information in it. He said it will take some time to establish this committee and he suggested that it be addressed again at the next meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2008. Cllr. Morgan proposed that this item be put on the agenda again for the November meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if training will be provided for the members. Mr. Cullen said that it would be provided for the committee chairs. Cllr. Regan proposed that the members have an informal meeting prior to the next meeting to discuss the make up of the committee. He suggested Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 at 7.30 p.m. in the Council offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed.

**Fix date for Annual Budget Meeting.**

The Annual Budget Meeting will be held at the December Monthly meeting unless a circular issues from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government stating that it has to take place earlier.

**Correspondence.**

Letter from Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism dated 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 regarding the Swimming Pool in Loughrea.

Letter from Kevin Kelly, Director of Service, Corporate and Cultural Services. Dated 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 regarding the Swimming Pool.

Letter from Paul Connaughton T.D. dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 regarding the Swimming Pool. stating that he had raised the question in Dail Eireann with Minister Cullen.

Letter from Ulick Burke T.D. dated 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2008 enclosing an acknowledgement from the Chief State Solicitor's Office.



Letter from the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2008 acknowledging letter sent to them on decommissioning of the Pound in Loughrea and its reuse as a Park for Stoney Brennan's plaque.

Letter from the Taxi Regulator regarding maximum Taxi Fare Revision.  
Cllr. Maher asked if a Taxi rank will be provided in Loughrea. He said there are at least 4 people in Loughrea who own taxis. He said they have a taxi rank and hackney rank in Tuam and why has Loughrea not made any provision for same. Cllr. Regan said he understands that there is provision for a taxi rank at the bus station whenever it is provided. Cllr. Curley asked if there will be a rank for hackneys in the town. Mr. Cullen said he is not sure if a taxi rank will be provided in Loughrea. He said hackneys operate a different system and have to be ordered by the customer whereas taxis can be stopped anywhere. He said he would check out this matter with the Director of Services, Roads and Transportation Unit to see when it will be provided.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.**

(i) "I will propose that the following recommendations be sent to the local Garda Authorities to take whatever steps are necessary to return The Walks to the people of Loughrea and its visitors, and that those who are responsible for the walkway being consistently littered with broken bottles be prosecuted"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

(ii). "I will propose that the following recommendations be sent to the Minister for Local Government that all candidates in Local Government Elections be equally required to have twenty sponsors, which the Irish Constitution requires, so that the discrimination against Independent candidates be abolished".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Regan.

(iii)" I will propose that the following recommendations be sent to Galway County Council that it lease a back entrance to Dr. O'Flaherty's Clinic off Main Street Car Park, Loughrea, so as to facilitate patients who are even more inconvenienced since the road was narrowed as part of the new Main Street Plan".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan . There was no seconder to this proposal.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Tully.**

"I will propose that the following recommendation be sent to Galway County Council that funding be allocated to the Town Council to provide amenities in Loughrea from proceeds from paid parking in the Town".

It was proposed by Cllr. Tully seconded by Cllr. Curley.

Cllr. Tully said that €1.4 million was collected by the County Council since pay and display commenced. He understands that a loan of €3 million has to be paid off and there are maintenance costs as well but he wants some of the funding given back to the town for much needed facilities in it. Mr. Cullen said the legislation governing

local government funding required that the proceeds be used for traffic management or otherwise be applied to the central fund for the county as a whole. He said what is collected in rates in the town is not sufficient to run the town. He said the estimate adopted by the Town Council has to be supplemented by a demand from the County Council for the deficit. He said if the 7 Loughrea Area Councillors abolished the pay and display parking in the town, the other 23 members of Galway County Council would continue with it. They know that there would be no improvements in Water and Sewerage schemes; Roads: Disabled Persons Grant etc. if funding does not go into Central funds. He said the loan has to be paid back. He said €1 million of funds collected went towards the regeneration of the Main Street. Cllr. Tully said he was of the opinion that the National Roads Authority funded this project. Mr. Cullen said the NRA were awarded the grants and paid for part of the project but the balance came from monies collected from pay and display. He said that Loughrea is now a thriving town and has benefited with funds generated in other parts of the County. He said if the water and sewerage schemes are not upgraded no new businesses will come to the town. Mayor Burke said he met some people from Leixlip Town Council at the recent AMAI conference and he said they can secure funding from the Local Government Fund for projects in their area. We can not provide a mobile sweeper for the town as all of the funds go back for use in the County. Cllr. Maher said there are approximately 240 car parking spaces in the town and they are nearly all occupied every day. He said this would yield a substantial amount of money over 12 months. Cllr. Regan said when the dump was in Ballinasloe that the money collected went back to improve the town. He said Loughrea has the lake and it is supplying all the outlying areas with water and there is no return to Loughrea from it. He said the lake was bequeathed to the town by the Earl of Harewood. Mayor Burke said water is being pumped to Craughwell, Tynagh and Kilrickle and other areas with no improvements to the Loughrea supply. Cllr. Tully asked why the tickets can not be purchased in the shops and the shop keepers would get a percentage of it like the Post Office gets a percentage of dog licences issued. Mr. Cullen said the pay and display system is in place and that is what they have to work with.

**Any Other Business.**

Cllr. Morgan said he would like to congratulate Bernadette Lally on her new publication It is called the printing culture in Loughrea 1850 to 1900. It is about Kelly Printers in Loughrea. Bernadette Lally is a native of the town and should be supported. He said the launch was taking place in O'Dea's Hotel at 8.30 p.m on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2008.

Mayor Burke said there is a lot of drinking going on in public areas and he asked if the by-laws adopted by the Town Council could be implemented. He said Leixlip Town County Council had similar by-laws and they have been successful with cases taken to Court.

Cllr. Regan asked if the traffic lights at the Westbridge will be up and running this year? Mr. Raftery said it is being examined at the moment.

Cllr. Regan asked if the pedestrian crossing at Barrack Street will be provided. Mr. Raftery said the Road Design Section is at present preparing plans for this area.



Cllr. Regan asked what emergency works were being carried out at the Health Centre the previous week and if there was an incident of lead in the water supply. Mr. Cullen said this was an isolated case and the responsibility of the Health Service Executive in Loughrea.

Cllr. Regan asked if work on the Earlsparck Junction will take place next year. Mr. Raftery said it was not put forward under the Specific Grants for 2009 which was sent to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Cllr. Regan said heavy trucks are going through the town including Coillte ones drawing timber from the forests. He asked if bye-laws could be implemented to restrict the weight of the trucks. Mr. Cullen said the hauling of materials for the construction of the N. 6 East to Ballinasloe is causing some concern for the County Council and it is being addressed by the Director of Roads and Transportation Unit.

Cllr. Regan said there is flooding on the road outside the Garda Barracks and Pat Murphy's house since the revamp of Barrack Street and he asked if some remedial works could be carried out at this location. He said this work was not properly finished. Mr. Raftery will look at it.

Mayor Burke said that there is still flooding on the Main Street at the traffic lights. He said that this matter did not seem to be rectified when restoration work was being done on the Main Street. He asked that this matter be addressed before the contractors get paid. Mr. Raftery said the kerb was so low that the gullies had to be put beside it.

Cllr. Regan said that there was an article on the Sunday World on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2008, regarding a fatal accident on the Masonbrook road on the 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2008. He said he had reported irregularities on this road some time ago to the local office and asked if it was attended to. Mr. Raftery said this matter was being investigated by Galway County Council.

Cllr. Maher asked if the Walks is swept each time the sweeper is in town as there seems to be a lot of debris around. If it is not being done please arrange to do it. Mr. Raftery said the contractor was instructed to sweep the Walks as well as the other areas.

Cllr. Maher said that cars are continually parking on the top of Abbey Street on the footpath and people with buggies or wheelchair can not access this street. He asked that the Community Wardens take action in this area.

Cllr. Maher asked what is the up to date position on the vacant town council house at Galway Road. He said this was held in committee at the last meeting and he was wondering if a decision had been reached by Mr. Cullen. He asked if an estimate was prepared by the Council. Mr. Cullen said he just received a copy of an estimate and did not have time to check the details. Cllr. Maher said an elderly couple were interested in this property for renting. Mayor Burke said that the town council would have to look and see what is the best option for this property if it should be re-let or sold off. He said the letting of the property to an elderly couple would be at minimal rent and would not be sustainable. Mr. Cullen said that the letting of houses is an

executive function and the town councillors would have no say in who gets it. The town council can make a decision on its use. He said the Town Council has no funding to carry out repairs to this property. Cllr. Tully asked if the tenant had remained on in the property would the Town Council not be obliged to carry out repairs to the house. Mr. Cullen said that the tenant could take the town council to Court to have them carried out but the legal team would have to plead inability to carry them out because of lack of funding.

Cllr. Tully said that the town council member met with the Fisheries Board to discuss issues that can be done jointly to improve the town as agreed at the meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2008. He said the Fisheries Board had pointed out a drain discharging into the river, below Station Road car park, and it was his opinion that it was not surface water run off. He said there was a very unhealthy smell emanating from it. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter.

Mayor Burke said he would like to congratulate and thank the County Council for European Mobility Week. He said the no car day was an excellent idea and it let people see at first hand the implications of pedestrian only in the town. He said Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2008 was a brilliant day with lots of activities to keep people entertained but unfortunately Monday fell very flat because nothing was organised. He said the community could have organised entertainment for this day if they were made aware of it.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she would like to congratulate Fr. Cathal Geraghty on his new appointment as Vicar General in the Diocese of Clonfert. She wished him every success in his new role and requested that a letter be sent from the Town Clerk conveying those wishes.

This concluded the business of the Town Council meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2008.

Signed this 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2008 Mayor: Gerald Burke



**Minutes and proceeding of Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.**

I lathair.

**Mavor:** Cllr. Gabriel Burke.

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayer.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2008.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Curley and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting be adopted. Mayor Burke requested that the first item on the agenda regarding the vacant town council house be taking in committee. This was agreed.

**Town Council Vacant House.**

Mayor Burke said a town council house had become available and he asked Mr. Cullen to outline procedures in relation to it. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services said there are two options with regard to this house. One is to let the house which is an executive function and the other is to sell the house which is a reserved function. He said the Town Council does not have the money to do repairs in the house to make it habitable. He said that to date one couple in England had written and expressed an interest in renting it. He said he was not aware of other applicants at this time. A general discussion took place and it was agreed to send an application form for housing to the couple in question for completion. Mr. Cullen said that the Housing Section of Galway County Council would adjudicate on the applicant when it is returned. A decision could only be made when all the data is collected.

**Matters arising from the minutes.**

Cllr. Regan asked if the pedestrian crossing will be provided at Barrack Street. Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer, said that money is provided for three pedestrians crossings in the County. Tenders are being sought at the moment for Loughrea, Headford and Gort for them. It will be provided as soon as possible.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the pedestrian lights at the Allied Irish Banks are faulty and do not seem to give access for pedestrians. She asked if this matter could be investigated. Mr. Raftery said he would check them out.

Cllr. Regan asked if there is any progress on the provision of a Swimming Pool for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said that he had checked out this matter with the Director of

Services dealing with it and he said he had got correspondence from the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism relating to this matter. He said that a four page document had been received from the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2008, addressing the question as to whether the grant sought would constitute state aid and in that context whether the procurement process had been the appropriate one. He said that the correspondence received was very legalistic and the County Council's Law Agent is presently clarifying the issues raised by the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism and will issue a reply in due course. He said all the questions asked of the County Council have been answered and he does not know why this has come up now and it certainly was not a positive development. Cllr. Regan said there is nothing positive about this matter and Loughrea seems to be no nearer getting a Swimming Pool. Cllr. Hynes said that the Grant Aid is obviously been pulled on this project because of mismanagement of public funds by the present government. It was very obvious they were finding every excuse to turn down this project. He said the committee have been fund raising over the years but it seems there efforts are in vain. Cllr. Bane asked if another meeting should be sought from the Dail Deputies and Senators. She said Minister Treacy had made an announcement that the Swimming Pool was eminent but obviously there was no foundation to it. Mayor Burke said that there was no point in meeting Dail Deputies until the questions are answered by the County Council's legal department. Mr. Cullen said that there are a number of legal issues questioned and it will take some time to get it sorted if at all.

Cllr. Maher asked if any further information was available on the taxi rank for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said he spoke to the Director of Services, Roads and Transportation Unit, and his view is that the onus is on the County Council to provide this facility if requested by the Taxi Operators.

Cllr. Maher said that the Bottle Banks are still causing problems at Station Road car park. He said there are bottles and boxes left strewn around even though the containers were not full. Mayor Burke said he was speaking to the engineer in charge and he said he is looking for tenders to provide security lights at this location. Cllr. Tully asked if any prosecutions were taken on illegal dumping at this area. Mr. Cullen said prosecutions have been taken for illegal dumping.

Cllr. Regan asked if there is any law to restrict heavy goods vehicles going through the town. Mr. Cullen said there is no process at the moment to stop heavy goods vehicles going through the town. Cllr. Maher said this matter was discussed at the last area meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 and Mr. Lavelle said that this issue can be addressed with the review of the Traffic Management Plan.

Cllr. Regan said there is constant flooding on the Gort road since Ward and Burke did the road works. He requested that this matter be addressed without delay. Mr. Raftery said it is the far side of the Green and Ward and Burke did not do any work at this location. The level of the lake was high all year round which has contributed to it. Cllr. Regan asked if Ward and Burke are responsible for the flooding outside Pat Murphy's house as this area is constantly flooded. Mr. Raftery said the gullies are blocked and need cleaning. Cllr. Tully asked for both sides of the road is cleared at Fahy's and Loughnanes. Mr. Raftery said there was no flooding outside Loughnanes property.



**Joint Policing Committee (JPC).**

Town Clerk stated that she had written to the Chief Superintendent of the Garda Siochana, Mill Street, Galway, regarding the establishment and operation of Joint Policing Committee in the administrative area of Loughrea Town Council. She said she also wrote to Frank Dawson, Director of Services, asking him to nominate three community representatives for this committee. She is awaiting a reply for both people.

**Correspondence.**

Thank You letter from Fr. Cathal Geraghty, Vicar General to the Dioceses of Clonfert, for the good wishes extended to him from Loughrea Town Council.

Letter from Chamber of Commerce notifying the members of monthly meeting in O'Dea's Hotel, on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at 6.30 p.m. to discuss Christmas Lighting and Christmas Promotions.

All Weather Pitch for Loughrea. Letter from Enda Nugent regarding proposals for community facilities in the recreational land along the Lake close to the Children's playground. He proposed to install two 5-a side Astro Turf Football pitches, fully fenced in with floodlights. The approximate size of the required space is 40 metres by 40 metres. They will install all the facilities at their own expense. The County Council will have free use of facilities each week day until 5.00 p.m. and every week end. Enda Nugent & Co would use it from 5.00 p.m. until 11.00 p.m. for rent to hurling/soccer/gaelic football etc. and some weekends. The Astro turf and floodlights would be of a very high standard. A general discussion took place on this issue and it was decided that a copy be forwarded to each member for their information.

Acknowledgement from Ms. B. McDermott, County Secretary, in relation to the disused pound in Loughrea.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Curley.**

"I propose that the Health Service Executive, (West) on completion of the new Community Nursing Unit on the grounds of St. Brendan's Home, that the old building be retained by H.S.E. West for Primary Community and Continuing Care purposes. A formal request to be sent from Loughrea Town Council to Ms. Pryia Prendergast, Local Health Officer, H.S.E. West requesting this".

It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Curley said the new 100 bed unit is ring fenced and work will commence next year. He would hope that the old building will not be sold that it is retained for community uses. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said it would be ideal for a Music school or University and she hopes that it will be reused for some purpose. She agrees that the town council should meet Ms. Pryia Prendergast before any decision is made to the building. Cllr. Morgan said this is a listed building and can not be sold. Cllr. Tully said that this should be outlined at the meeting the use Loughrea wants to make of the building.

"I propose that Galway County Council be compelled to replace doors and windows of our Heritage Building namely Loughrea Town Hall which could currently be considered a derelict building".

It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Cllr. Curley said that our heritage building namely Loughrea Town Hall is in a dangerous condition and needs doors and windows without delay. Mayor Burke said the panes of glass are ready to fall out and it is not safe for the public or the buildings adjoining it. It was decided to write to the Director of Services Corporate Affairs to request that essential repairs be undertaken.

"I propose that Galway County Council attend to the main Loughrea/Gort Road from Loughrea side of the Seven Eye Bridge to the village pub as this area has been the scene of five accidents in the last week".

It was proposed by Cllr. Curley seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Curley said this area has been the scene of several accidents in the last week. He said traffic lights are in place but they will not prevent accidents. He asked that this issue be addressed immediately. Cllr. Maher said he was on a deputation to the N.R.A. office regarding haul roads for the construction of the new road. He said that this area was further damaged by the lorries hauling stones from a nearby quarry. He said they also discussed the weight restrictions of the Lorries using the roads. Cllr. Regan said the cost of the lights over time would go along way towards repairing it. Cllr. Bane said she travels this road very often and it is a disgrace. Mr. Raftery said that he has written a report to the National Roads Authority but they have replied that there is no funding for it.

**Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.**

"I will propose – that the gate to the north side of Main Street, Loughrea, which gives access to The Walks, be open on Saturdays and Sundays, as is the case on other days of the week"

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan said the gate to the Walks needs to be open on Saturdays and Sundays so as to give access to shoppers using Station Road car park. Cllr. Regan said the cost of opening this gate could not be justified. Cllr. Maher said the Community Wardens do duty on a Saturday in the town and this could be part of their duty. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said this was private property until the car park was constructed and the public did not have access to the Walks. She said the employee would need overtime and with the limited personnel in the Loughrea area it would be very difficult and demanding to attend to it. Mr. Raftery said that there is no funding to give this service to the public. Mr. Cullen said they would look at it and see if a decision can be reached.



"That a stop sign be erected at the white line at the exit from Loughrea Main Street Car Park, as many motorists are ignoring said white line".

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher.

"That a cutting be made along the road beside the footpath outside Gloss Hairdressing Saloon and Loughrea Printing works, Bride Street South, Loughrea; as people can not get in or out of these premises/dwellings without being drenched by rainwater being splashed on them, by passing cars during flooding, which is every time it rains.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Tully.

Cllr. Morgan said he has referred to this matter several times but no solution has been found. He said the gully is blocked outside Maggie May's premises and needs to be cleared. Mr. Raftery said he would investigate this matter.

#### Any Other Business.

Cllr. Maher asked if Fitzzy's Corner will be demolished this year. Mr. Raftery said tenders have gone out for the demolition of this building and the closing date for receipt of them is 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2008. He said he will meet with the successful contractor to see when it is suitable for him to do the work.

Cllr. Maher said there is gravel left at the Long Point and he asked if it would be removed before Christmas for the Annual Swim at the Long Point.

Cllr. Tully said that there is raw sewage seeping into the river below Station road, car park. This is a spawning river for young trout and needs to be addressed immediately. He said this was mentioned by the deputation from the Fisheries at the July meeting 2008 but nobody has come back to them with a solution.

Cllr. Regan said there is a problem with raw sewage at Corry's Field and needs action without delay. Mr. Raftery said a 9" and two separate 6" pipes connect into one manhole with one 6" pipe on the outlet. He said with heavy rain the 6" sewer gets blocked and seeps into the Lake via overflow which was put in place to prevent houses in Cuscarrick getting flooded. Cllr. Regan said that there are 4 or 5 manhole covers that need attention along this area. Mr. Cullen said the Lake is sampled regularly and the quality is excellent. He said there may be incidents of pollution from time to time but that does not finish the quality of water of the Lake.

Mayor Burke said he would like to thank Cllr. Jimmy Curley for deputising for him at the memorial ceremony held on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 for those who lost their lives and for those who returned from war and United Nations duty over the years. He said he would also like to thank Colman Shaughnessy and Joe Loughnane for the time and effort they put into this project over the last year. Cllr. Morgan said he would like to thank Cllr. Regan for donating the plaque. Cllr. Regan said his preferred choice would be at Station Road where most of them left from and did not return but the majority seemed to favour the Civic Offices. Mayor Burke said he hopes it will not be taken and wondered if it should be made more secure by setting it in concrete.

Mayor Burke said the presentation for Olive Loughnane would take place on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at 8.15 p.m. in Loughrea Hotel and Spa on Athenry Road. He said all are welcome to attend together with the Loughnane Family. He said a scroll would be presented to her and a bit of Galway Crystal. He said the volley ball team were honoured earlier at a function in the Temperance Hall.

Mayor Burke said that the Annual Christmas Dinner will take place on the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2008 in O'Dea Hotel after the Annual Budget Meeting and monthly meeting. He said it would be appreciated if business could be kept to the minimum for the monthly meeting.

Mr. Raftery said he had a request from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government seeking a list of footpaths to be done in 2009 in former town commissioner areas. He said this submission is needed by the 21<sup>st</sup> November. Mayor Burke said to send out a list of his proposals and he would arrange a meeting to discuss it further. This was agreed.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2008.

Signed this 5<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2008. Mayor: Colm Bual