

Minutes of proceedings at the Annual Budget Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2008, in the Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.

**Mayor:** Cllr. Burke

**Members:** Cllrs. 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 Curley.

Mr. Jim Cullen, Director of Services, presented the Annual Budget for the year 2009. Mr. Cullen stated that the expenditure for 2009 is estimated at €100,852.75 with income at €15,240.00. The amount of the demand to be submitted to Galway County Council for 2009 will be €79,794.03 and the multiplier will be €3.15 which represents an increase of 4.5% on last year. He said there was one exceptional item which is the holding of the Local Elections in 2009 which has to be met out of the Capital funds held by the Town Council. He said he has put it in as a contra item in expenditure and receipts. He said this is a one off process as no other cut backs can be made as most of the expenditure is statutory and can not be reduced. He recommended the Budget be adopted.

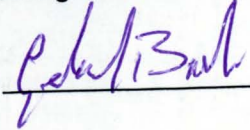
Cllr. Morgan said that he had no problem with the budget as presented. Cllr. Regan said if the funding of the local election could be made over 5 years it would be less of an impact. Mr. Cullen said this could be looked at from 2010 onwards. Mayor Burke said he would like to compliment the Manager on the budget and recommends that it be accepted. He said that a new committee has been set up to organise St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2009. He said they have sought funding to hold this event and he recommends that it be supported. He said the budget was reduced two years ago on the recommendation of the town council and the deficit has to be made up some time so it was difficult to phase the local elections over five years. He said with the reduction of the town council property it is going to be more difficult to keep the rates down. Mr. Cullen said he had to reduce the contribution to the Chamber of Commerce this year in order to keep the rates to the minimum. He said the contribution to the Chamber of Commerce are for the Christmas Lighting and the St. Patrick's Day parade. He has no problem in giving 50% to the organizers of the St. Patrick's Day parade from the allocation under heading Chamber of Commerce. This arrangement was agreed by the members.

On the proposition of Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix and resolved that the Budget of the Loughrea Town Council for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2009, as set forth at A, B, C. on the Form of Budget be adopted and the Form of Annual Budget be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

It was also resolved that the Demand be made on Galway County Council by the Loughrea Town Council for the sum of €79,794.03 for the financial year ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2009, and that the Form of Demand be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

This concluded the business of the Annual Budget Meeting.

Signed this 12 day of January, 2009.

Mayor: 

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

I lathair.

**Mayor:** Cllr. Gabriel Burke.

**Members:** Cllrs. 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 Curley.

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

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 be adopted.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Regan said that there is still flooding outside Pat Murphy's house since the refurbishment of Barrack Street and he asked when remedial works will be carried out to rectify this matter. Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer, said they are currently doing work on the Gort Road relieving flooding. He will investigate it.

Cllr. Maher asked for an up date on the Bottle Banks at Station Road Car Park and when will the cameras be installed. Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, said that a temporary CCTV camera has been installed at this location. He said they are seeking quotations for a more sophisticated system which is hoped to be installed early in the New Year.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the Swimming Pool for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said that Mr. Kevin Kelly, Director of Services is dealing with it and has answered all the questions and a definite and final reply is now awaited. He said this swimming pool is excellent value for money and the Department will have to make a decision one way or another. Mayor Burke said the Developer, County Council and the Swimming Pool Committee are working in tandem and want this development to progress. He said they want an answer, from the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism, one way or another and move on. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that a letter should be written to the Oireachtas members inviting them to meet the Town Council as soon as possible to see if they can put pressure on the relevant authorities to pursue this matter. This was seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Cllr. Regan referred to the correspondence about the all weather pitch proposal at the Fairgreen and suggested that the pitch be sited at Knockanima where there are toilets parking etc. and not the fairgreen. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said this facility is needed but the fairgreen is a non-runner but the Town Council was prepared to enter discussions on other sites. Mayor Burke said that discussions should take place with this person so

as not to loose out on this much needed facility. Mr. Cullen suggested that a letter be written to Kevin Kelly stating that the town council is interested in this facility but not on the site specified and see if discussions can be opened on alternative sites.

**Correspondence.**

Acknowledgement letter from Ms. Breda McDermott, County Secretary, regarding the Town Hall, Loughrea.

Letter from Coiste Fheile Padraig regarding funding for St. Patrick's Day Parade. This was discussed at the Budget Meeting and it was agreed that funding allocated to the Chamber of Commerce cover this event as well. The money allocated is a contribution for the lights at Christmas and St. Patrick's Day parade.

Letter from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform – regarding Gaming and Lotteries Act, 1956. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that this issue came up a number of years ago and the Town Commissioners of the day did not adopt it for the administrative area of Loughrea Town Council. It was proposed by Cllr. Gunter-Nix seconded by Mayor Burke that there is no change in Loughrea Town Council's view on this matter. They do not intend to allow gaming in the town.

Letter from Senior Citizens Club, Loughrea, seeking funding for the Christmas Party for 2008. It was agreed that there was no funding available and it was suggested that each member subscribe privately to this cause.

Letter from Loughrea Anglers Association regarding issues around the town.

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

(a) I will propose that the E.S.B. who when placing a mesh wire fence around their power box beside the back entrance to O'Dea's Hotel, Loughrea, also fence in the County Council's stainless steel litter bin, and he requested to reposition said fence so that the public may again have use of said bin.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan.  
This proposal was not seconded

(b) That a recommendation be sent to the Minister for Justice that the ban on smoking in specified areas include a ban on smoking in motor vehicles, where the lighting and quenching of cigarettes, together with the effect of smoke in the eyes of the driver could lead to an accident.

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan.  
This proposal was not seconded.

**Any Other Business.**

Mayor Burke said he would like to thank Ms Pryia Prendergast, Health Service Executive, for meeting the members of Loughrea Town Council to discuss issues pertaining to St. Brendan's Home and closing of Youth Group in Loughrea at the end

of the year. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said it was a worth while meeting which brought them up to date on both issues.

Cllr. Maher asked when it is intended to do work on the Seven Eye Bridge and the Kilchreest road and if repairs will be done this year. Mayor Burke said work is at present taking place at this location and he said he would like to thank the County Council for attending to it.

Cllr. Morgan asked again if the gate leading onto the Walks from Main Street car park could be opened on Saturday and Sunday to facilitate people using Station Road car park. Mr. Raftery said there is no funding at present to give this service

Cllr. Regan again raised the issue of a sewage problem on the Gort Road and the threat of pollution going into the Lake. Mr. Raftery said that a 9" and two separate 6" pipes connect into one manhole with one 6" pipe on the outlet. (combined drain). He said with heavy rain the 6" sewer gets blocked, with leaves and litter, and seeps into the Lake via overflow which was put in place to prevent houses in Cuscarrick getting flooded. Mr. Cullen said that the quality of the water in the Lake is above the expected standard at present under the Water Directives. He said there will be small incidents of pollution from time to time and they can rectify those issues as they occur. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said Loughrea has received the Blue Flag over the last ten years and it is obvious that the quality of the water is up to an acceptable standard and is in compliance with the EU Directives on Water Quality.

Cllr. Maher asked when the demolition of Fitzy's house will take place and if it will be done this year. Mr. Raftery said the tenders are at present being adjudicated on and a decision will be made as soon as possible.

Cllr. Maher asked if the gravel will be removed from the Diving area of the Long Point in order to facilitate the annual Christmas swim. Mr. Raftery said he would arrange to have it removed before then. Cllr. Regan asked if the Walk around the Lake is complete. Mr. Raftery said phase one is complete. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if the town trail, agreed by the members, will be done in the near future. She also asked if the signs for the Cathedral which were taken down when the Main Street was refurbished can be erected when the town trail is being done. Mr. Raftery said the original estimate submitted with the application form was too high and modifications had to be made to the scheme. This has been re-submitted and a reply is expected very soon. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if there is a time frame to complete this work once approval is received. Mr. Raftery said they have to be complete in June, 2009.

Cllr. Regan said that recently a local hurling club had won a match in Loughrea and the organisers and players went around the town with children hanging out windows displaying the cup they had won. He said there is an accident waiting to happen. He said the Managers and back room members are responsible and it should cease. Cllr. Morgan said he had tabled a Notice of Motion along those lines and he was referred to the Superintendent of the Garda Siochana to take action on the matter. He said every times he sees this happening he rings the Garda Station to stop the culprits. He said the clubs should take note and act more responsibly. He said the Gardai should put penalty points on the drivers to eliminate this problem.

Mayor Burke wished the members, officials and reporters the compliments of the season and a peaceful New Year. Mr. Cullen did like wise.

This concluded the business of the Town Council meeting held on the 8/12/2008.

Signed this 12 day of January, 2009. Mayor: Gabriel Burke

**Minutes and proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.**

**I lathair.**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Gabriel 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, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk.

The meeting opened with prayer.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Annual Budget Meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2008.**

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

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008.**

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

Mayor Burke said that two representatives had come to the meeting to discuss an all weather pitch in Loughrea and he requested that this item be taken first. This was unanimously agreed.

**All Weather Pitch for Loughrea.**

Mr. Fergal Nugent and Mr. Michael Mulhern outlined their proposals for an all weather pitch for Loughrea. Mr. Nugent said he is a brother of Enda Nugent who had first written about this project. He said that his brother is away on business and could not attend. He said he spent a lot of time in sport and is familiar with the requirements needed.

They would like to install two 5-a-side Astro Turf Football pitches, fully fenced in with floodlights on the piece of land. The approximate size of the required space is 40 metres by 40 metres. He gave a brief outline of his proposal as follows:-

1. We will install the facilities at our own expense.

2. The County Council/Town Council will have free use of the facilities for local and community activities each week day up until 5.00 p.m and every weekend. There may be some restrictions on occasions and this can be discussed with the relevant authorities.
3. We will have use of the facilities from 5.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m. from Monday to Friday to be used to rent out for Soccer/ Hurling/ Gaelic/Football etc.
4. The quality of the Astro Turf and Floodlights will be of a standard comparable with any pitch in Ireland or the United Kingdom.

He said that this is just a brief outline and is open for discussion if the Town Council is in agreement to have such a facility in the town of Loughrea. He said this is a unique opportunity for the town of Loughrea to acquire top facilities at no cost to either to the council or residents of the town. He said they developed Athlone Soccer Pitch and the members were free to view this playing pitch if they so wish. He said they would be charging €60.00 an hour for renting the pitch to sporting bodies.

Mr. Michael Mulhern said they would move to the next stage once a piece of ground is identified and a site survey of the ground would be undertaken and drawings would be done and drainage and whatever else needs to be done by the Company free of charge. He said he is the engineer for the company. He said he would show the drawings and the maps to the members when agreement is reached on a site.

Mayor Burke said he would like to thank Mr. Nugent and Mr. Mulhern for outlining their proposals. He asked how did they pick Loughrea for this facility. Mr. Nugent said they noticed that Galway County Council had a budget of €2 million to provide sporting facilities in the County but Loughrea was not mentioned so they decided to do a survey of the town. Mayor Burke asked if the Company would maintain fences once it is up and running. He asked if a Caretaker will be provided to look after the area. Mr. Nugent said that they would maintain the fences within reason. He said once the Town Council agree in principle to the facility in the town that all legal matters would be sorted out. He said there would be a cabin for the Caretaker on site to look after the grounds and for security reasons. Mayor Burke said he welcomes this facility and hopes that a suitable site will be found.

Cllr. Tully said if toilets, showers, car parks etc. are not available on the site are the Company prepared to put them in. Mr. Nugent said that he notices that people in Athlone do not shower until they get home but they would look at it in the overall picture.

Cllr. Regan asked what type of capital is envisaged to be spent if the ground is made available. Mr. Nugent said they would be spending approximately €200,000.00 on the project. He said they would be charging €60.00 an hour for rent to the sporting groups using it. It will be rented to schools free of charge. Mr. Mulhern said if the services are available they would use them and would allow for services in the estimate when submitting it. Cllr. Regan said he has a site in mind with all services available if it was suitable.

Cllr. Curley said that this project should be given every consideration. He said that planning permission will be required and services will have to be made available for

whatever site is chosen if they are not already on the site. He asked if the ground would have to be in the town area. Mr. Mulhern said that the site would have to be within walking distance of the town to facilitate children and other users.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked what other projects in the County was done by this Company apart from the pitches in Athlone. He said they did one in Craughwell and Oranmore. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said this would be a great facility for Loughrea and especially for children to get them involved in Sport. She said the teams around Loughrea have to travel to other parts of the country for training so it would be used if provided. She said this project should be looked at favourably. She said we should look at it for the betterment of the town.

Cllr. Maher said he supports the comments made by the other speakers and hopes this facility is provided in the town. He said everybody should work together and advance this project.

Cllr. Bane asked what booking facilities will be in place and or how can it be made. She asked if the Caretaker will be taking them. Mr. Mulhern said that it will be done through the website.

Cllr. Hynes said he would like to thank the two gentlemen for their presentation and he hopes that this project will progress in the next few weeks.

Cllr. Morgan also thanked them for their presentation.

Mr. Cullen, Director of Services, thanked Mr. Nugent and Mr. Mulhern for attending the meeting and outlining their proposals. He said Loughrea Town Council did not have a site to offer them but he hoped that Galway Council would have one suitable for them. He said that Dermot Mahon in Kevin Kelly's section would be dealing with the matter and he would investigate every avenue to see if this facility can be provided in Loughrea. He said the final decision will rest with the County Council members.

Mr. Nugent and Mr. Mulhern thanked the town council members for permission to address the meeting. They then left the meeting.

A general discussion took place on this matter and most of the members agreed with the facility being provided in Loughrea. They said they consider the Knockanima site to be the most suitable and it is zoned recreational. They said that this area was bequeathed to Galway County Council by Tynagh Mines so there was no expense to the County Council. It would also be welcomed by residents in this area as they are requesting that this area be cleaned up. They said that all the facilities are available in this area which would reduce the cost. Cllr. Hynes said it can be sited any place around the town except the fairgreen. Mr. Cullen said that Kevin Kelly's section will be dealing with it and there will be procurement issues with any site selected within the town environs. He said it will be Galway County Council members who will have the final decision.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr. Regan asked if there were any developments with the proposed Swimming Pool for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen said all the questions have been answered and no further correspondence has issued since then. Cllr. Regan said that the members of the town council want clarity on the matter as do the community of Loughrea. He said it is either yes or no. It is unfair to the Swimming Pool Committee and Developer who went through the planning process to secure this facility. Cllr. Hynes said that Deputy Ulick Burke made it crystal clear that because of financial constraints this much needed facility will not be provided in Loughrea. He said planning permission has been granted and the people of Loughrea should not take no for an answer. He said Swimming Pools have been provided in Tuam and Ballinasloe and why not Loughrea. Mayor Burke (Chairman of Loughrea Swimming Pool) said the Swimming Pool Committee got this project off the ground and they want a decision one way or another on it. He said that he has a copy of a reply to Deputy Ulick Burke's parliamentary question and it stated that it can not be grant aided because they are not happy with the present contractual arrangements. He said they understand that the funding for the project is ring fenced. Cllr. Curley said this project is floating for 15 years and he proposed that a deputation be sent to the Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism to ascertain what the problem is and if it can be solved. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Cllr. Curley said that members of the Swimming Pool Committee, Loughrea town Council and officials should attend this deputation. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said this saga is going on for years and some positive action is needed to see if any progress can be made on this project. Cllr. Tully said if the finances are ring fenced it might be provided in the future when all the legal matters are sorted out and it is no harm to keep it alive. Mr. Cullen said that this is a unique project in the State because it is being done under PPP which is a first venture of its kind in Ireland. He said the other pools in Tuam and Ballinasloe were done in traditional style. He said because it is a PPP project and being state aided it could affect the competition law. He said a definite yes or no is what is needed and move on from there.

Cllr. Regan asked about the state of the bottle banks over the Christmas season. He asked if there is any footage that would identify the culprits. Cllr. Maher said he passed by the bottle banks over Christmas and he said the banks were not full but yet people just dumped the boxes. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the camera was covered over with a black bag so the culprits could not be identified. Mr. Raftery said that this camera was only a temporary measure and a new camera will be installed shortly once they get clearance with the E.S.B. He confirmed that one of the cameras was covered over and the other had a fault so they do not know what footage is available until they roll the film. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the culprits when found should be named and shamed. Cllr. Bane also agreed with this suggestion.

Cllr. Maher said he was delighted to see the pedestrian crossing being done on Barrack Street. He said he spoke to Martin Lavelle and he informed him that the Traffic Lights will be done in the near future at the Westbridge. Mr. Cullen also said he spoke to Mr. Lavelle and he got a similar reply.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix requested that the tourist sign for the Cathedral, mentioned at previous meetings, be erected as soon as possible. This sign was taking down when

the roadworks were done at Main Street. It was erected outside O'Dea's Hotel at the bottom of Moore Street. She asked if the other signs showing the walking trail will be started soon. Perhaps this sign could be erected at the same time. Cllr. Regan said one of the signs at West Bridge got damaged over the Christmas period and he asked that this be addressed as well when the other signs are being erected. Mr. Raftery said that the sign at the West Bridge got hit by a car during the holiday time. He said he is waiting for final approval from Fáilte Ireland on Loughrea Historic Town Trail. Work will start as soon as possible.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AMAI Spring Conference in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2009.

Notice of Motion - Cllr. Morgan.

I will propose that the following recommendation be sent to Galway County Council-  
(a) That an additional Public Street Light be provided between the junction of Bride Street and Railway Road and the back entrance to O'Dea's Hotel, Loughrea.

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

(b) That the two seats, on the property of the old E.S.B. office, Piggott Street, Loughrea, which are coming out over the public footpath, be moved away from said footpath. (P.S. I do not know if the new footpath, recently provided thereat, has been widened and thereby caused the obstruction.

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

(c) That when tarmac is spread on the streets of Loughrea, that it be applied direct from a hot box, as a recent road repair at Bride Street, resulted in tarmac chips ending up on the footpath and being taken into houses on peoples shoes, and carpets ruined.

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

Cllr. Morgan said that cold tar application is not satisfactory for fixing potholes. He said it is washed away within days of being applied and it is a waste of public funds. He said a hot box should be provided to prevent potholes coming back within days of being repaired. He said the ground is wet when the tarmac is put on it and it is not packed in. Mayor Burke said that there are potholes all over the town and he asked if there is a programme in place for repairing them.

Any Other Business.

Mayor Burke said there is about 20 metres of wall at Garrybreeda burial ground knocked and it is in a very bad state. He asked what is going to be done about it. He said a number of people had come together to remove the ivy from this area but were prevented from doing it by the Heritage Officer. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said the fence around Garrybreeda playground needs to be replaced/repared and make it safe. She said she brought up this matter at previous meetings but nothing was done about it.

She said a decision will have to be made on this matter before there is an accident. Mr. Cullen said to write to Kevin Kelly in Corporate Services to see if funding is available to repair fence. Cllr. Morgan said this matter needs to be addressed before something serious happens.

Cllr. Bane said that the Tennis Club want to tarmac the Court but there is an ESB pole in the way. She said the contractor has applied for a Road Opening Licence but it has not been granted yet. She asked if this could be looked at and issue licence as soon as possible. She said there is a break in the fence near the skating park area and children go on to the Tennis Court. She asked if this could be repaired.

Mayor Burke said that cars are parking on the footpaths in Bride Street and around the town and people with buggies and wheelchairs can not pass because of this obstruction. Cllr. Maher said that cars are constantly parked on Abbey Street on the footpaths and it needs to be looked at.

Mayor Burke said that businesses are feeling the pinch of the credit crunch and he asked if free parking could be allowed on a Saturday in the car parks and on the streets. Cllr. Regan said that paid parking has been introduced to Ballinasloe and they have a monthly ticket for workers at €20.00. Mayor Burke proposed that parking on Saturdays for the foreseeable future be free of charge in car parks and streets in Loughrea. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Maher asked if any progress had been made with vacant town council house. Mr. Cullen said that two people are interested in this house and a decision will be made soon.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2009.

Signed this 9<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2009. Mayor: Gabriel Burke

**Minutes and proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 in the County Council offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea.**

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Mayor: Cllr. Gabriel 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, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Imelda Deely, Town Clerk, Anne Power, Senior Staff Officer.

The meeting opened with prayer.

**Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2009.**

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

Mayor Burke said that Mr. Cullen, Director of Services wished to discuss the position about the vacant Town Council house, in committee, and he asked the press to respect this wish. Mr. Cullen said that he has assessed the situation and his opinion is that the house can not be let until repairs are carried out on the house which will be in the region of €15,000.00 for minor repairs which would be the minimal for letting. He said more extensive repairs would cost in the region of €26,000.00. He said he had informal talks with the Law Agent's office in Galway County Council and their advice is that the Town Council need to be very careful with letting this house and advised against allowing any third party to undertake repairs. He was also advised by the council's housing staff that the applicants would not be deemed eligible and that the accommodation would not be deemed suitable for their needs. This house is a 2 bedroom house with a narrow stairs and two rooms on the ground floor. There is a bathroom with bath and toilet and no hand basin. He said if either of the people got disabled a chair lift would have to be provided which would be difficult to provide and add further liabilities. He said it is only suitable for a small young family in need of housing in the area. He considers that a bungalow would meet the requirements of the couple involved and they should put their names down for this type of accommodation.

He said that Galway County Council does not accept applications for housing from persons living outside the County as there are a substantial number on the housing list awaiting housing in the County. If people return to live permanently in County Galway they may apply for housing but they should ensure that adequate provision is made for private housing as no guarantees can be given that housing will be provided in the immediate future. Mr. Cullen said he can not let the house to Mary and Kenneth Manners (nee Lohan) for the reasons outlined and to do so could lead to future liability for the Town Council.

The second option is to have the property valued for the open market and sell it. He said the market is not very buoyant at the present time for selling the house. He said

it is a very valuable property but this may not be reflected in the markets. He said this is a Reserved Function and the decision will be made by the Councillors.

The third option is Galway County Council to purchase the property from Loughrea Town Council at market value and re-let it to people on the waiting list for social housing.

Cllr. Hynes said that the applicants are returning emigrants born in Loughrea in the house next door. He proposed that the "Safe-Home Programme" which is an option for returning emigrants should be looked at before a decision is made. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Mr. Cullen said he is not familiar with this programme but would check it out further and would let him know at the March meeting. He said the options outlined will be the same. He will just get information on the "Safe Home Programme". Cllr. Hynes asked if there is more than one applicant. Mr. Cullen said that there are 2 applicants. The second applicant wants to purchase the property but has not made contact recently.

Cllr. Morgan thanked Mr. Cullen for his advice on this issue for the meeting. He said this is an emotional issue for the Town Council as Mary Manners, nee Lohan, lived next door in the early days of her life. He said that there is no guarantee that this dwelling can be brought up to an acceptable standard for letting and it would have liabilities for Loughrea Town Council. He thinks that the Town Council should move on to stage 2 or 3 outlined.

Cllr. Regan said he is not in favour of selling this property on the open market. He said it is a local authority house and should be for social housing. Mr. Cullen said if the property is sold it would be a decision made by resolution of the members.

Cllr. Curley said the members had not much choice in the matter as outlined by Mr. Cullen unless the property is sold on the open market. He said he would await and see the outcome of the "Safe Home Programme" details before making a decision. He asked if the Town Council would have the necessary finance to do the minimal repairs or would they have to take out a loan. Mr. Cullen said that it would have limited capital funding.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said it would seem that Mary Manners, nee Lohan, is not a suitable candidate, from details outlined by Mr. Cullen. She said a decision will have to be made on this issue sooner rather than later before this property becomes a derelict site. She said this house is over 60 years old and it would be difficult to bring it up to a standard for an elderly couple.

Cllr. Bane asked if the property is sold on the open market can the money be spent in the town council area in the town. Mr. Cullen said that he would have to check out this matter with the Department of the Environment Housing Section to see if the money could be spent in the town.

Cllr. Maher said that the Lohan family are willing to do up this house at no expense to Loughrea Town Council. Mr. Cullen said this is not an option now in view of legal advice.

Mayor Burke said that all the details have been outlined by Mr. Cullen and he will await information on the "Safe Home Programme" from him.

**Presentation by ProtectIT Ireland - Company for removing chewing gum from pavements.**

Mayor Burke said that Mark Kelly will outline details of the Company Protect IT to the members. He said Mr. Kelly would speak first and the members were free to question him afterwards. Mr. Kelly said he was from Ballinasloe and was Managing Director of the Company. He said in 2005 Galway City Council instructed ProtectIT Ireland to clean and protect the pedestrian area adjacent to the Taxi Rank at Eyre Square, Galway City. He said this area was constantly subjected to dirt, grime, chewing gum and atmospheric pollution which had made pavements in the area very dirty. The pavement were cleaned and then protected with ProtectGuard FT which is an impregnating sealer specifically for use in heavy traffic areas. This sealer does not allow dirt or grime to penetrate the surface to which is has been applied, allowing the majority of dirt to be washed away by rain water. Chewing gum and graffiti are easier to remove once the sealer is applied. He said he recently checked with Gary O'Loughlin, Galway City Council, to see if he was satisfied with the product and if it was doing what is expected of it. Mr. O'Loughlin said that the product is doing exactly what was requested by the City Council i.e. no stains, graffiti and chewing gum are sticking to the surface and is therefore easy to remove with a power washer. He said they sealed the premises owned by Christy Kelly, now the Credit Union, years ago and it was a huge success. He said they did jobs in O'Connell Street, Dublin, Bedford Row in Limerick as well as Eyre Square in Galway City. He said that he will give a demonstration to the Town Engineer and members if they wish to avail of it. He left catalogues etc. to the Town Engineer and his contact details if required. Mayor Burke thanked Mr. Kelly for giving details of the product to the members and he said he would take questions from the members. Cllr. Gunter-Nix asked if the product is expensive. He said his firm does not supply it but he could put them in touch with companies who do. He said normally that this product is added to Capital Funding when work in being done in urban areas. He said the refurbishment of the streets are now complete in Loughrea and can not be done under this scheme. Cllr. Regan asked what is the time frame for this product and how often is renewed. He said that it should last for at least 10 years. He said the mechanical sweeper used in Galway City will not pick it up but there are sweepers on the market which will do the work. He said once it is sealed a power washer will remove it. Cllr. Hynes said that chewing gum is a huge problem and it is easier to remove if the pavement is sealed. Cllr. Morgan said that graffiti is a big problem on the private doors on the Walks and he wondered if this product could be used for this purpose. Mr. Kelly said once the sealer goes on it can not be painted afterwards. It was proposed by Cllr. Hynes that the Town Engineer have the product investigated as a gesture of courtesy to Mr. Kelly. This was seconded by Cllr. Curley. Mr. Kelly thanked the members for allowing him to address them and he said he is available at any time if further clarification on the product is needed. Mr. Raftery, Executive Engineer said he would read through the material to see if it is a worth while exercise. He will be in contact if he requires a demonstration.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Mayor Burke said he had received correspondence from Greg Kennedy, Dartfield, Kilrickle, Loughrea regarding an All Weather Pitch he proposes to develop outside the town in the Tynagh area. He said he read a report on the local paper that a company was looking for sites to develop the facility. He said he has submitted a planning application for an All Weather Pitch. He asked the members if they supported this project. Cllr. Regan said he considers the Tynagh road very dangerous and not suitable for this facility. Cllr. Maher said that a firm by the name of Thornton's from Portumna had also given information on an All Weather Pitch and he said the cost was much cheaper than that presented by Enda Nugent from Athlone and seemed better value for money. He said he spoke to Kevin Kelly, Corporate Services, about it as well. He said that all of the applicants should be looked at and each judged on its merits. Cllr. Hynes said that the facility should be in the town and preferably at the Long Point where all the services are provided. Cllr. Tully said that Mr. Kennedy was building his facility on private property independent of the Town Council or County Council. He said he has offered this facility to the town if they are interested in it. Cllr. Curley said that a bit of competition is no harm and let each company go through the planning process and see the outcome. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said all applicants should go through the process and hopefully some of the companies will be successful. Mr. Cullen said that this matter should be brought to the attention of Mr. Kevin Kelly and Mr. Dermot Mahon of Corporate Services.

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on the Swimming Pool and an idea of when it will be provided in the town. Mayor Burke said he had no official word on it. Cllr. Regan asked if any word had been received from the Minister for Sport, Tourism or Recreation on receiving the deputation. Town Clerk said she had written to the Minister and all the Deputies in East Galway. She also spoke to Minister Kitt on the matter and he said he is trying to arrange a meeting but without success. Cllr. Curley said this matter is going on for 15 years and there are obstacles being put in the way each time. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that they should invite back the Deputies and Senator for the area to see if they can throw any light on the subject. It was proposed by Cllr. Regan that the Deputies be invited to an informal meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 at 8.00 p.m. in the Council Offices in Barrack Street to see exactly what is the position with the Swimming Pool. Is this project going ahead or not? This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Cllr. Hynes said that the hoarding around the site is very dangerous and some adjoining properties were worried in case it would fly onto the properties or road at Meadowbrook Court, Athenry Road etc. He asked who is responsible for this matter. Mr. Raftery said he had notified Kevin Kelly about it and was awaiting a response from him. Mr. Cullen said he presumes a licence was granted to the Developer or an agreement was reached but he would check it out. Cllr. Hynes said he wanted this information for the next meeting. Cllr. Morgan said Ulick Burke said that no funding is available due to financial constraints. Mayor Burke said he understands that funding is available. He said he is constantly on to Ministers to see if it is going ahead. He said he has stuck with this project for 14 years and he will not give up at this stage until he hears otherwise. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said if there are legal difficulties or some stumbling block the Deputies from East Galway should have the answers when they meet on the 16<sup>th</sup> February. Mr. Cullen said that it is difficult

for the Deputies to arrange a meeting and all they can do is keep lobbying and hope that it will happen.

Cllr. Maher said that traffic lights will be erected within 6 – 8 weeks at the Westridge, Loughrea. Cllr. Bane asked who the contractor is. Mr. Raftery said he had arranged to meet the approved contractor for the project with some of the road design engineers on site on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February to investigate this matter. Mayor Burke said that he had seen the plan at the Area Meeting. He said that four set of traffic lights will be erected but there are none going between Morrissey's and Cooney's as it is intended to make Dolphin Street one way. He said there is no facility for deliveries into Londis. Mr. Raftery said that Londis will have to use smaller trucks or make alternative arrangements. He said that Road Design team will have to go ahead with the best option.

Cllr. Regan asked how many prosecutions were issued in relation to the Bottle Banks over the Christmas period. Mr. Raftery said that 32 had gone out for payment. He advised that the new cameras will be installed in the near future. Cllr. Regan asked if the culprits will be named and shamed. Mr. Cullen said if the fines are paid they can not be named and shamed. If, however, payments are not made a prosecution will issue and if successful the culprits can be named and shamed at that point. Cllr. Tully said the bottle banks seemed to be pushed back nearer the river. Mr. Raftery said he was not aware of it as Environment Section is responsible for them. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that the banks were full again and asked how often they are emptied. Mr. Raftery said the banks are emptied as required.

Correspondence.

Letter from AMAI regarding Spring Seminar in Letterkenny, Co, Donegal. Mayor Burke said he would not be attending this conference because of the economic climate. Cllr. Maher said he will not attend either.

Mayor Burke said that Loughrea Anglers Association had written some time ago requesting a deputation to be received to discuss issues around the town. It was agreed by the members that this item be taken at the March Town Council meeting.

Letter from Loughrea Tidy Towns requesting a deputation be received to discuss issues of concern around the town. They have commissioned Donaldson Tourism & Heritage Company in Cork to assist with the National and Local Tidy Towns competition to see if marks can be improved. They want to see if both groups can work together for the betterment of the town. It was agreed by the members that they come to the March meeting

Letter from Chamber of Commerce stating that the monthly meeting of the members will take place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 at 6.30 p.m in O'Dea's Hotel. The closure of Cigna and Hope Industries as well as other job losses will be discussed. It is important that as many members as possible attend this meeting. Town Clerk said copy of letter given to Cllr. Gunter-Nix, who is the affiliated member of the Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of the Town Council.



Extract of letter from Road & Transportation Unit regarding free parking in Loughrea on Saturdays for the foreseeable future. This matter was raised by Mayor Burke at the January meeting of the Town Council. Mayor Burke proposed this be implemented and it was seconded by Cllr. Maher. "I regret it is not possible to reduce the operation of pay parking in Loughrea for 5 days due to the impact of such a change on traffic management and the associated budgetary implications for the Council. The Council has continuing commitments arising from the implementation of pay parking in Loughrea including the significant costs associated with the purchase and development of car parks, the implementation of traffic management plan and pay parking together with associated loan repayments."

Letter from Greg Kennedy, Dartfield, Kilrickle, regarding New All Weather Pitch in Loughrea. This was discussed under matters arising from the minutes. Mr. Cullen said to forward a copy of letter to Kevin Kelly and Dermot McMahon for attention.

Extract of letter from Christopher Talbot, Subway, Loughrea, regarding parking on Main Street since the redevelopment of it. He said it is the general consensus that the majority of shoppers have not returned to do business in Loughrea because of traffic jams due to the lack of proper bus stop facilities: very bad parking layout and lack of parking on Main Street and the side streets. He proposed that the bus stop be moved down to Station Road i.e. from the entrance to Kilboy's Funeral Home back to Paul Byron's shoe shop. There is an overhang outside Subway which can shelter bus passengers. He is willing to provide wheelchair accessible toilet facilities, a waiting area, during opening hours, with no obligation on bus passengers to purchase. The street is well lit and has CCTV covering the whole area, it is a safe place to drop off and pick up passengers. The councillors said that is not feasible for buses to park so near the Funeral Parlour. Mr. Raftery said to forward a copy of the letter to Martin Lavelle for his attention.

#### Any Other Business.

Cllr. Gunter-Nix said she had got a note from Owen McCormack regarding a poster free Local Elections campaign in the interest of the Environment. She said posters can be dangerous, especially the larger ones, if they fell down on somebody. She asked the members to support this campaign. Cllr. Hynes said the putting up of posters is a personal issue and one for each candidate to decide. Cllr. Regan said that if the Minister wants this issue to be nationalised he should bring in a law to that effect. Cllr. Curley said it is up to the Minister for the Environment to draw the line on this matter. Cllr. Tully said it is up to the all the candidates to agree on this issue. Cllr. Bane asked if this would include flyers in the letter boxes.

Cllr. Tully asked about the pedestrian crossing being constructed at Barrack Street, Loughrea. He asked what type of lighting is going to be installed at this location. Mr. Raftery said that a representative from the National Roads Authority had done an audit on pedestrian crossings for Loughrea. They identified the area at the Town Hall as the most suitable location for the one at Barrack Street. He said the lights will be the same as the ones provided on the Main Street i.e. Flashing Lights press button type. He said the County Council is building a chamber for ducting for public lighting and traffic control lights and similar lining as that provided outside Allied Irish Bank, on the Main Street. Cllr. Tully said the school children will be constantly

pressing the push button and delaying traffic. Mr. Raftery said there is a smart control detector on the lights which allows the traffic to move and children pressing the button will not stop it. He said the lights will be delivered in the next 6 - 8 weeks.

Mr. Cullen said that gas line is coming to Loughrea in the near future and it will be a great boost for the town and make it more attractive for industries and business in the town.

Mr. Raftery said that there is an allocation of €144,000.00 for footpaths in former Town Commissioner areas.

Mayor Burke said that this was the last meeting for the Town Clerk as she was retiring. A presentation was made to her by the Mayor. Members, Officials and Press paid tribute to her and wished her well in her retirement. The Town Clerk thanked the members, officials and press for their kind remarks. She welcomed Ms. Anne Power, the incoming Town Clerk and wished her well in her new role. She wished the members every success in the forthcoming elections.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2009.

Signed this 9<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2009. Mayor: *Peter Bane*

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Gabriel Burke

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

**Officials:** Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

**Apologies:** Cllr. Jimmy Curley & Jim Cullen, Director of Services send their apologies.

The Meeting opened with prayer.

Mayor Burke welcomed Ms. Power to her first Meeting as Town Clerk and wished her well in her new post.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009**

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

**2. Deputation from Loughrea Tidy Towns Committee**

Mayor Burke introduced Ms. Perlie Fullard and Mr. David Kingsland to the Meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Ms. Fullard stated that the Tidy Towns Committee had commissioned Donaldson Tourism & Heritage Company in March 2008 to prepare a Three Year Tidy Towns Plan for Loughrea to cover the period 2008 to 2010. The Report makes a total of 123 recommendations for consideration by the Loughrea Tidy Towns Committee. A suggested strategy for target marks increases in each adjudication category was also provided in the report. They had prepared a comprehensive report which it was agreed to be circulated to each Member.

Referring to a Tidy Towns Seminar held in Westport in February, Ms. Fullard stated that the following points were made by Frank Donaldson:

- Importance of Partnership – Involving all Committees in the Town
- Recommends that every Committee should have a Three Year Plan

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009

- Involve Schools – have some students on the Committee
- Entry Form should include a Tidy Towns Plan
- Include photographs of Before and After (e.g. Main Street, Playground, etc.)
- Clearly mark Heritage Buildings, Monuments, Derelict Buildings, Vacant Sites, Signage.
- Let them know a Blue Flag has been awarded for Loughrea Lake
- Use of colour on buildings important

He advised the things Judges look for are:

- Landscaping, Paving, Trees, Shrubs
- Window Boxes, Hanging Baskets
- Have a wildlife survey carried out in the lake
- Information Panels e.g.: Wildlife
- General tidiness
- Approach Roads – Signage Landscape – Roadside Verges – Gates & walls

Regarding Litter Control, the following advice was given:

- Bins should be emptied twice daily during the summer, painted & clean
- Retail goods on pavements on Main Street should be removed
- Car Parks – always a litter problem
- Litter in laneways often ignored while concentrating on Main Streets
- When planting trees always get professional advice first
- Have Bring Banks well sign posted, make it a feature, with plants, shrubs, etc.

At the Seminar the Chairperson of Westport Tidy Towns made a presentation and (Westport Tidy Towns Award Winners in 2001 & 2006) advised that:

- Westport has a Tidy Towns Committee of 24 people and 150 volunteers
- They make sure flowers are co-ordinated throughout the town
- Bins are emptied twice daily during summer months
- The Committee litter pick every Sunday morning 52 weeks of the year
- June, July & August Volunteers clean up the town centre and approach roads
- Good Friday is Clean Up day in Westport and every one in the town joins in
- Transition Year Students do a litter pick one day per week
- The Fisheries Board maintain the River

Ms. Fullard stated that the Plan gives a guide of what needed to be done. She stated that they hoped that the Council would take on board two or three of the proposals outlined in the Report and if this were done over the next number of years, it would mean an improvement in the marks for Loughrea Town over the coming years.

Cllr. Morgan asked what their suggestions with regard to litter bins are. Ms. Fullard requested that a survey be carried of the existing litter bins and that more litter bins be

erected in the town where required. Cllr. Maher thanked the Deputation for coming in. He suggested that they seek to do three or four of the objectives in the plan for 2009 and the important thing was that they all worked together for the betterment of the town. Cllr. Nix stated that the marks they achieved last year were quite good and they should aim to improve on that each year. She stated that with some help from other sources, and if additional volunteers came on board they should be in with a good chance of getting in to the winners enclosure. Cllr. Regan suggested that it may be time to approach the businesses and look for sponsorship for competition prizes for the Tidiest Estate, Best window box display, etc. and this should be held on an annual basis to ensure that the level of interest and involvement is kept up. He said that unless people are involved in their own areas, it wouldn't work. Mayor Burke stated that the Council would not have the manpower or resources to help towards the many proposals made in the Report. He said that they did not have the people on the ground and it was outside of their control. Cllr. Nix stated that people have taken responsibility in their own little areas and if that was a little more widespread, the onus would not be completely on the Council. She suggested that they carry out an audit on the bins to see where the extra bins should go and this would also be a step in the right direction. Mayor Burke stated that by having the Chamber of Commerce and everybody working together would help solve the litter problem. He suggested that every business keep outside of their premises clean and litter-free.

The Members thanked the Deputation for attending and they then left the Meeting.

It was agreed that a copy of the Booklet would be sent out to each Member.

Cllr. Regan referred to comments made earlier by Cllr. Morgan regarding a Notice of Motion he tabled previously not being seconded while the Deputation were still in attendance. He stated that Mr. Morgan was not adhering to the procedures laid down for receiving of Deputations at Meetings. Mayor Burke agreed that Cllr. Norman did not abide by the rules laid down for receiving deputations. He said that he should not have raised that matter while the Deputation was still in attendance.

#### **Matters arising from Minutes**

##### Bottle Banks

Cllr. Regan, referring to the 32 no. prosecutions for littering offences at the Loughrea Bottle Banks issued over the Christmas period, queried how many had paid their fines to-date. Mr. Raftery stated that he did not know but would advise them at the next meeting. Cllr. Regan queried what the next step was for those who did not pay their fines. Mr. Raftery advised that if they did not pay their fine, court proceedings would be taken against the offenders. Cllr. Regan said that a fine of €150 was not enough of an incentive for people to desist from dumping. He said that naming and shaming the culprits was a far more effective means. Cllr. Nix proposed that a recommendation should go to the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government that the litter fines be

increased substantially as a deterrent to those who are dumping their waste at the bottle-banks. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Referring to the proposed site for Recycling Centre/Council Depot at Raruddy Road, Cllr. Hynes asked for an update on same. Mr. Raftery advised that a preliminary site investigation was carried out on the site at Ruruddy Road and the cost of making this site suitable would be enormous. He advised that there was a possibility of a site being developed on the Bullaun Road beside the existing Sewerage plant. He advised that the Council own a section of land there which could be developed, however he said that the site was smaller than the one at Raruddy and the plans would have to be scaled down but it probably could be suitable for a local area depot.

##### Proposed Swimming Pool for Loughrea

Referring to Minutes of Special Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February regarding the proposed Swimming Pool for Loughrea which were circulated to the Meeting, Cllr. Bane queried if there was any response back in relation to same. The Town Clerk advised that she had not received any response back to-date.

Cllr. Regan said that it was his understanding that a meeting was to be arranged with the Minister within a matter of days with the Oireachtas Members, a representative from the Swimming Pool Committee and a representative from the Council in attendance. Cllr. Hynes stated that it was clearly stated by Deputy Burke at that meeting that the project could not continue under the current contractual arrangements. Cllr. Maher stated that they should be seeking to get this meeting held as soon as possible. He said that they needed an answer and to move on from there. He said that the issue was taking up at least half an hour at every meeting and they were still no further on that they were this time last year. Cllr. Maher suggested that it would go from the Media that they are looking for a meeting with the Minister and have been received no feed-back and are looking for a meeting as soon as possible.

#### **3. Discussion re: Correspondence from Loughrea Anglers Association**

Correspondence dated 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 from Loughrea Anglers Association was circulated to each Member. Mayor Burke stated that it had been agreed at the February Meeting that the matters raised in the correspondence would be discussed at the March Meeting. Cllr. Regan queried if a pipe that was to be put in place last October was installed in Coscorrigh that would alleviate the problem of the smell in a drain there. Mr. Raftery advised that the pipe was not put in place as there were no monies to carry out these works. He stated that he had received a reply on this issue from Sanitary Services Section advising that the Sewerage Treatment Plant was being upgraded, should be completed within the next few months and this would mean there was going to be greater capacity of raw sewerage. He said that there was also a study on-going to assess the sewerage network in the town by way of CCTV survey on the pipe network (Impermeable Area Survey). He said that they were identifying areas where pipes were

taking more surface water and that two locations were identified, Coscorrigh and an area at Station Road. Referring to a reply from the S.E.E. in Sanitary Services, Mr. Raftery advised that it was expected that the Design would be submitted to the Department in March 2009 with Contract Documents expected to be submitted to the Department by May 2009. He advised that the pipes were put in 30/40 years ago and were sufficient for that time but were not now. He advised if that water was kept in the system, there was a potential to back up the system. He said that they had got a commitment from Sanitary Services that a submission is to go to the Department for funding and if approval was given and the contract was going ahead, it would make all the overflows in the town redundant.

Mayor Burke stated that given the current economic climate he felt that the Department would not be in a position to provide funding for this. He asked if there was any short-term solution to stop the sewerage going into the lake and queried if an interceptor could be put in in the meantime. Mr. Raftery advised that there was an interceptor on that line already. In reply to Cllr. Morgan's query regarding the adequacy of the pumps in the pump Station in Moll's Boreen, Mr. Raftery advised that the pumps were strong enough but the pipe network was inadequate. Cllr. Nix queried if the two problem areas identified earlier had been addressed. Mr. Raftery stated that the overflows at Coscorrigh and the back of O'Dea's Hotel on Station Road were still there. He stated that the pipes in Station Road were 4m underground and a massive job would be involved. He advised that the funding that would have been provided for these type works would have come from Development Contributions/Development Levies which were not available now. He said that unless they could get some sort of emergency funding, it would not be possible to carry out these works. Cllr. Nix stated that emergency funding should be sought urgently. Cllr. Tully asked what happened if the EPA became aware of this problem and would they be then forced to do these works. Mayor Burke stated that the pipes that were put in at that time are inadequate for now as the town has grown so big since then. Cllr. Hynes queried how the D.O.E. would look at this in terms of breach of directives from Europe and asked if this would create a case for emergency funding. Mr. Raftery stated that there was a case to be made to seek funding. Mayor Burke stated that it was important to emphasise that the water sampling in the lake was being checked constantly. Cllr. Morgan said one of the major considerations was that this was one of the worst winters in history in terms of high rainfall. He said that all this extra water was going into these pipes and that was having an effect on it as well. Cllr. Bane suggested that they have a separate meeting with the Anglers Association to discuss the issues raised. She said that they would need to have somebody from Sanitary Services to advise how they would go about seeking funding for these works. Mr. Raftery stated that he would contact Mr. Liam Gavin, S.E., Sanitary Services regarding same.

#### 4. Correspondence

Letter from County Manager inviting the Mayor and one other Member to a Meeting in the Regional Offices Loughrea. Meeting to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> March at 4.00 p.m., with representatives from Loughrea Chamber of Commerce, Loughrea Enterprise

Development Committee and the Council to discuss proposals to bring about rejuvenation of the Economic Development of the town. On the proposal of Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix, it was agreed that Cllr. Bane would attend this meeting.

Letter from Bord Gais Networks giving update on proposed gas network to Loughrea Town. Bord Gais Networks are holding a stakeholder information meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at which project details will be provided including the feeder main route, construction methods and timelines for the project.

Letter from Mr. Lavelle, S.E. in reply to submission made by Mr. Talbot, Subway regarding traffic management in Loughrea town. The contents were noted.

Letter from Sean O Neachtain, MEP requesting that the Members send a letter to the offices of the new American President and the new American Secretary of State urging the new American administration to legalise the undocumented Irish in America. The contents were noted.

Letter from Monaghan Town Council regarding Notice of Motions adopted at their February Monthly Meeting.

Letter from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd., requesting appointment of a member to attend and vote at General Meeting which takes place on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009 in the Burlington Hotel, Dublin. As Cllr. Curley is the nominee for Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd., it was agreed to ask whether he wished to attend.

#### 5. Notice of Motion – Cllr. G. Burke

- (a) That the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government overturn his decision to stop the harvesting of turf in our area.

It was proposed by Mayor Burke, seconded by Cllr. Regan.

Mayor Burke referred to proposals to prevent turf cutting on certain raised bogs which were designated under the EU Habitat Directive. Cllr. Nix said that it was important to note that has come about as a result of an EU Directive and not all bogs were included. She stated that it was proposed to preserve some bogs in their entirety. She said that the message was not coming across very clearly that it was not all bogs were banned from harvesting the turf and the ban on turf cutting relates to 32 no. raised bogs in the country, 8 no. of which are located in County Galway. Mayor Burke stated that certain people had received notices that they could not cut in their own bogs. Cllr. Nix advised that those affected would be getting either monetary compensation or choice of another bank of turf. Cllr. Regan stated that he fully supported Mayor Burke's motion. He stated that Cloonmoylan Bog outside Portumna was one of the bogs affected and it provides turf for many families in the area. Cllr. Tully stated that there were some virgin bogs that have

never been cut and these should have been ear-marked firstly. He said that they were taking away a form of heating from some people and also a livelihood from others.

- (b) That the footpaths in Moore Street be replaced

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

Mr. Raftery advised that Moore Street was included in the 2008 proposals for footpath improvements. However that was changed because of the route identified by Bord Gais Networks would have meant that they may have to be dug up again. He advised that the grant allocation in 2009 was €144,000 and the locations were as follows:

1. Section of Cross Street
2. Section of Abbey Street
3. Section of Bride Street/The Hill

Mayor Burke asked that it be considered as a proposal in the 2010 Programme.

- (c) "That a weekly Parking Ticket be provided for Staff working in Loughrea".

It was proposed by Mayor Burke, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

Cllr. Morgan queried where these people would park. Mayor Burke stated that the majority of people are paying daily and parking in the car-parks. Cllr. Bane asked that it be checked how it was working in Ballinasloe. Cllr. Morgan agreed that by being able to get a weekly ticket would be convenient, but he was concerned that there would be no spaces left for people to do business. He said that before paid parking was introduced in the town, people working in Galway but travelling by bus, business people and staff were parking in the main parking areas. He said that they needed to encourage people that are passing through to come into the town and they needed to have parking available to do this. Cllr. Nix queried stated that would need to think about how they would charge people who are working a 3 or 4 day week.

#### 6. Notice of Motion – Cllr. Morgan

- (a) "That the broken frames holding the entrance gates to the Long Point be removed and replaced by frames adequate to carry said gates."

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

Mr. Raftery advised that funding had been cut and they were not employing anybody to open and close the gates, so effectively the gates were being left open at all times.

- (b) That a sign stating Loughrea Town Centre be erected at the Roundabout on the Dublin Road."

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Bane.

It was proposed that a sign would also be placed at the Roundabout on the Galway end also.

- (c) "That the underground pipe, which carried the water from the drain along the north side of The Walks, and runs eastwards across under the road adjacent to the back entrance of O'Dea's Hotel, and which was damaged during roadworks, be repaired."

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

#### 7. To fix date for April Monthly Meeting

It was agreed by the Members that the April Monthly Meeting be held on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009 owing to the Easter Bank Holiday week-end falling on the second Monday in the month.

#### 8. Any Other Business

##### Road Surface – Athenry Road, Loughrea

Cllr. Bane stated that the road surface on the Athenry Road was in a very poor state and asked if there were any plans to repair this stretch of roadway. Mr. Raftery stated that the NRA would have to be approached to secure funding for same.

##### Works at the opening of the Lake

Cllr. Bane referred to the opening of the lake where works were carried out as part of the first phase of works for the Loughrea Walkway. She referred to the metal fencing that was left and stated that some of the wall was falling into the lake. Mr. Raftery advised that he would mention this to the S.E.E. who was in charge of the project.

##### Water Pressure – Athenry Road

Mayor Burke asked for the position with regard replacing the watermain going out the Athenry Road. He said that the water pressure was very poor in this area and asked when it was being upgraded. Mr. Raftery advised that the upgrading works would be dependant on funding being available and with the huge decrease in Development Levies being received it was unlikely that these works would be carried out in the near future. He advised that there was an agreement reached with two developers to upgrade the main further out and something similar was going to have to be drafted up for the new development going on there presently.

Fitzzy's Corner

Cllr. Tully queried when the site at Fitzzy's corner was going to be completed. Mr. Raftery stated that the contractors had made the site secure, put hoarding up, tarmaced the area and made it safe. He said that there were no plans to progress it any further. He said that Road Design Section was going to prepare a design for this junction but he did not have a time-scale of when this would be complete.

Pedestrian Lights – Barrack Street

Cllr. Tully queried when the pedestrian lights on Barrack Street were going to be completed. Mr. Raftery stated that they were waiting on the Contractor to come back and he was expected back this week.

Potholes

Cllr. Tully stated that there was major potholes on the Bohercom Road and requested that they be repaired. Mr. Raftery noted this.

Unfinished Estates

Cllr. Tully said that certain sites in town, he made particular reference to an area at Jardin Estate, that the access was not properly finished off by the relevant Developer at the time. He asked who was now responsible for same. Mr. Raftery stated that under the Derelict Buildings Act, Planning Section can issue enforcement proceedings on the contractor to ensure that the estate/access to estate are finished properly. He advised that the Planning Department should be contacted so that they can issue notice to the owner regarding the condition of same.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Signed this 20<sup>th</sup> day of April 2009. Mayor: Gabriel Burke

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Gabriel Burke

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

**Officials:** Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

**Apologies:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services

The Meeting opened with prayer.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

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

Cllr. Regan expressed his dissatisfaction that there was no senior official present at the Meeting. He stated that while he accepted that Mr. Cullen may not be able to attend all meetings, he proposed there should be a Senior Official who could attend in his place and would deal with any queries raised at the Meeting. This was agreed by the other Members. Cllr. Nix proposed the appointment of an Assistant Manager who could replace the Town Manager whenever he was unable to attend. The Members requested that a strongly worded letter would be sent to the County Manager requesting that in the event of the Town Manager being unable to attend the Town Council Meetings that another Senior Official would be sent in his place.

**Matters arising from Minutes**

Loughrea Tidy Towns

Following on from the Deputation received from Loughrea Tidy Towns at the last Meeting, Cllr. Maher queried if any of the proposals from the Report that had been circulated were going to be done in 2009. Mr. Raftery stated that owing to the sizable reduction in funding this year, there would be a reduced level of service provided. He said that it would be difficult to achieve what was expected of them within the funding available. In terms of the report produced, he stated that it was an excellent report and that they would endeavour to try and get something done in return. Mayor Burke stated that it was a very good report and it was important that they had a plan in place should

monies become available again. Referring to the cleaning of the town he stated that the footpaths out the Athenry Road were not being cleaned. Mr. Raftery explained that it all came back to funding and the availability of it and advised that presently they have one person sweeping the whole town. Cllr. Maher stated that the footpaths at Mount Carmel Crescent and Cosmona had not been swept for a long time. In relation to the report, Cllr. Nix stated that hopefully they could pick sections of the report to achieve in the first year. She stated that they were considering applying for a FAS scheme and if they secured this it would be a great achievement. She said that they needed more input from the people of the town and it would mean that the workload for the County Council would be greatly reduced. She proposed that a letter be sent to Ms. Brenda Winters, Loughrea Chamber of Commerce sending her their wishes for a full recovery. Cllr. Regan queried how bad things were on the ground with regard to the cut-backs. Mr. Raftery stated that staffing was currently being looked at and negotiations were ongoing between Senior Management and the Unions. He advised that there had been a recommendation that some staff would be laid off. In reply to Cllr. Regan's query, Mr. Raftery stated that there was 27 no. outdoor staff employed in the Loughrea Engineering Area (which included Athenry Town). Cllr. Regan stated that as a result of the cut-backs the gates at the Long Point were no longer closed at night-time. He said that damage had been caused to the toilets at Long Point over the week-end and as a result would be costing the Council monies in terms of repairs. He said that he was concerned that they may lose their Blue Flag Status if this type of vandalism continues at the Long Point. Mr. Raftery said that they wanted to reduce the number of people being laid off and as a result all over-time has been reduced, therefore the gates at Long Point were being left open at all times. He stated that he took photographs of the toilets/general grubbiness of the area and compiled a report of the work that was required to be done in this area and this was sent to Mr. Cullen. He said that ongoing maintenance works included grass cutting on all green areas, emptying of litter bins, a litter pick has to be done twice daily during the busy summer period and sweeping has to be done in the area also. He explained that up to now funding for these types of works came out of Provision and Improvement Grant, i.e. carrying out minor improvements, new litter bins, replacing lifebuoys and lifebuoy holders and that the monies received in 2009 were greatly reduced. He stated that the Report highlights the issues that need addressing prior to the blue flag inspections. In response to Cllr. Morgan, Mr. Raftery stated that four outdoor workers had retired in recent times and two temporary workers were being let go. In response to Cllr. Hynes, Mr. Raftery stated that there were four temporary employees in the Loughrea Engineering Area. Cllr. Hynes stated that the Town Council had a substantial amount of money invested and he queried how much this amounted to. He suggested that in these circumstances and in this economic down-turn that the monies be drawn down and utilised. Cllr. Regan stated that while he agreed that they should try and maintain the staffing for upkeep of the town, that money was there as an investment and that they should be very careful in how they spend this fund. On the jobs front, Mayor Burke stated that if they spent the investment monies on retaining employment levels in the town, the monies would be gone in a very short time. He said that these monies were used to keep the rates down. Mayor Burke referred to a situation that took place at the Long Point over the week-end where a group of people had gathered for a barbeque and were drinking and playing loud music. He said that he found the situation very

intimidating. Cllr. Regan queried if he notified the guards about the situation and suggested that the Superintendent be contacted and made aware of the situation.

#### Bottle Banks

Cllr. Regan, referring to prosecutions for littering offences at the Loughrea Bottle Banks, asked for an update on same. Mr. Raftery stated that in the last three months there were sixty eight fines issued, of which four were deemed void. Fourteen fines were paid to-date and fifty were still pending. He explained that process involved in issuing a litter fine. In response to Mayor Burke in relation to rubbish that had been left at the bottle banks over the week-end, Mr. Raftery stated that the footage would be viewed by the Community Warden and further prosecutions would be issued. Cllr. Nix stated that the fines should be increased substantially in order to be enough of a deterrent to those who are dumping. The Town Clerk advised that a letter had been sent to the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government regarding the proposal made at the last meeting and an acknowledgement had been received on same.

#### Drain at Corry's Field

Cllr. Bane queried if any reply had been received from Sanitary Services Section in relation to seeking emergency funding for installation of a pipe at Coscorrigh that would alleviate the problem of the smell in a drain there. Mr. Raftery advised that he had spoken to Mr. Gavin, S.E., Water Services who advised that he had met with the Survey Crew doing the survey around the town and he asked them to prioritise that section. Mr. Batty, S.E.E., Sanitary Services had been in touch with the Consultant Engineers who were over the scheme and asked them for a costing to upgrade that section. He stated that it was established from the survey that infiltration was getting into the foul water network and that needed to be separated out. He said that this would eliminate the overflow. He said that it has been referred on to the Consultants for a costing and it was ongoing.

Cllr. Burke referred to an item on Galway Bay FM last week in which a person had sent in sample results indicating that the drinking water in Loughrea was unsafe. He said that it was important to reassure people that the water was safe and said that it took over two days before someone from the Council responded to the claims. Cllr. Maher stated that Mr. Gavin, S.E. had gone on Galway Bay FM and explained in detail that the water was tested on an ongoing basis and was perfectly safe. Mr. Raftery stated that part of the reason for the delay was that the notice went directly to Galway Bay FM and not to the Council and it was dealt with on the radio before it came to the attention of the Council. Mayor Burke proposed that he be written to and asked to produce evidence of his claims. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher.

#### Proposed Swimming Pool for Loughrea

Cllr. Regan queried if there was any further update in relation to the proposed Swimming Pool for Loughrea. The Town Clerk advised that she had not received any response back to-date. Cllr. Maher stated that he had asked Mr. Kelly, D.O.S. and he advised that he

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009

had heard nothing back from the Department. Cllr. Regan stated that it was time they had finality to this ongoing saga. Cllr. Morgan stated that it was in the hands of the Government and everything they could do had been done. Cllr. Hynes stated that the fact of the matter was that the Government was not willing to provide the monies for the project. He said that several representations had been made but the funding was not being made available by the Government. He said if the will had been there it would have been done many years ago. Cllr. Burke stated that he had been involved for many years and that he had no intention of letting the project go at this stage.

Road Surface – Athenry Road, Loughrea

Cllr. Bane queried if the N.R.A. had been requested to provide funding for improvement of the road surface at Athenry Road, Loughrea. Mr. Raftery advised that the N.R.A. monies had been reduced significantly in 2009. He said that these works would have been typically done under routine maintenance or specific grant funding and in previous years, however both were significantly reduced in 2009. He advised that he would follow it up again with the N.R.A. He stated that Bord Gais would be laying piping for gas in Loughrea Town in the coming weeks and also highlighted that a water main would have to be installed before an overlay could be done and therefore there would be a lot of digging on this stretch of roadway for the next while. He said that all this would have to be done before the overlay could be thought of. In relation to the water pressure at this end of town, Cllr. Burke stated that when the Shopping Centre was completed, he was of the opinion that the water main would not be able to cope with the additional development that has occurred on this stretch. Mr. Raftery advised that he would have to look at the conditions attached to the Planning Permission in this case and see what the conditions stated. He also advised that there were an awful lot of leaks in this area and this was part of the problem. Cllr. Tully queried if the Fire Services in Loughrea had contacted the Council Offices regarding any concerns about the water pressure on the Athenry Road. Mr. Raftery advised that he had not been made aware of same. Cllr. Regan asked that in the event of a major fire, was the pressure good enough for this area. Mr. Raftery advised that to improve the water pressure was not hugely costly and stated that they would have to look to organise a meeting between the Developer and the Sanitary Services Section. He agreed that he would check out the conditions attached to the planning permission for this development. Cllr. Bane suggested that this was the best time to address the issue of water pressure in this area with the road about to be dug up for the installation of pipes by Bord Gais and queried if the works be carried out in tandem. Mr. Raftery advised that it would have to take it up with Sanitary Services Section.

Pedestrian Lights – Barrack Street

Cllr. Maher queried when the pedestrian lights on Barrack Street would be in working order. Mr. Raftery advised that the Council had completed their works for the past number of weeks. He said that an application was made to the ESB and to the Traffic Light Contractor to get the traffic lights and public light switched on and commissioned.

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009

He stated that he had requested both parties to commission the traffic lights and public light as soon as possible.

Potholes

Cllr. Maher referred to particularly bad potholes on the Bohercom road and asked if routine maintenance could be carried out. Cllr. Tully stated that this was the main entrance to the Secondary School and that on wet days the potholes were not able to be seen and could result in a child falling from a bicycle or a serious accident happening. Mr. Raftery advised that this was one of many roads that were in need of routine maintenance. He advised that maintenance monies had greatly been reduced and they were not in a position to maintain the roads to the same standard. He stated that they had been informed only last week that the Restoration Improvement Budget has been cut by €200,000 in the Loughrea Engineering Area.

Mr. Raftery advised that the Director for Roads & Transportation would be sending a proposal to the Department requesting that the monies allocated for Surface Dressing proposals in 2009 would be transferred to the road maintenance allocation for this year to try and counteract the huge reduction in maintenance funding. The Members agreed with this proposal and it was proposed by Cllr. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

Unfinished Estates

Cllr. Maher queried if any response had come back in relation to the issue of unfinished estates in the town. The Town Clerk stated that she had written to Planning Enforcement Section and no response had been received to-date.

Fitzy's Corner

Cllr. Tully proposed that some form of recognition be put in Fitzy's Corner in recognition of Mr. Ciaran Fitzgerald, former Rugby player and Captain of Ireland and the Lions Team, who resided there. This was seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

**2. Correspondence**

Letter from Killarney Town Council Monaghan Town Council regarding Motion adopted at their April Monthly Meeting.

Letter from Longford Town Council regarding Resolution passed at a recent Meeting.

Letter from Monaghan Town Council regarding Motion adopted at their March Meeting requesting appeal for cuts and immediate reversal of the proposal to abolish Early Immersion Education and cuts to support for summer courses in Irish Colleges in the Gaeltacht. This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Hynes.



Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009

Letter from A.M.A.I. stating that motions (subject to a max. of 2 per Council) must be submitted before 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009 to be included for Annual Conference to be held on 10/12 September 2009.

Letter from Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government regarding amendment to Section 19(7) of the Litter Pollution Acts 1997-2003 which introduces a time limit prior to public meetings/elections/referenda from which posters can be erected.

Copy of County Galway Socioeconomic Profile 2008 which is an analysis of the 2006 census data for County Galway.

Referring to correspondence from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd., requesting appointment of a member to attend and vote at General Meeting which takes place on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009 Cllr. Curley advised that he was unable to attend as he will be away. It was agreed by the Members that due to the current economic climate that nobody else would be in attendance.

**3. Notice of Motion – Cllr. J. Curley**

(a) That Galway County Council purchase the now derelict site at Dunkellin Street (formerly known as The Arcade) for use as a public car-park. Purchase of the site can be funded by car-parking receipts. Traders in the west end of town currently do not have public car-parking facilities. In the interest of equity of access to designated car-parks, this should be given serious consideration.

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

Cllr. Curley stated that there was no parking at that end of town and that since Christmas, one third of the businesses on Dunkellin Street have closed down. He stated that the Council owns the property at the back of this premises and it could provide a car-park that would front onto both Barrack Street and Dunkellin Streets and through its pay-parking receipts would pay for itself in a very short time. Cllr. Hynes agreed that there was no parking on that end of town and it would be an ideal location for a car-park and he hoped that funding could be secured for the proposal.

**4. Notice of Motion – Cllr. Morgan**

(a) "That, in compliance with the law, which makes it illegal to back into oncoming traffic, that the markings in the parking area on the south side of Main Street, Loughrea be accordingly reversed, thereby allowing motorists to back into the car-parking spaces."

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

Cllr. Morgan stated that the Council were leaving themselves open to claims by leaving the parking in this way. Cllr. Tully stated that the idea of the putting the parking in this

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009

way was to keep the traffic flowing and this was not happening. Cllr. Bane stated even if the markings were reversed, people were still going to drive into the spaces as opposed to reversing into them.

(b) That Galway County Council remove the ivy which is destroying the ewe trees in Garrybreeda Cemetery, Loughrea, or that they allow volunteers from the public to remove the ivy."

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Mayor Burke.

(c) "That Galway County Council grant 5 no. free parking spaces to Loughrea Anglers Association, directly outside their boathouse, on the Saturdays of Whit week-end and the June Bank Holiday each year."

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher. Mayor Burke advised that Mr. Cullen was to meet with the Secretary of the Loughrea Anglers to resolve some issues. Cllr. Regan stated that there was no reason why the Council and the Anglers could not come to an agreement in relation to this.

**5. Any Other Business**

Burst Pipe – Lake Road

Cllr. Regan queried when the area that had recently been dug up to fix a burst pipe on the Lake Road would be made right. Mr. Raftery stated that there was still an issue with the pipe work and they would not be reinstating it until they were satisfied that the repairs were fully complete.

School Warden

Cllr. Bane stated that it had been brought to her attention that the School Warden that was appointed last year was employed for half the hours of her predecessor. She requested that additional hours be given to the School Warden. The Town Clerk advised that she had arranged a meeting with the School Warden and this matter was being considered.

Litter Bins

Mayor Burke stated that there was no litter bin from Monet's Shop on Dunkellin Street up to Supermac's on Main Street and he requested that additional litter bins be provided.

Casual Trading

Cllr. Regan stated that discussions had taken place some time ago about the possibility of moving the casual trading area to Main Street car-park and asked the up-date in relation

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009

to same. He also asked why the Council had not addressed the issue of illegal traders. Mr. Raftery explained that the Casual Trading Bye-laws were being adopted for the whole county and there were a couple of areas where there were still some issues to be addressed. He stated that it was still proposed that the Casual Trading Bays would be located in the Main Street Car-Park when the new bye-laws were adopted for the County. In relation to illegal traders, Mr. Raftery stated that he would ask the Community Warden to check to see which traders had licences to trade on the next market day. Cllr. Regan asked that traders who had a licence be given first priority when the licences were being considered for the new trading area and asked what would happen if the number of licence applications exceeded the number of bays. Mr. Raftery stated that it was proposed that there would be 12 no. casual trading bays in the car-park. He said that a suggestion had been made previously that if there were more applications than trading bays that consideration could be given to having two market days instead of one.

Public Toilet

Cllr. Maher asked for clarification of what monies had been taken in for the public toilet to-date. The Town Clerk stated that she would have this available for the next meeting.

Leak on Barrack Street

Cllr. Tully stated that was a leak on Barrack Street outside Mulcairs and asked that it be repaired. Mr. Raftery stated it was a service connection that was leaking and they were aware of same.

Junction Definition Bollards

Mayor Burke asked if junction definition bollards could be erected at the junction going towards Kincullia. Cllr. Nix also asked if one could be erected at the entrance to Caheronaun Road. Mr. Raftery stated that he would look to have those erected as requested.

Cllr. Curley advised that this was his last Meeting as he would be gone away for the next one and wished all the Members the best of luck in the forthcoming Elections.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on <sup>20 April</sup> ~~9<sup>th</sup> March~~ 2009.

Signed this 11<sup>th</sup> day of May 2009. Mayor: Gabriel Burke

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Gabriel Burke

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

The Meeting opened with prayer.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

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 Minutes**

Loughrea Tidy Towns

Cllr. Gunter-Nix stated that the Tidy Towns Committee had met recently and they had been advised that there was no funding available from the Council for planting in the town. She requested that each member of the Town Council would make a contribution towards the purchase of the flowers. She requested that anyone willing to make a contribution would advise her as soon as possible as they need to be purchased and sown in the next couple of weeks.

Long Point

Cllr. Regan circulated to the Meeting recent photographs he had taken illustrating the damage carried out to the toilets at Long Point and said that he was concerned about whether they would be able to retain the Blue Flag status for Long Point.

In relation to Long Point, Mr. Cullen stated that Mr. Raftery had prepared an estimate of works that were required. He stated that they can just about manage to do enough repairs at the Long Point to maintain the Blue Flag status. He stated that the damage there was absolutely shocking. He said that the money that was going to be spent on these repairs was money that would be better spent employing someone. Cllr. Bane suggested that

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

maybe the press could help out by highlighting the problems at this area and making the public more aware that monies that could be used to improve the amenity were being used to carry out repairs to vandalism.

Cllr. Regan referred to a steel bar sticking up near the manhole covers on Main Street (top of Abbey Street) and asked that it be sorted out as soon as possible. Mr. Cullen stated that would be given directly to Mr. Lavelle, S.E., Road Design for his immediate attention.

Drain at Corry's Field

Cllr. Bane stated that she had received complaints from residents on the Gort Road about the smell coming from a manhole outside their properties and asked if there was any update on same. Mr. Raftery advised that he had recently met up with engineering staff from Sanitary Services Section in relation to this matter. He stated that it was established from the survey carried out that infiltration was getting into the foul water network and that needed to be separated out and this would eliminate the overflow and improve the performance of the pumps. He stated that Sanitary Services were looking to providing a temporary solution to the problem but it may take a number of weeks before a solution was found.

Proposed Swimming Pool for Loughrea

Cllr. Regan queried if there was any further update in relation to the proposed Swimming Pool for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen advised that he had spoken to Mr. Kelly, D.O.S. and he advised that there was nothing further back from the Department. Cllr. Gunter-Nix said that they were still awaiting news from the Department and it appeared that this would not be forthcoming for some time yet and all they could do was to keep on hoping that it will come to fruition at some stage. Cllr. Maher stated that a planning application was being lodged by a private venture in the coming weeks seeking planning permission for a swimming pool and astro-turf facilities in Loughrea and hopefully that will get the go ahead which will provide great amenities for the town. Cllr. Hynes stated that a lot of people are annoyed and disillusioned with the whole situation. A heated discussion took place in relation to the funds raised from a raffle for the proposed swimming pool. Cllr. Bane suggested that the PRO of the Swimming Committee should make people aware of what monies were raised and to remind people of the prizes for that raffle. Mayor Burke stated that the accounts for the Swimming Pool committee were audited each year and put on display in the library. He explained that there have been no recent meetings of the committee because there has been nothing new to report. He acknowledged the Council's efforts to secure the swimming pool and said that they were all disappointed that the venture had not gone ahead.

Traffic Lights – Westbridge

Cllr. Regan queried when the traffic lights would be installed at Westbridge. Mr. Raftery stated that he had recently been asked to price the civil works for this job. When asked

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

about the possible time-frame on carrying out these works, Mr. Raftery explained that the Roadworks Programme would be getting priority. He stated that it was hoped to get the surface dressing and road constructions jobs completed before the end of June (weather dependant) and they would include the civil works in their works programme thereafter. He stated that they had to stagger the work to get the most available for those resources. He stated that letting work out to contract would ensure the works would be done sooner but would deprive work for the local work-force.

Potholes

Cllr. Regan queried when the potholes in the town were going to be filled. Mr. Raftery explained that funding for the whole county was down dramatically. Mr. Cullen stated that a proposal was being sent to the Department recommending that the road allocation would be changed and what they were trying to do was move away from doing longer stretches of road improvements to smaller works which were more labour intensive. He advised that they needed to get approval from the Department before they could do that. Referring to correspondence at last Month's Meeting from A.M.A.I. requesting motions to be submitted for the conference to be held in September 2009, Cllr. Gunter-Nix proposed that a motion recommending that the road allocations would be changed and that Local Authorities would be given more flexibility in how this funding was utilised. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane and agreed by the Members.

**2. Proposed Meeting of Joint Policing Committee**

Mr. Cullen explained that the Loughrea Garda Superintendent was in contact with him in relation to setting up the Loughrea Joint Policing Committee. He stated that the inaugural meeting of this committee would be held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 p.m. in Loughrea Regional Offices. He stated that the total membership of the committee was nineteen and made up of the Town Council Members, Oireachtas Members, three Community Forum Representatives, Garda representatives and two Council officials. He said that the first meeting would be mainly familiarising themselves with the role of the committee and election of a chairperson. He explained that the Chair had to be a member of the Town Council.

**3. Correspondence**

Correspondence from County Manager, regarding the attendance of senior officials at Town Council Meetings which was raised at the April Meeting, was circulated. Cllr. Regan stated that he raised this issue at the last meeting and made the request that a senior member from the Council should be available to attend all Meetings of the Town Council to answer any queries that may be raised. Mr. Cullen explained that the only officials that would be able to answer any question on items raised would be the Town Engineer, Town Clerk and himself. He said there would be no point in getting someone not familiar with the area to stand in for meetings.

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

Letter from Maureen Fynes, East Galway Food Festival regarding the holding of the inaugural East Galway Food Festival on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2009 in the grounds of St. Brendan's.

Letter from Pdraig O Baoill, Gael Scoil Riabhach requesting a nomination for best heritage publication under the County Heritage Awards 2009 for a local publication called "Carachtair Áitiúla, Tionchar Náisiúnta" which was launched in December 2008. It was proposed by Cllr. Bane, seconded by Cllr. Morgan and agreed that the Town Clerk would write and nominate this publication for a County Heritage Award.

Letter from Mullingar Town Council regarding Motion passed at March Meeting requesting the Health Service to provide more support for dementia sufferers and their carers. This motion was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Letter from Monaghan Town Council regarding resolution passed at a recent meeting.

## 4. Notice of Motion – Cllr. Morgan

- (a) "That speed check cameras be placed permanently at Bride Street, Lake Road and Gort Road."

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

After discussion it was agreed that the motion be changed as follows:

"That speed check cameras be placed permanently at appropriate locations in Loughrea Town". Mr. Cullen advised that this motion would be forwarded to the Gardai who are the enforcing agency for these types of requests.

- (b) That pedestrian/traffic lights, similar to those at Kilrickle, be provided at the entrance to Corry's Field and the Children's Playground, Gort Road, Loughrea."

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

Cllr. Regan proposed that following the Local and Town Council Elections that the Members seek a Meeting with Loughrea Area Members to request funding under Notice of Motion for this request.

- (c) "That ramps similar to those in Dublin, be provided where speed limits are being ignored within the town of Loughrea."

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan. This proposal was not seconded.

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

## 5. Any Other Business

House at Lake View

Mr. Cullen recommended that some repairs be carried out at No. 4 Lake View, Loughrea. He stated that he didn't want the house to fall into disrepair and some works were urgently required to be carried out. He advised that the monies would be coming out of the accumulated deposit. The Councillors felt that it was a good approach and recommended that he proceed. Referring to a previous application for renting of this house, Cllr. Regan queried if they would still be considered. Mr. Cullen stated that if it was liveable and suitable, they would be considered for it.

Garrybreeda Graveyard

Cllr. Mary Gunter-Nix referred to graves on the far side of Garrybreeda cemetery that were being disturbed as a result of people using the graveyard as a short-cut from an adjoining housing estate. She queried whether anything could be done to cut off this shortcut. Mr. Raftery stated that he would have the matter investigated. Cllr. Regan requested that the tap in the graveyard would also be fixed.

Mayor Burke stated that as this was the last Meeting of the present Council, he wished all the Members the best of luck in the forthcoming Elections. All the Members present wished Cllr. Tully well as this was his last meeting.

Mr. Cullen stated that this was the last meeting of this particular Council. He stated that over the last five years a lot of significant things had happened in Loughrea and it was quite possible that the same would not be happening over the next five and it was good for this Town Council to be associated with this. He said that significant developments included decentralisation of the R.S.A. offices to Loughrea; new Regional Offices; refurbishment of Main Street, opening of Loughrea Bye-pass; and the sewerage plant upgrade. He thanked Cllr. Tully for his very direct and fair contributions. He wished all the candidates the best in the upcoming elections and thanked the press for balanced reporting in Loughrea.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

Signed this 13<sup>th</sup> day of June 2009. Mayor: PAT HYNES  
15<sup>th</sup>

**Minutes and Proceedings of Annual Meeting of Loughrea Town Council  
held on the 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack  
Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Pat Hynes

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

The Meeting opened with prayer.

Cllr. G. Burke resumed the chair until the election of Mayor took place. He welcomed Ms. S. Burke, the only new member to the Town Council and wished her well. He congratulated Cllrs. Hynes and Maher on their election to the County Council. He commiserated with the candidates that were unsuccessful in securing a seat on the Town Council. He thanked the Officials for all their help and co-operation during his term as Mayor.

**1. Return of Persons Elected at Local Elections 2009**

The Town Clerk read out the list of people returned at the Local Elections 2009 as follows:-

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

Mr. Cullen welcomed back the Members who had regained their seats in the election and welcomed Ms. S. Burke on to the Town Council. He extended his commiserations to those who lost out in the election. He also gave a special thanks to the outgoing Mayor, Cllr. G. Burke.

**2. Election of Mayor**

Cllr. Hynes was proposed by Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Maher.

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

Cllr. Hynes thanked the Members for unanimously electing him as Mayor and the electorate for voting him on to the Town Council. He asked that the deceased members of the Town Council be remembered. He welcomed back all the members who were re-elected and extended a warm welcome to Ms. S. Burke and wished them all the best in their new term. He thanked the Council Staff for carrying out the election count so efficiently. He said the main issues which he would be working towards were job creation for Loughrea Town, the continuation of the Lake Shore Walk and the construction of the proposed swimming pool. He welcomed the news on the proposed swimming pool and paid tribute to all the work done by the Swimming Pool Committee. He also thanked the outgoing Mayor Cllr. G. Burke.

**3. Election of Deputy Mayor**

Cllr. Morgan stated that he advocated that the position of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and other vacancies would be filled in accordance with the way the people voted. He stated that he didn't think it was fair to the people who had voted for them to fill the positions in this manner. He recommended that the Members take this into account and that there would not be any bitterness between them.

Cllr. Maher was proposed by Cllr. Curley and seconded by Cllr. Bane.

As there were no other proposals, Cllr. Maher was declared elected.

Cllr. Maher thanked his proposer and seconder.

Cllr. Morgan congratulated Cllr. Hynes and Cllr. Maher and stated that he would give them his support in their positions and stated that there will be no animosity.

**4. Election of Delegates to the A.M.A.I. – 2 Delegates**

**First Delegate:**

Cllr. Regan was proposed by Cllr. Hynes and seconded by Cllr. Maher.

As there was no other proposal, Cllr. Regan was declared elected as the First Delegate.

**Second Delegate**

Cllr. Curley was proposed by Cllr. Regan and seconded by Cllr. Bane.

Loughrea Town Council Annual Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009

As there were no other proposals, Cllr. Curley was declared elected as the Second Delegate.

**Delegate to Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd. – 1 Delegate**

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

As there were no other proposals, Cllr. Hynes was declared to be the representative to I.P.B.M.I. Ltd.

**Associated Member to the Chamber of Commerce**

Cllr. S. Burke was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.  
Cllr. Regan was proposed by Cllr. Curley and seconded by Cllr. Bane.


A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

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

Cllr. Regan was declared elected as representative on to the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Cullen advised that at the next meeting they would formalise the reappointment of members of the Town Council to the Joint Policing Committee. He further advised that the nomination process to the SPC's would not be happening for some time yet. In relation to the Standing Orders, he stated he would come back to the Members advising whether the existing Standing Orders needed to be reaffirmed. In relation to Non-Party Members, he stated that correspondence would be issuing to them shortly asking them to nominate a person as a replacement on the Town Council in the event of a Casual Vacancy arising.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Annual Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

Signed this 13<sup>th</sup> day of July 2009. Mayor: 

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Pat Hynes

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

The Meeting opened with prayer.

**1(a) Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

It was proposed by Cllr. Bane, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed that the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting be adopted.

**Matters arising from Minutes**

Drain at Corry's Field

Cllr. Bane queried if a permanent solution to this problem had been found. Mr. Raftery stated that the new pumps were now installed and were up and running which provided a short-term solution to this issue. He explained that the permanent solution involved separating the foul water and surface water going into the mains and getting rid of the overflow and major capital monies were required to do this. In response to Cllr. G. Burke, Mr. Raftery stated he could not give a time-frame as to when these works would be carried out. He stated that the town has been surveyed and that has been documented. He stated that the next stage is to design a separate sewer and this would require Departmental approval and funding. This was being done by the Sanitary Services Section. In reply to Cllr. Regan's request, Mr. Raftery stated that since the pumps were commissioned there have been no problems in this area since. Cllr. Morgan queried if the area on the Gort Road where raw sewerage was coming up could be dealt with as a separate issue. Mr. Raftery stated that what they were ultimately trying to achieve was to eliminate the pump-house altogether which would involve taking levels to lay a gravity sewer on the Gort Road and tie it in with sections that are in spec. Cllr. Bane proposed that the local Area Councillors and relevant personnel in Sanitary Services Section be written to stating the seriousness of the situation and requesting action as soon as possible.

Potholes

Cllr. Bane queried the outcome in relation to the proposal that was sent to the Department recommending that the road allocation be changed moving away from doing longer stretches of road improvements (Surface Dressing) to smaller works which were more labour intensive. Mr. Raftery stated that they Department had advised them that this was not an option and that the Roads Programme approved by them in February was what was to be completed in 2009. In response to Cllr. Regan, Mr. Raftery advised that funding had been hugely reduced for road maintenance in 2009 and as a result monies were not available to carry out potholes repairs. He advised that there were numerous drainage issues around the town that needed to be sorted but again availability of monies was the main consideration.

Cllr. Regan queried if the Town Councillors would get a copy of the Monthly Call-out Rota system which contains the contact numbers of Council personnel whom can be contacted in the event of an emergency/incident. Mr. Raftery explained that any call-outs come through the emergency services and when appropriate they contact the relevant Council personnel. He advised that before such a decision could be made it would have to be discussed at Area level as it was a county wide issue.

Traffic Lights – Westbridge

Cllr. Curley queried when the traffic lights would be installed at Westbridge. Mr. Raftery advised that the civil works were being done by direct labour and will commence when the Roadworks Programme was completed.

Cllr. Regan queried when the traffic lights at St. Brendan's home would be operational. Mr. Raftery advised that the works should be complete in the next few weeks.

Cllr. Morgan stated that the Stop Sign at the junction of Main Street/Westbridge needed replacement. Mr. Raftery advised that he would take note of this.

Loughrea Tidy Towns

Cllr. Gunter-Nix thanked that the Members that contributed towards the purchase of flowers for planting in the town. She advised that €150.00 was received from the Councillors and the Tidy Towns Committee met the balance of €200.00.

**1(b) Confirmation of Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix and agreed that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting be adopted.

**3. Correspondence**

Letter from Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government in response to Notice of Motion in relation to turf cutting.

Letter from Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government in response to Council's proposal to substantially increase the level of litter fines.

Letter from Director of Services Roads Department, Galway County Council in response to Notice of Motion in relation to request to acquire further land for car-parking in Loughrea town.

Letter from Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform inviting submissions from the Members regarding a major review of gambling which is commencing in September.

Correspondence from Director of Services Roads Department, Galway County Council inviting representations from Loughrea Town Council in relation to the making of Road Traffic (Speed Limit) County Galway Bye-Laws.

Details of A.M.A.I. Annual Conference 2009 being held on 10/12<sup>th</sup> September 2009. It was agreed by the Members that the two delegates elected as members of the A.M.A.I. be approved to attend this conference.

Details of The John Hewitt International Summer School being held on 27/31<sup>st</sup> July 2009.

Details of Clare Tourism Conference being held on 26/28 November 2009.

Details of Local Government Seminar for Councillors being held on 25/26 September 2009.

Letter from Macroom Town Council regarding Motion on Natural Resources passed at May Meeting.

**4. Notice of Motion – Cllr. Morgan**

(a) "That a Stop Sign be erected at Abbey Terrace, at the junction of Abbey Terrace and Abbey Street."

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

(b) That the owner of the field on the south end of Jardin Drive, The Hill, Loughrea be requested to place a proper gate and fence thereat, as horses and cattle are escaping into Jardin Drive Estate – where young children are playing and from there on to the public road."

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. S. Burke.

- (c) "That the document containing the layout, location and ownership of graves in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Loughrea be kept in the County Council Office at all times, and that only a photocopy, as appropriate, be in the possession of the caretaker. Note: A similar document for Garrybreeda Cemetery was mislaid and the cemetery closed because of irreconcilable disputes about ownership of graves thereat."

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

Cllr. Morgan stated that this is a very valuable document and is required from time to time to sort out and substantiate the ownership of plots in Mount Pleasant Cemetery and that was why he was proposing that the original document should be retained in the County Council and a copy given to the Caretaker. Mr. Raftery stated that it was always the policy that the original document would stay with the caretaker. He further advised that a photocopy of this document is retained in the Council offices.

#### 5. Notice of Motion – Cllr. Bane

- (a) "That the Town Council be given a break down of the costs involved in repairing the vandalism at the Long Point and any other works necessary at the moment."

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

Mr. Raftery stated that €17,000.00 funding was allocated for works at the Long Point which provided for the replacement of windows and door; provision of grids for the windows; grass cutting and strimming; litter collection and opening and closing of public toilets. However, Mr. Cullen advised that next year such monies would not be available and they may have to reconsider the opening and closing times at the Long Point as paying somebody overtime for opening and closing the gates/toilets was not an option. In response to Cllr. S. Burke's suggestion that the opening and closing of the gates could become part of the Community Warden's daily duties, Mr. Cullen stated that that was something that would have to be negotiated and was not something that could be mandatory imposed. In relation to the gates, Cllr. Maher stated that the LCI Engineering Company had offered to repair them. He stated that since the gates had been left open at night-time the vandalism had increased again and it was important that they be closed at night-time.

- (b) "That a development plan for the Long Point be brought together by the relevant Department at Galway County Council & the Town Council, taking into consideration the possibility of developing the land at Knockanimma as a campsite for tourists."

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

Cllr. Bane suggested that communication be made with the relevant Department in the Council to arrange a meeting to put in place a plan for the Long Point area. She stated that there was huge tourism potential for this area and while she acknowledged that lack of funding to implement the plan would be a problem, at least by having a plan in place was a step in the right direction. Mr. Cullen advised that this proposal will be referred to the Recreation and Amenity Department for their consideration and felt that it was worth exploring. He advised that part of this area would be required to be retained for future extension of the pumping station and some of it may be required for the proposed Lakeshore Walkway.

- (c) "That the area known as "The Grove" across from St. Brendan's Hospital be handed over on a trial basis to a number of established community groups, who would be prepared to maintain it, with guidance from the Town Gardener."

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

Cllr. Bane stated that was a beautiful area and gives pedestrian access from St. Brendan's Home. She said that the maintenance there was huge and she knew of two groups that were willing to maintain it on a voluntary basis with guidance from the Town Gardener. Cllr. Nix stated that Loughrea Tidy Towns Committee got a plan professionally drawn up and this was one of the areas that were highlighted and a lot of the proposals in the report on this area could be done on a voluntary basis. Mr. Cullen stated that they should be able to facilitate this type of voluntary work and that they would need to know exactly what works were involved. He suggested that they bring in a proposal and they would take it from there.

#### 6. Any Other Business

##### Fairgreen, Loughrea

Cllr. Curley asked when it was proposed to cut the grass on the Fair Green. Mr. Raftery stated that the grass was not being cut and this was as a result of the current Outdoor Workers dispute.

##### Abandoned Trailer on Caheronaun Road

Cllr. G. Burke advised that he had been notified about an abandoned trailer full of rubbish which was parked on the Caheronaun Road. He asked that the trailer be removed as there was a strong stench coming from it. Mr. Raftery advised that the Community Warden had a look at it and advised that it was on private property. Mr. Cullen advised that they would ask the Community Warden to have a look at it again and if it is deemed to be a nuisance then they would look to have it removed.



Manhole Cover

Cllr. Maher stated that the manhole cover outside the Garda Station was collapsed and needed replacement.

Mount Pleasant Graveyard

Cllr. Maher stated that a contractor had offered the use of a digger and a dumper for the clean up of the graveyard in Race Week. Cllr. Regan stated that at the back of the cemetery there is a huge hole there and this clay and stones could be put in there. He stated that this area was quite dangerous and in the interest of safety it would be better to fill this area up.

Tourist Information Signage

Mr. Raftery informed the meeting that an allocation of €25,000.00 was made available for Tourist Information Signage. He stated that the signs were currently being manufactured and the works had to be completed by end of September.

Garrybreeda Graveyard

Cllr. G. Burke asked if contact could be made with the Heritage Officer and that she be requested to come to Garrybreeda Burial Ground to advise what works could be carried in the graveyard. He stated that the graveyard is in a very bad state at the moment. The Town Clerk stated that she would make contact with the Heritage Officer in relation to the matter.

Garrybreeda Park

Cllr. G. Burke stated that that part of the railings in Garrybreeda Park were broken and dangerous and requested that they be fixed. He also requested that the grass in the play area be cut.

Laying of Gas Pipes at Westbridge

Cllr. Regan proposed that in the event of Bord Gais requesting to be allowed to lay the gas pipe which will be going down by the Fair Green through the Fair Green, so as to prevent that area of road being dug up and possible traffic delays at this location that they would be allowed to do so. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane. After a discussion by the Members it was agreed not to make any decision on the matter until the proposal came in from Bord Gais and if a decision had to be made a special meeting would be convened at that stage.

Water Main – Athenry Road

Mr. Cullen advised that there will be a new water main laid on the Athenry Road which will help improve the water pressure in this area. He advised that it will be done in stages and work is expected to commence during the summer.

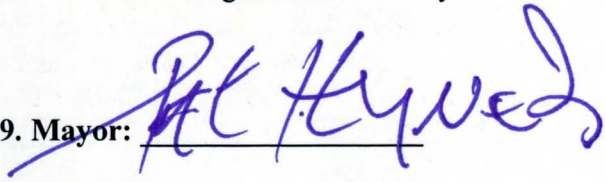
Joint Policing Committee

On the proposal of Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher it was agreed to formally nominate the members of the Town Council to the Loughrea Joint Policing Committee.

Oil Spillage on Railway Road

In response to Cllr. Regan's enquiry regarding the recent oil spillage on Railway Road, Mr. Raftery advised that preventative measures had been put in place on the Bullaun Road. He stated that the Environment Section had advised him that there was no threat to the stream or river as a result and it was monitored for a few days after the spillage.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009.

Signed this 14<sup>th</sup> day of September 2009. Mayor: 

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Pat Hynes

**Members:** Cllrs. Geraldine Bane, Gabriel Burke, Sylvia Burke, Jimmy Curley, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

The Meeting opened with prayer.

**1 Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. G. Burke and agreed that the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting be adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Morgan it was agreed to suspend the Standing Orders and deal with item No. 2 on the Agenda next. This was agreed by the Members.

**2 Presentation & Update on Loughrea Historic Town Trail**

Ms. Eimear Dolan, Community & Enterprise circulated to the Meeting an update on the Loughrea Town Trail Project. She explained that the project is developed by Galway County Council in partnership with Loughrea Town Council, Galway East Tourism, local business owners and heritage groups and is part-supported by Failte Ireland. She stated that phase 1 of the project which included a Brochure and Audio Tour was completed and Phase 2 which includes Street Signage including a map-board and information signs along the trail will be completed by end of October 2009.

She outlined the benefits of the Trail and the Signage Project as follows:

- It provides a focus on the Town Centre and the heritage and built assets of the town.
- It provides a free "product" to visitors and locals to undertake an easy to follow walking trail.
- It makes best use of what we already have and highlights the work undertaken by the Authorities and local groups in the town.

- It is part of a series of six trails in East Galway and is on an audio version on the internet, enhancing its promotion, appeal and accessibility.
- It is linked to a broader driving trail in East Galway.
- It is linked to a national and international marketing promotions of Failte Ireland.
- The trail has been developed using a "collaborative" approach and highlights potential of Loughrea and how it could be further promoted.

She then outlined what was involved in Phase 2 of the project:

- The signs consist of "Orientation Panels" or a Map Board at the start of the trail at the Fair Green and map in town centre.
- Interpretative Panel or information boards are also placed at each site.
- The trail is then linked by directional signs.
- All information will be presented in English and Irish.
- The style of the physical signage is specific as per National Guidelines supplied by Failte Ireland.
- The layout of the information on the signs will build on the current trail and locally sourced information and approved by Council Conservation and Heritage Officers.
- Signage will be installed by Galway County Council staff and are located predominantly in public spaces.
- Project costs are €87,000 for signage, artwork, printing and installation. 50% funded by Failte Ireland.

Ms. Dolan advised that the installation of the signage will be commencing in the next few weeks and it was hoped it would be completed by the end of October. She asked the Members for their support in promoting the initiative.

The Members thanked Ms. Dolan for her presentation and she then left the Meeting.

**1 Matters Arising from Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009**

Cllr. Regan referred to a call from a member of the public about a leak on the water main at the weekend and he was unable to contact someone to rectify the problem. Mr. Cullen advised that if there is an emergency out of hours that members of the public should be advised to ring Galway Fire Station who has the details of the on call supervisor for the particular time. He in turn mobilises the necessary response if deemed necessary. He said that they could not provide these contact numbers to members of the public as otherwise the Overseer could be inundated with calls which may not be his responsibility at all. He stated that there is a 24 hour Emergency Service being provided by Galway County Council and that number should be contacted if a member of the public feels it is necessary to do so. He stated that he would make the on-call rota available to the local Councillors but advised that the alerting should only be done in the case of an emergency. Mr. Raftery stated that cost of call-outs to the Council was enormous and stated that it was important to be able to keep control on it to ensure that only calls for issues relevant to the Council are acted upon.

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Fairgreen

Cllr. Curley queried the update on the upkeep/grass cutting of the Fairgreen. Mr. Raftery advised that owing to the industrial action of the Outdoor Workers during the Summer months, the Council were unable to cut the grass and stated that there was very little the Council could do when the industrial action was ongoing.

Roundabouts

Cllr. Bane queried what the update was in relation to maintenance of the roundabouts in Loughrea. Mr. Raftery advised that the N.R.A. allocates funding that covers the whole of the N6 in the Loughrea Engineering area; i.e. hedge-cutting; pothole repairs; street sweeping, etc. and that the funding was not specific to roundabouts. Cllr. Bane stated that arising out of a Tidy Towns Committee Meeting held recently there are a number of businesses who are willing to sponsor the landscaping of the roundabouts. Cllr. Maher said that a local group is working to improve the overall situation concerning the roundabout maintenance.

**3 Nomination of Representative to Housing, Fire & Emergency Services SPC**

On the proposal of Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. G. Burke, Cllr. S. Burke was nominated.

On the proposal of Cllr. Curley, seconded by Cllr. Regan, Cllr. M. Maher was nominated.

Referring to the Draft SPC Scheme which was issued to the Members, Mr. Cullen advised that as Cllr. Maher was already a nominee on an existing SPC, it was recommended that there be a good representational spread on the SPC's. Cllr. Maher then withdrew his nomination and Cllr. S. Burke was nominated as the Town Council's representative to the Housing, Fire & Emergency Services SPC.

**4 Nomination of Representative to Planning, Economic Development & Community SPC**

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. S. Burke, Cllr. N. Morgan was nominated.

On the proposal of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Regan, Cllr. Bane was nominated.

Cllr. Morgan thanked his proposer and seconder but asked his name to be withdrawn from the nomination as he explained that he was writing a book and did not have the time to take on this role. Cllr. Bane was nominated as the Town Council's representative to the Planning, Economic Development & Community SPC.

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009

**5 Correspondence**

- Letter from Director of Services Roads Department, Galway County Council giving details of the events organised for European Mobility Week and "In Town Without My Car" which runs from the 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009.
- Details of 2009 La Touche Legacy Seminar being held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2009 in Greystones, Co. Wicklow.
- Details of 7<sup>th</sup> National Tourism Conference being held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2009 in Carlow.
- Details of Local Government Workshop being held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at University College Cork.
- Details of Conference on "Reducing Drug & Alcohol related harm" being held on 8th/9<sup>th</sup> October 2009.
- Details of "Promoting Partnership in Tourism" Conference being held on 26/28 September 2009 in Ennistymon, Co. Clare.
- The following Motion was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed by the Members, that:

"Loughrea Town Council call on the Taoiseach and Minister for Social and Family Affairs to publish the National Carers Strategy as committed to in the Social Partnership Agreement – Towards 2016 and in the programme for Government as a matter of principal."

- The Members of Loughrea Town Council proposed the following Motion:

"Loughrea Town Council calls on the Government to support the Family Resource Centre Programme and, in particular, Family Resource Centres based in Galway.

Loughrea Town Council supports the three campaign principles of the Family Resource Centre National Forum, which are:

1. The Family Resource Centre programme delivers a value-for-money support for families across Ireland. At times of financial hardship, the services of Family Resource Centres will be needed more than ever. Rather than considering closing or reducing the FRC programme, it should be developed and expanded.
2. The Family Support Agency is the best vehicle to deliver the Family Resource Centre Programme, and the Agency should be maintained.

3. If any changes are to be made to the FRC programme or Family Support Agency, the Family Resource Centre National Forum must be consulted on the way forward."
- Letter from Tuam Town Council regarding Motion passed at a recent meeting requesting that recommendations to abolish Town Councils contained in the McCarthy Report be withdrawn. This motion was proposed by Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Morgan.
  - Letter from Mullingar Town Council requesting the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, to amend the Home Energy Savings Scheme to include provision for the replacement of aluminium/teak windows and doors which are not energy efficient in private dwellings. This motion was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Bane.

**6. Notice of Motion – Cllr. Curley**

(a) That Galway County Council ascertains who is responsible for upgrading the roads from their current dangerous state. Is there a Health & Safety liability and if so does it rest with the Town Council of Galway County Council? The roads are full of potholes and in certain locations the road surface has been forced up on the footpath creating a dangerous place for pedestrians and older people. I am requesting Galway County Council to clarify this situation and make the people of Loughrea aware of when the roads will be back in a state of good repair."

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

Cllr. Curley stated that he had been approached by a number of people in relation to the poor condition of the roads. He asked what is the situation in relation to repairing the roads and if monies were available to carry out the necessary repairs. Mr. Raftery stated that the N.R.A. had just allocated €1.5m towards roads repairs on roads affected by the construction of the new N6. He advised however that this covered the Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Oranmore Engineering areas and that it was now a matter of determining what roads were going to be funded for improvement. He referred specifically to some roads in the Athenry area which would require total reconstruction and stated the allocation would not be sufficient to undertake complete overlays.

Cllr. G. Burke referred to particularly bad potholes on the N66, just outside Loughrea town and near Kilchreest Village. He also stated there were particularly bad potholes on the Bullaun road that have been there for the past number of weeks. Cllr. Regan referred to the amount of Lorries/large HGV's that is using Main Street as a short-cut to access on to the new motorway and said that it would only be a matter of time until damage was done to the carriageway on Main Street. He said that the Lorries should not be permitted to go up Main Street and he queried if there was an agreed route that they were to take. Mr. Raftery stated that there was designated haul routes which they were to use. He advised that it had come to their attention that they were using other routes and they put

in place bye-laws to restrict access and this seemed to work. He said that signs were erected and the guards were notified and asked to enforce same. Cllr. Regan queried if there was an agreed route, why were they not being prosecuted for not adhering to that. Mr. Cullen stated that all they could do is to work with the guards to enforce it as best they could.

**7 Notice of Motion – Cllr. Morgan**

(a) "That the many parking and other signs that are crooked and damaged be repaired or replaced as quickly as possible, so as to avoid legal complications arising when accidents occur in these areas."

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

Cllr. G. Burke stated that there were a number of signs around the town and on Main Street that are turned the wrong way around and others that need replacing. He also stated that a number of bollards on Main Street had either been damaged or removed and needed replacing.

(b) That the Fair Green, where the Amusements had just been, be restored and rolled flat as soon as possible, thereby also removing the ridges left there since last year's amusements."

This was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. G. Burke.

**8 Any Other Business**

Vote of Congratulations

Cllr. Morgan proposed a Vote of Congratulations to Ken Kelly, Kelly Printing Works for their sixty years in the printing business. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher and agreed by the Members.

It was agreed to make a presentation on behalf of Loughrea Town Council to Olive Loughnane on her recent achievement on coming second in the 20km Walk in the World Championships held in Berlin. It was also agreed that a presentation be made to the four minor hurlers from Loughrea Town who were on the Galway Minor Hurling Team that recently won the All-Ireland Minor Hurling title.

Leak on Barrack Street

Cllr. Regan queried when the water mains leak outside Fergus' Petrol Station and Finnegan's Public house on Barrack Street would be repaired.

Mr. Raftery advised that the repair works is included in their works schedule and though he couldn't give a timeframe as to when it would be completed, it would not be until after the completion of the Road Works Programme.

Damaged Bollards Outside Supermacs

Cllr. Maher stated that the bollards outside Supermacs on Main Street had been knocked and needed replacing.

Dogs

Cllr. Maher stated that there are a couple of dog owners who bring their dogs down to the Green to clean them and asked what could be done to alleviate this from happening. Mr. Cullen advised that the details be given to the Council's Veterinary Officer who would investigate the matter further.

Litter Bins

Cllr. Maher requested that extra litter bins be provided on Dunkellin Street.

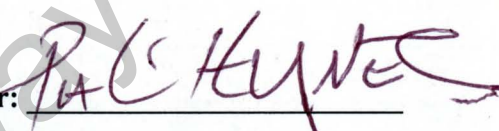
Bord Gais

Cllr. Maher stated that arising out of the works being carried out by An Bord Gais, a number of water tables were being closed and need reopening before the winter season sets in.

Manhole Cover

Cllr. Maher stated that the manhole cover outside the Garda Station had collapsed and needed replacement.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

Signed this 12<sup>th</sup> day of October 2009. Mayor: 

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Pat Hynes

**Members:** Cllrs. Gabriel Burke, Sylvia Burke, Jimmy Curley, Mary Gunter-Nix, Michael Maher, Norman Morgan, James Regan

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

**Apologies:** Cllr. G. Bane

The Meeting opened with prayer.

**1 Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. G. Burke and agreed that the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting be adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Morgan it was agreed to suspend the Standing Orders and receive a Deputation from the Board of Management of St. Raphaels College, Loughrea. This was agreed by the Members.

**Deputation from St. Raphael's College, Loughrea**

Cllr. G. Burke introduced Messrs. Paul Cafferty, Principal of St. Raphaels and Gerard Dervan, Chairperson of St. Raphael's Board of Management to the Meeting. Mr. Cafferty circulated to the Meeting a presentation outlining their current position with regard to the future development of the school. He explained that the school currently occupies two separate buildings, the main school building and junior buildings adjacent to the primary school. He explained that the junior buildings do not belong to the school but was the property of the Mercy Order. He said that they had recently achieved their aim and had been approved to stage three by the Department of Science and Education for an extension and refurbishment of their present building at a projected cost of approx. €6m. He said that as well as seeking this new development, they were also pursuing ways to improve the entrance to their school. He explained that the entrance that the pupils use was the present back entrance from Bothar Cám and this was far from ideal as it is too narrow and poorly illuminated at night. He said that they had previously proposed road widening on part of Bothar Cám but this endeavour failed due to problems with the heritage status of the old boundary walls to the Mercy property at Bothar Cám.

He said that when applying to the Department of Science & Education for funding for the extension proposals, it was pointed out to them that a proper entrance would be a prerequisite to them getting the go ahead. Following a meeting with Galway County Council and representatives of the Board of Management of the School, Mr. Lavelle came up with a plan for a complete new entrance at the east end of Bothar Cam with a roadway to be constructed up to the new building from the east end of Bothar Cam and it was further proposed the continuation of this road out to Cross Street creating a new loop road to allow the circular movement of traffic to and from the school, thereby relieving the congestion normally experienced at Moore Street. Mr. Dervan advised that when the Mercy Sisters were advised about the new plans, they responded by giving an undertaking to give the required land from in so far as it passes through Mercy lands. He said that the Council had given an undertaking to purchase the other pieces of property required to complete the road and this allowed their building proposals to progress to the point they were now at. He said the reason they were making this presentation to the Members at this meeting was that they needed this road to become a reality. He outlined the advantages for the school and the town as follows:

- Loughrea needs the best education facilities it can get and by having two great second level schools in St. Raphels College and St. Bridgets Vocational School, it provides fine educational infrastructure in Loughrea.
- There is a lot of traffic congestion in the Cross Street area due to school traffic and the provision of this new route would take at least 50% of St. Raphaels traffic away and some of the traffic going to St. Ita's N.S. as well. It would also improve traffic circulation on Moore Street.
- The entire project would give a lot of employment in the town during the construction phase and would provide additional teaching posts and opportunities in the town when complete.
- It would raise the educational profile of the town and provide better education facilities and opportunities for the future generation of children in the surrounding areas of Loughrea.

He said that he hoped that the Members agree that this was good for the school and also for Loughrea and would help them progress their plans through the next stage.

Cllr. S. Burke queried if there was any feed-back from Mr. Lavelle in relation to including this project for funding in 2010. Mr. Cafferty stated that Mr. Lavelle was to request the application to be included for funding in 2010. Cllr. Maher stated that this project was brought up for consideration when the Specific Grants for Non-National Roads 2010 were being discussed at the last Area Meeting. He said that Mr. Dolly had advised that the project was not included in this year's submission. However, he stated that Mr. Dolly advised that he would check to see if any other grants could be sought for this project. He said they would do as much as they could to move it forward and would keep the pressure on. Cllr. G. Burke complimented Mr. Dervan on the amount of work

that has been done to-date and stated that the Town Council would give all the support they could. Cllr. Hynes thanked the Deputation for their presentation and stated that they would certainly have the Members full support.

The Deputation then left the Meeting.

## 1 Matters Arising from Minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009

### Leak on Barrack Street

Cllr. Regan thanked Mr. Raftery for arranging the repair of leaks on Barrack Street as requested at the last Meeting.

### European Mobility Week

In relation to the events organised for European Mobility Week, and with particular reference to the closing off of Main Street in Loughrea on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, Cllr. G. Burke stated that more thought needed to be put into the traffic management of the event. He proposed that bike racks should be installed in the car-parks in towns. This was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Cllr. Gunter-Nix stated that she agreed with the proposal for bicycle areas in the town. Cllr. S. Burke stated last year's event was held on a Sunday and it consisted of street entertainment and was a great success. She suggested that if it were to take place again that it would be made more of a family day and be held on a Sunday as opposed to a day during the week.

Mr. Cullen stated that all comments would be taken on board and would be passed on to the relevant personnel organising the event. He also advised that if possible they would try and seek funding from Roads & Transportation Section for cycle racks under the Smart Travel initiative if the deadline for proposals had not already passed.

## 2 Correspondence

- Invitation from Gaeilge Locha Riach & Coiste Ghlor na nGael to Cultural & Information Evening at Loughrea Rea Hotel on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009.
- Letter from Galway County Development Board re: Town Council Representation on Galway County Development Board. It was agreed by the Members that Tuam Town Council nominate a representative for the first period of the reconstituted CDB (from now up to the end of 2011).
- Details of Local Authority Member's Association Annual Winter Seminar being held on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in Limerick.
- Details of "Dynamic Regions – Future Directions in Regional Development" Conference being held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in Limerick.

- Details of Michael Davitt North/South Historical & Cultural Symposium being held on 6/7 November 2009.
- Details of Free Volunteer Management Training from Galway Volunteer Centre being held in Ballinasloe on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2009.
- Letter from Loughrea Chamber of Commerce requesting that Loughrea Town Council introduce a bye law banning HGV's from the West Bridge to Bride Street unless they have a specific purpose or have proof of delivery of goods. This was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke and seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix.

Cllr. G. Burke suggested that more signage be provided on approaches into the town to encourage HGV's to use the bye-pass and this might go some way towards reducing the traffic on Main Street.

Mr. Raftery advised that there were two options available to them to restrict HGV's coming onto Main Street, i.e. (a) weight restriction or (b) permit system. He explained that the permit system involved a huge amount of administration. In relation to the weight restriction, the HGV's would have to be brought to a weighbridge to weigh them and the nearest one was located in Oranmore. He said that it was something that sounded easy in theory but was actually more difficult to implement/enforce.

- Letter from Department of Social and Family Affairs in response to Motion sent by Members regarding funding for Family Resource Centres based in Galway.
- Letter from Plougasnou Twinning Committee proposing a twinning with Loughrea. It was agreed by the Members that this proposal be sent to Loughrea Chamber of Commerce.
- Letter from South Tipperary County Council regarding Motion passed at September Meeting regarding proposals relating to the re-introduction of third level tuition fees.

### 3. Notice of Motion – Cllr. G. Burke

(a) That in the current economic climate, the house owned by Loughrea Town Council at Lake View, Loughrea be sold and the proceeds of sale be used for improvements in the town.

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

Cllr. G. Burke stated that he tabled this motion because he feared that the spending of monies on refurbishing this property would ultimately mean that the rates being imposed

on the rate payers in Loughrea would be increased. He suggested that by selling the house it would mean that the monies could be put back into the investment fund and it could reduce rates in the town for the next couple of years. Cllr. Regan proposed that they do not sell this property and this was seconded by Cllr. Maher. Cllr. Regan stated that it was a very bad time to sell the house and proposed that they rent the house for the moment.

Mr. Cullen stated that his advice was that it was not the time to sell the property. He said that the repairs carried out to the house were necessary and that the repairs were nearing completion. He advised that this would not have an impact on the rate payer. He said that in any event, the ultimate capital value of the property would accrue to the Town Council. Cllr. G. Burke withdrew the Motion.

### 4 Any Other Business

#### Vote of Congratulations

The Members wished Cllr. Curley well on his retirement from Loughrea Fire Service following 27 years of service. It was agreed that a scroll would be presented to Cllr. Curley to mark this momentous occasion. Mr. Cullen also wished to be associated with the good wishes to Cllr. Curley. Cllr. Curley thanked the Members and Mr. Cullen for their good wishes.

#### St. Brendan's Home, Loughrea

Cllr. Curley advised that another ward was closing in St. Brendan's Home shortly and this had come about as a result of non replacement of staff that had recently retired. He said that about three years ago there were eight wards in operation and now there were only four. Cllr. Maher suggested that they get clarity on the matter from the H.S.E. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would write to request a meeting with Ms. P. Prendergast, General Manager, H.S.E. West.

#### Signage at Caherlavine

Cllr. Maher stated that a sign that was erected by the Lions Clubs at Caherlavine was damaged and needs to be removed and he also requested that it be replaced. Mr. Raftery stated that he would investigate same.

#### Litter Bins

Cllr. Maher again asked that extra litter bins be provided on Dunkellin Street. Mr. Raftery stated that he would look to provide 2/3 extra bins for that area.

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009

Bride Street

Mr. Raftery stated that they were commencing works on the footpaths on Bride Street shortly and stated that eight trees needed to be removed so that the works could proceed. He also advised that these trees would be replaced.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

Signed this 9<sup>th</sup> day of <sup>November</sup> ~~October~~ 2009. Mayor: PAK HYNES

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Pat Hynes

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

The Meeting opened with prayer.

**1 Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Curley and agreed that the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting be adopted.

**Matters Arising from Minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

Deputation from St. Raphael's College, Loughrea

Cllr. Bane stated that she was aware that Galway County Council had recently made an application under the Department of Transport's National Smarter Travel Competition relating to Loughrea. She requested that Mr. Lavelle, S.E. would attend the next Meeting of the Town Council to detail what was included in the application bid. This was agreed by the Members.

Traffic Lights at Westbridge

Cllr. Bane queried when works on the traffic lights at Westbridge would commence. She said that there was a lot of concern that the works would be ongoing in the run up to Christmas and access to the town would be affected as a result. Mr. Raftery explained that the works currently being carried out were grant funded and had to be completed by the end of November and had to be given priority. He said that it would be December before staff would be available to commence these works. Cllr. Regan requested that each Member would get a copy of the proposed layout for the works at Westbridge and that this would be put on display on the Notice Board in the Council foyer. Cllr. Gunter-Nix queried if the funding had to be spent before the end of December. Mr. Cullen stated that would be checked out in advance of the next meeting. He said that if it is found that



the monies allocated towards this project had to be spent by the year end they would just have to commence the works as otherwise funding would not become available for this again. Cllr. Regan stated that the safety aspect should be the paramount priority and suggested that the works be done as soon as possible.

St. Brendan's Home

Cllr. Curley asked if there was any update in relation to request for a Meeting with personnel from the H.S.E. regarding St. Brendan's Home. The Town Clerk advised that Mr. J.J. O'Kane, Manager of Older People Services had made contact and suggested the meeting be held on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> November at 2.30 p.m. This was agreed by the Members.

H.G.V.'s – Main Street, Loughrea

Cllr. Bane asked about a permit system to restrict H.G.V.'s coming on to Main Street. Mr. Raftery stated that he sought advice from personnel in the Roads & Transportation Unit in relation to this and it was stated that there was a huge amount of administration involved in this process.

Cllr. G. Burke stated that the erection of substantial signs on either end of the town to encourage H.G.V.'s to use the bye-pass might be an effective measure to help in solving this problem.

Sign at Caherlavine

Cllr. Maher asked if there was any update since the last Meeting. Mr. Raftery advised that the sign had been taken down as requested.

Litter Bins

Cllr. Maher asked if any extra bins were being provided on Dunkellin Street. Mr. Raftery advised that two bins would be erected in the next couple of weeks as requested.

**2. Annual Financial Statement 2008**

Mr. Cullen referred to the Annual Financial Statement 2008 document which had been circulated to the Members in advance of the Meeting. He explained that the expenditure was slightly lower in 2008 as a result of some Unpaid Bills at the end of 2008 and a refund that was made from Galway County Council arising out of an overpayment for Transferred Workers. He recommended the adoption of the figures. On the proposal of Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix, the Members approved the adoption of the Annual Financial Statement 2008.

**2(b) To Fix Date for Budget Meeting**

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Maher, it was agreed that the Budget Meeting be held prior to the next Monthly Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

**3 Correspondence**

- Letter from Gaeilge Locha Riach inviting nominations for groups that have promoted the Irish language in the Loughrea area throughout the year. Closing date for nominations is 27<sup>th</sup> November 2009.
- Letter from Connaught Rangers Association regarding Remembrance Ceremony being held at Council Offices on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 1.00 p.m.
- Letter from St. Brendan's Hurling Club, Loughrea requesting a contribution towards the Hurling Club.

Cllr. G. Burke stated that it was a great achievement for a Hurling Club to have three Teams in County Finals and asked, that owing to the huge costs involved, that the Town Council make a donation to the Hurling Club. Mr. Cullen stated that they could manage to make a small contribution this year but it would be a once-only contribution. He said he needed to make the Members aware of the bleak financial situation that lay ahead of them next year.

- Letter from Minister Eamon Ryan, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in reply to Town Council's Motion regarding the replacement of windows and doors in the Home Energy Savings Scheme.
- Acknowledgement from Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in connection with Town Council's Motion regarding the McCarthy Report.
- Letter from Monaghan Town Council regarding Motion passed at October Meeting requesting the ESB to resume the previous practice of Meter Readers leaving cards for absent householders to enter their meter reading and post same to ESB.
- Letter from Monaghan Town Council regarding Motion passed at October Meeting to oppose proposals to eliminate the existence of Town Councils contained in An Bord Snip Nua Report.

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009

- Letter from Mullingar Town Council regarding Motion passed at October Meeting to oppose proposals to eliminate the existence of Town Councils contained in An Bord Snip Nua Report.
- Letter from South Tipperary County Council regarding Motion passed at October Meeting requesting the Government to waive VAT on specialised items of medical equipment where the purchase is being funded through voluntary fundraising. This motion was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. Curley.
- Letter from Kerrill Creaven formally requesting Loughrea Town Council to adopt the Gaming & Lotteries Act 1956 at a location known as Mace Shop, Old Galway Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway at their next Meeting.

Cllr. Regan proposed that this proposal would be rejected and the situation would remain as it was. This was seconded by Cllr. Bane. Following a discussion on the matter, it was decided that a vote would be taken on retaining the existing situation:-

For: Cllrs. G. Bane, S. Burke, J. Curley, M. Gunter-Nix, P. Hynes, N. Morgan & J. Regan (7)

Against: ----

Abstained: Cllrs. G. Burke, M. Maher

**4 Any Other Business**

Walking & Cycling Routes

Cllr. Gunter-Nix queried if there was any feed-back in relation to the proposal made at the last meeting for bicycle areas in the town. Mr. Cullen advised that this initiative was included as part of the Smart Travel Application that had been recently made to the Department of Transport.

Traffic Management Plan for Loughrea

Cllr. Regan queried if there was any update in relation the review of the Traffic Management Plan for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen advised that there was no update in relation to the review of the Traffic Management Plan.

St. Brendan's School, Loughrea

Cllr. Maher stated that representations had been made to him requesting that flashing beacons be erected outside St. Brendan's N.S. Mr. Raftery advised that as this school was located inside the Speed Limit, it was generally not done as standard and that it

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009

generally applied to schools in rural locations where the speed limit was higher. He advised Cllr. Maher to raise it at the next Area Meeting.

Swimming Pool

Cllr. Bane queried if there was any update in relation to the provision of the swimming pool for Loughrea Town. Mr. Cullen advised that he would have an update available for the next Meeting.

Potholes at Westbridge

Cllr. G. Burke stated that some of the potholes at the Westbridge had reopened again and requested that they be repaired as soon as possible.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

Signed this 14<sup>th</sup> day of December 2009. Mayor: PAC HYNES

Annual Budget Meeting of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009

**Minutes and Proceedings of Annual Budget Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Pat Hynes

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

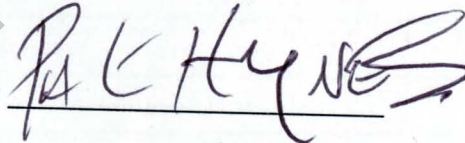
Mr. J. Cullen, Director of Services, presented the Annual Budget for the year 2010. Mr. Cullen stated that the total proposed expenditure for 2010 is €84,912.00 and the estimated income at €6,830.00. The amount of the demand to be submitted to Galway County Council for 2010 will be €78,082.00 and the multiplier will be €3.11 which represents a small decrease on the 2009 level. He recommended the Budget be adopted.

Cllr. Bane welcomed the additional allocation to the Chamber of Commerce which goes towards the costs of providing the Christmas lights. After discussion it was agreed that the allocation of €200.00 that was being proposed for Drinking Bye-Laws be reallocated as a contribution towards the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

On the proposition of Cllr. Maher, seconded by Cllr. Curley and resolved that the Budget of Loughrea Town Council for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, as set forth at A, B, C on the Form of Budget, be adopted and the Form of Annual Budget be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

It was also resolved that the Demand be made on Galway County Council by the Loughrea Town Council for the sum of €78,082.00 for the financial year ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, and that the Form of Demand be signed by the Mayor and by the Town Clerk.

This concluded the business of the Annual Budget Meeting.

Signed this 11<sup>th</sup> day of January 2010. Mayor: 

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009

**Minutes and Proceedings of Monthly Meeting of Loughrea Town Council held on the 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2009 in the County Council Offices, Barrack Street, Loughrea**

**I latharai:**

**Mayor:** Cllr. Pat Hynes

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

**Officials:** Jim Cullen, Director of Services, Martin Lavelle, Senior Engineer, Adrian Raftery, Executive Engineer, Anne Power, Town Clerk

The Meeting opened with prayer.

**1 Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

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

**Matters Arising from Minutes of 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

Swimming Pool

Cllr. Bane asked if there was any update on the swimming pool for Loughrea. Mr. Cullen advised that the Council is awaiting final details from the Department and advised that the Council sent additional information to the Department in relation to how the grant will be paid. Cllr. G. Burke stated that the developer expects to commence works in February 2010.

Traffic Lights at Westbridge

Cllr. Regan asked for an update on when works would commence on the proposed traffic lights at Westbridge. Mr. Raftery circulated to each Member copy of map illustrating extent of works to be carried out. He advised that it would be the New Year before works would commence on the job.

Flooding

Cllr. Bane referred to the repair job done on the Gort Road and queried when the road would be reconstructed. Mr. Raftery advised that the N.R.A. had sought an inventory of

the roads affected/damaged by the recent flooding and this included an application for a complete overhaul of this road.

Cllr. G. Burke referred to the footpaths on the Gort Road which were now being driven on by cars and made it dangerous for pedestrians using them. He suggested that bollards be put in place to stop cars using footpaths.

Cllr. Hynes thanked all the staff both indoor and outdoor that were involved in the works to help alleviate the flooding situation in Loughrea and stated that the response was well co-ordinated. He asked if there was any possibility that the Courthouse road would be raised to try and avoid it being flooded again. Mr. Raftery stated that the Gort Road junction was continually under water during wet weather and advised that he would look to see what works need to be carried out to improve the situation and if funding could be made available for these works.

Cllr. Curley queried why the Emergency Services were not called out to help the flooding situation. Mr. Cullen stated that the Fire Brigade were called out wherever they could usefully be deployed. He stated there was a lot made about use of the fire services and there seemed to be a lot of misinformation out there. He stated that it was being used appropriately and as it should be. In relation to the Area Staff, he said that they did a remarkable job and complimented the S.E.E. and E.E.'s in Gort, Portumna and Loughrea.

## 2 Proposals for provision of new footpaths and repairs to existing footpaths in Former Town Commissioners Areas

Copy of proposals for provision of new footpaths and repairs to existing footpaths in Loughrea Town Council area for 2010 was circulated to each Member. Mr. Raftery explained that the proposals required the approval of the Town Council so that a submission can be made to the Department. Cllr. Regan referred to the proposal for installation of water meters for all domestic premises and asked if some advance works could be done before installation of the footpaths so as to avoid extra costs afterwards. Mr. Cullen advised that no confirmation had been received from the Department as regards the requirements in relation to the installation of domestic water meters as yet and therefore it was not possible to put in the meters in advance of these works in 2010. On the proposal of Cllr. Regan, seconded by Cllr. Gunter-Nix, the Members agreed the proposals as circulated.

## 3 Correspondence

- Letter from Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in reply to Town Council's Motion regarding the McCarthy Report relating to towns.
- Letter from South Tipperary County Council regarding Motion passed at November Meeting in relation to Fás.

- Letter from Gaeilge Locha Riach to Minister E. O'Cuiv to request the business schemes be reinstated in the New Year. This motion was proposed by Cllr. Morgan, seconded by Cllr. Maher.
- Planning Seminar for Councillors on 29/30 January 2010 in Limerick
- Tourism Conference being held on 29/30 January 2010 in Dunadry, Co. Antrim.
- A.M.A.I. Conference being held on 12/13 February 2010 in Sligo.

## 4 Notice of Motion – Cllr. G. Burke

“That Galway County Council creates and implements a plan to stop the flooding of houses at Cross Street and Lake Road.”

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Burke, seconded by Cllr. J. Curley.

Cllr. G. Burke referred to the river at the back of Cross Street which caused flooding to some houses at Cross Street and asked that a plan be put in place to prevent this from happening again. He said that something would have to be done so that the river at the back of the houses can take the flow of water and requested that funding be sought to have these works carried out.

## 5 Any Other Business

### Smarter Travel Areas

Mr. Cullen stated at a previous Meeting he informed the Members that Galway County Council had recently made two applications under the Department of Transport's National Smarter Travel Competition. He explained that the ambition for the national competition is to demonstrate delivery of targets at local level, and showcase innovative and high quality travel solutions and transport systems, creating better rural and urban spaces, and contributing to healthier and more active populations, and more competitive and amenable commercial centres. It aims to promote walking, cycling car-pooling and use of public transport, raising awareness and highlighting what can be achieved. A joint application was submitted by Galway County Council & Galway City Council for the Galway Metropolitan Smarter Travel area and one was submitted for Loughrea Smarter Travel Town. Mr. Lavelle stated that 105 applications were made in total which has been short listed down to 11 and these 11 have been selected to go to proceed to Stage 2 of the competition. He circulated a copy of application submitted for Loughrea Town to each Member. He advised that both applications made by Galway County Council had made it to Stage 2 of the competition which he stated was a great achievement. However he advised that progression to Stage 2 of the selection process was not a guarantee of

Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009

success in the final competition. He stated that Stage 2 bids have to be submitted to the Department of Transport no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 and four towns of the eleven would be successful. He said that the Minister for Transport is proposing an Exchequer contribution of up to €50m for the period of the scheme. He said that the aim is that funding of the final selected projects will commence from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010 for a five year period. He outlined some of the measures included in the Plan which included the development of a transportation corridor at Bohercom/Cross Street which if implemented would take the school traffic out of the area. The total indicative cost for the measures proposed for Loughrea Town is €5m.

Cllr. Bane queried how the consultation process would be carried out. Mr. Cullen advised that the Town Council, Local Area Councillors and Chamber of Commerce would be involved in the process. Mr. Lavelle advised that they will be appointing Consultants shortly and it would be proceeding very quickly.

The Members welcomed the announcement.

This concluded the business of Loughrea Town Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

Signed this 11<sup>th</sup> day of January 2010. Mayor: PAC HYNES

