

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL
Monday, 27th January 2025 at 11.00am

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. M. Kinane
Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill: Comh. /Cllr. S. Broderick, I. Canning, J. Charity, D. Collins, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, S. Cunniffe, S. Curley, T. Ó Curraoin, G. Donohue, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, T. Grealish, A. Harney, M. Hoade, C. Keane, , D. Kelly, D. Killilea, P. Killilea, G. King, M. Lee, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, S. McHugh Ryan, M. McNamara, P.J. Murphy, Dr. E. F. Parsons, A. Reddington, N. Thomas, O. Turner, S. Walsh and T. Welby.

Baill ar líne: Comh. /Cllr. P. Keaveney M. Leainde.

Oifigh: Mr. L. Conneally, Chief Executive, Mr. L. Hanrahan, Director of Services, Mr. U. Finn, Director of Services, Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services, Ms. K. O'Connor, Head of Finance, Mr. M. Owens, Director of Services, Ms. J. Carroll, Director of Services, Ms. J. Brann Meetings Administrator, Mr. G. O'Mally, Chief Fire Officer, Mr. M. O Donnchadha, Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge, Ms. H. Riordan, A/Staff Officer, Ms. T. Costello, Assistant Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting by thanking the outdoor staff of the Council, Electricity Supply Board (ESB) and Uisce Éireann and all of the emergency services and community groups for their efforts in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn. She also thanked the Chief Executive for providing the Members with up-to-date information.

The Chief Executive addressed the Chamber. He said the Storm was the most ferocious witnessed in County Galway with windspeeds the highest ever recorded, that storm damage across the County was very significant and that the Council is one of the lead agencies tasked with dealing with the aftermath of storm Éowyn. He outlined that since the red alert ended the Council's fire crews, Municipal Districts offices, Management team and Executive have been co-ordinating the clearing of roads and dealing with the storm clean-up. National routes have been prioritised, then regional roads and local roads will be addressed in sequence. Contractors have been engaged across all MD's and he thanked the farming community and Galway communities across the County for their invaluable help.

He informed the meeting of the preparation that was undertaken in advance of the storm through The National Emergency Co-ordination Group (NECG), of which himself, Mr. Uinsinn Finn and Ms. Rachel Lowe are members. The level of readiness and preparation undertaken before the storm and the timing of the storm (during the night) ensured the response was immediate and comprehensive. The Council are facilitating the ESB and telecom companies in accessing lines which has ensured key infrastructure is accessible. The NECG continue to meet daily, also the Council's Crisis Management Team meets daily. The Regional Emergency Co-ordination Group consisting of the fire services, ESB and ambulance service are meeting, and the Council are assisting in their asks. The Crisis Management Team are co-ordinating the physical response on the ground and liaising with ESB and Uisce Éireann.

Uisce Éireann have released a comprehensive list of alternative water supply locations in the County. Uisce Éireann and ESB will also be present at the regional meetings. There are Council crews on the ground and on the Islands to ascertain the

needs of the people residing there. Communication infrastructure across the County is still out in large parts.

The Department of the Taoiseach has stood up the Community Fora. The Galway County Community Forum has been stood-up and Community Hubs are being established with a dedicated Council hotline and e-mail address. They will communicate with all agencies to assist vulnerable people across the County. The Civil Defence will also be made available.

The Cathaoirleach invited the Party Leaders of each political grouping to address the meeting on behalf of their party, to facilitate the release of the Executive team to continue to co-ordinate the emergency response.

Cllr. Hoade spoke on behalf of Fianna Fáil. Storm Éowyn was the worst storm that she has experienced. She conveyed her deep gratitude to the Municipal District and emergency services staff. To the co-ordinating team and officials taking calls, farmers and the local community. Also, to the Regional and National Co-ordination teams. The communication network needs to be examined. Alternative methods of communication such as local radio must be utilised more effectively to distribute information to those without phones or internet coverage. There are areas estimated to be without power until 5th February. She raised concern for dwellings and schools that are reliant on private group water schemes that are currently without water. She asked that the services of contractors be engaged.

Cllr. Thomas spoke on behalf of Independent Ireland. The scale of damage that he witnessed is beyond comprehension. Restoring power to towns and villages must be a priority. He called on people to have patience. ESB staff are physically walking lines to check for damage. He congratulated the Council for reopening roads. He expressed disappointment on hearing that the Government failed to take the assistance that was offered in advance of the storm. He called on people to keep an eye on their neighbours.

Cllr. McClearn spoke on behalf of Fine Gael. He commended Council and ESB staff on the huge effort being carried out. He expressed dismay that water treatment plants do not have their own generators. After storm Eileen in 2020 he contacted Irish Water to ensure that they would have generators on standby to ensure water connections would not fail in the event of power outages, this was not done. Calls

were not answered on the Public Representatives Line. Uisce Éireann must provide water tankers to areas without water.

Cllr. Donohue thanked all of the outdoor and ESB staff. She asked if a generator could be provided for the Kilchreest water scheme. The 1993 Roads Act governing roadside trees is not fit for purpose and expressed disbelief that neither the updating of the act or Ash Die Back are included in the new Programme for Government. Large trees should not be along the roadside or near power or phone lines. Power lines would not have been brought down if the roadside trees were removed. She asked if feedback has been received from Council tenants residing in retrofitted houses on how they are managing with the air to water system.

Cllr. Welby spoke on behalf of the Independent Members. He thanked all staff for their efforts. This storm has highlighted our dependence on electricity and communication. He asked that if the maintenance of roadside trees by landowners is not realistic then an alternative policy must be formed. Storms and flooding are only increasing in number due to climate change.

Cllr. Dermot Connolly spoke on behalf of Sinn Féin. He thanked all staff and everyone that has assisted in the aftermath. He asked why local contractors have not been engaged to help. Communications are vital as Council staff were uncontactable due to the breakdown of the communication network.

ITEM NO.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

4493

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Keane the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 16th December 2024 were **AGREED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. King the minutes of the Statutory Budget Meeting held on 9th December 2024 were **AGREED**.

ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4494

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. D. Killilea the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on 9th December 2024 were **NOTED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Reddington **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cunniffe the Draft minutes of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 10th April 2024 were **NOTED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Grealish **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher the minutes of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee Meeting held on 4th October 2024 were **NOTED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cunniffe **SECONDED** by Cllr. Kelly the minutes of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 14th November 2024 were **NOTED**.

It was agreed by the Members as per recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group that Galway County Council would hold a Civic Reception to honour Kilkerrin Clonberne Ladies All Ireland 4 in a row Football Champions and Sarsfields Ladies Camogie All Ireland Senior Champions for the 4th time, after the March plenary meeting.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- As agreed at Corporate Policy Group (CPG) meetings, Civic Receptions be held every quarter to increase participation at the reception.
- That An Cheathrú Rua be honoured at a Civic Reception on winning the Junior All Ireland Club Hurling Final.

ITEM NO.3 TO CONSIDER THE AUDIT COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON THE 2023 AUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT (AFS) AND STATUTORY AUDITORS REPORT (PURSUANT TO SECTION 60 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2014).

4495

Report dated 8th January 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. King the Audit Committee Report on the 2023 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) and Statutory Auditors Report pursuant to section 60 of the Local Government Act 2014 was **NOTED**.

ITEM NO. 4 PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER ON THE CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME FOR THE GALWAY FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE. 4496

The presentation was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The Chief Fire Officer Mr. Gerry O'Malley gave a presentation on the Capital Investment Programme for Galway Fire and Rescue Service. He outlined the structure of the service in Galway and the capital investments completed to date at Gort, Clifden, An Cheathrú Rua, Tuam, Athenry and Loughrea stations. He also informed the Members of the investments made to vehicles and equipment across the County. The priorities for future capital infrastructure were outlined for Galway City Station and Head Quarters and Ballinasloe, Portumna and Inis Mór Fire Stations.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- The Chamber was united in its appreciation and gratitude for the work of the fire fighters in response to storm Éowyn.
- Assurances were sought on the emergency response times to the areas of Ballymoe, Esker and Clonfert.
- Delivery time for a new Fire Station in Ballinasloe was sought.
- Where week on week off rota is in operation in a fire station, it was asked if there would always be fire staff available to respond to calls.
- Thanks were conveyed to Ballinasloe Fire Station for supplying water to the Nursing Home.
- If generators could be provided to Ballinalsoe fire station as there is currently no power in the station and the battery packs will soon expire.
- If plans for a new station in Ballinasloe have been prepared in advance of funding approval, to avoid delays in the planning process.

- Confirmation that Portumna fire station is on the list for future projects was welcomed.
- If the Civic Defence can be utilised more and a group be re-instated in Athenry.
- Appreciation given to the fire fighters in Tuam that assisted in an overturned demountable and came to the aid of the Nursing Home.
- If the Members could be informed when funding applications are lodged for capital funding for the provision of fire stations to enable Members to lobby TDs at a national level.
- The emergency response times for the area that was once covered by the now closed Castlerea fire station were requested.
- A firm commitment on the provision of a new fire station in Ballinasloe was sought.
- Concern was raised on the consequences of their being a week on week off rota in Clifden Fire Station and concern on the distance between Clifden and the covering stations.
- If the recruitment of extra fire fighters in Clifden was imminent.
- Assurance was sought on the future of Mountbellew Fire Station.
- Clarity was sought on the recruitment process of new fire fighters. Successful candidates have been placed on a panel but have not received contracts.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Fire Officer:

- He assured the Members that North Galway is adequately served in the absence of a fire station in Castlerea. The entire County has been mapped and he confirmed that the minimum response times can be met from other stations.
- Week on week off rotas are in operation in 80%-85% of fire stations. These rotas were introduced on the request of the fire fighters. 12 staff are required to operate a 2-pump station, this arrangement ensures flexibility where the station does not have 12 staff.
- Once approval for funding is received, a design team can then be procured to produce plans for a new Ballinalsoe station.

- He explained that the Civil Defence falls between 2 Government Departments. The Department of Defence funds 70% of the costs and Local Authorities the remaining 30%. Local Authorities administer the running of the Civil Defence. East Galway is adequately covered by the service, however there is insufficient interest in the west side of the County.
- Mountbellew Fire Station is a valuable station.
- There are currently 12 personnel stationed in Clifden. Department sanction would need to be sought to increase that number.
- Galway Fire Service ranks highly on the NOAC indicators.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- 6 out of the 11 Fire Stations in County Galway are now modern stations.
- Work is ongoing to upgrade the Fire Stations in Galway City and Ballinasloe.

ITEM NO. 5 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE NORTHERN & WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (NWRA). **4497**

Report dated 20th January 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Hoade **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee it was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. King to the Northern & Western Regional Assembly (NWRA).

ITEM NO.6 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **4498**

Report dated 16th January 2024 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Lee **SECONDED** by Cllr. Maher it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. Parsons to attend WoMeN's Regional Caucus at Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo on 15th October 2024. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. Collins, McHugh-Ryan and Comh, Curraoin to attend LAMA Spiring Training Seminar at The Kilford Arms Hotel, Kilkenny on 30th & 31st January 2025.

ITEM NO. 7 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, OTHER EVENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

4499

Report dated 16th January 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee it was **AGREED** to authorise Comh. Ó Curraoin to attend Celtic Conferences – The Finance Act 2024 at McKevitt's Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth on the 10th to 12th January 2025 (Retrospective Approval)

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. Parsons to attend Celtic Conferences – Corporate Governance at O'Donovan's Hotel, Clonakilty on the 7th to 9th February 2025.

ITEM NO.8 TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142 (5f) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

4500

Report dated 15th January 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Maher **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee the summary of proceedings at conferences attended were **NOTED**.

ITEM NO. 9 TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – JANUARY 2025 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED). **4501**

Report dated 17th January 2025 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The Management Report – January 2025, in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (As Amended) was **NOTED**.

ITEM NO. 10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE. **4502**

The following items of correspondence which were published on the extranet prior to the meeting were **NOTED**:

- Letter dated 10.11.24 from Wexford County Council. Resolution – Affordable Underwriting Irish Public Bodies.
- E-mail dated 17.12.24 from Donegal County Council. Resolution – Restoration of Town Councils.
- E-mail dated 17.12.24 from Donegal County Council. Resolution – Rain Water Harvesting.
- Letter dated 19.12.24 to Minister's Office Department of Health. Resolution – Covid Recognition Payment.
- E-mail dated 13.01.25 from Private Secretary to Minister for Health Minister Donnelly TD. Resolution - Covid Recognition Letter. Acknowledgement.
- Letter dated 06.01.25 to Open Eir. Invitation to attend a Galway County Council plenary meeting.
- E-mail dated 16.01.25 from Mr. Callaghan of Eir Public Affairs. Invitation to attend Plenary Meeting. Acknowledgement.
- Letter dated 06.01.25 to Department of Transport. Resolution – Grant for felling of roadside trees.
- E-mail dated 16.01.25 from Private Secretary to Minister Ryan TD. Resolution Grant for felling of roadside trees. Response.

- Letter dated 15.01.25 from Leitrim County Council. Resolution – Voting for our Diaspora.
- Letter dated 15.01.25 from Clare County Council. Resolution – Housing Aid for Older People Grant
- Letter dated 15.01.25 from Clare County Council. Resolution Admittance fee to GAA matches.
- Letter dated 17.01.25 from Roscommon County Council. Resolution – Rural Isolation and Loneliness.
- Letter dated 28.11.24 to Department of Transport. Resolution – Broaden criteria to fell roadside trees.
- E-mail dated 21.01.25 to Department of Transport. Resolution – Broaden criteria of felling of roadside trees. Reminder.

ITEM 11. QUESTION

4503

Cllr. Donohue submitted the following Question prior to the meeting:

'To ask the Director of Housing has any Galway County Council owned property occupied or vacant been identified and showing signs of MICA or Pyrite and if so please set out in tabular format the numbers.'

The following reply issued:

I wish to confirm that no Galway County Council owned property occupied or vacant has been identified as showing signs of MICA or Pyrite.

ITEM 12. NOTICE OF MOTION

4504

Cllr. Donohue submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

'To ask the Chief Executive to make a statement on the "Galway Metropolitan Retail Strategy" that it is developing with Galway City Council.'

The following reply issued:

A Joint Retail Strategy is currently being prepared by Galway City and County Councils as per the requirements of Policy Objective RET 3, Chapter 5, Section 9 of the County Development Plan.

It states that it is an objective of the Planning Authority to work with Galway City Council to prepare a Joint Retail Strategy as per the requirement under Section 3.5 of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012).

The policy objective further states that a Joint Local Authority Working Group will be set up to prepare and deliver a JRS for the Galway Metropolitan Area.

RET 3	joint Retail Strategy
It is an objective of the Planning Authority to work with Galway City Council to prepare a joint retail strategy as per the requirement under Section 3.5 of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012). A Joint Local Authority Working Group will be set up to prepare and deliver a Joint Retail Strategy for the Galway Metropolitan Area. The Joint Retail Strategy which will identify requirements for further retail will be completed within 1 year of the adoption of both city and county plans and will be adopted by way of variation to this Plan.	

Following a competitive tender process, KPMG FA were appointed as consultants to deliver the JRS, works on which commenced in September 2024.

A number of stages of the project have been carried out including:

- Baseline data gathering and analysis
- In person shopper survey
- Household survey
- Stakeholder Engagement including MD Members, NWRA, LEO, Retailers, and appropriate DOS' in both City and County Council's.

A working draft document has been submitted to the Joint Working Group for review with bi-weekly meetings scheduled between the Consultants – City Council and

County Council to ensure delivery of the Strategy. A presentation of the JRS will be made to the Elected Members once finalised.

From Galway County Council's perspective, the JRS will provide a robust evidence base and identify requirements for further retail development within the MASP settlements of Baile Chláir, Bearna and Oranmore.

ITEM 13. NOTICE OF MOTION

4505

Cllr. Charity submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

'In circumstances where it is recognised that the current Courthouse facilities at Courthouse Square, Galway are no longer fit for purpose, and that the Courts Service have actively been seeking a site for development of a new purpose built Courthouse facility for the County and City of Galway, I propose that Galway County Council commenced discussions with the Courts Service regarding the potential for the use of the upper and/or lower car park sites at County Buildings for the development of an upgraded Courthouse and civic office facility for the County and City of Galway.'

The following reply issued:

Since the completion of the Galway County Council Strategic Workforce Plan (involving an increase in staff across the organisation) which will be implemented on foot of recent budget decisions, we as a Council are reviewing our overall office accommodation.

The capacity within our buildings both owned and leased to cater for our own Staff accommodation needs is being examined. A Contractor/Consultant has been appointed in this regard. A part of this brief is to examine Council owned brown-field sites as potential locations for development to satisfy our own office accommodation needs in Galway Co. Council.

If there is an opportunity to engage with the Courts Service (which will result in an opportunity for Galway County Council to partner in what might be a suitable partnership arrangement), this will be considered. There would however have to be a very clear benefit from a Galway County Council perspective.

The Chief Executive asked Cllr. Charity to forward contact details in the Court Service directly to him.

ITEM NO. 14 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

4506

Members raised the following points and queries:

- There was uniform praise and gratitude expressed in the Chamber to everyone that is working tirelessly in assisting in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn.
- If in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn permits will be required to erect scaffolding to carry out repairs.
- ESB lines should be placed underground.
- The location of the Community Hubs was requested.
- Uisce Éireann were criticised for their lack of foresight in not ensuring generators were ready to ensure continued water supply.
- It was requested that updates on Galway Bay FM continue.
- Planning regulations prohibiting the installation of stoves in new build houses was heavily criticised. Those with air to water systems in their homes have no way of heating or cooking in power outages.
- The establishment of the Community Fora was welcomed and a request was made that Members be kept informed on their locations.
- If a generator could be made available to Kilchreest group water scheme.
- The 1993 Roads Act is not fit for purpose.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Ms. Carroll, Director of Services and the Rural and Community Directorate is currently working to establish the Community Hubs. They are to be established in areas across the County without power and water and wherever needed.
- He thanked and acknowledged the work of the outdoor crews, engineers, those that co-ordinated works, contractors, farmers and the general community in clearing roads.
- He asked for patience, it will take time to fully address the storm impact in all areas. Vulnerable persons and properties will be prioritised.
- The concerns expressed regarding Uisce Éireann and the lack of generators will be conveyed to UE.
- He thanked Mr. Finn, Director of Services and his team in County Hall and the MDs.
- Asked that all fallen wires be treated as if they are live and must not be touched and they must be reported to ESB or the Council and that care should be taken by people working at heights.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- He assured the Members that he had noted the comments raised.
- Information on issues is being received and complied by customer services, they will be addressed as appropriate.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- Roadside trees and those near houses need to be removed.
- Update was sought on Council houses that are without heating.
- A Civic Reception should be held for those that carried out works in the aftermath of the storm.
- The public were advised not to visit Knockma with multiple trees leaning across walkways.

- Galway Bay FM and other local stations need to be utilised to ensure consistent messages are being conveyed.
- Farmers must be supported after the storm, notably in the rebuilding of sheds and planning requirements.
- The delay by Government in seeking foreign assistance was criticised.
- Calls on the ESB to communicate with the Members.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- Over the weekend Mr. Michael Sheil was in contact with the chairs of the group water scheme committees.
- It will be a few days before electricity is restored to Kilchreest water scheme, he noted the Councillors request.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- Council houses with air to water systems may still have an open fire, depending on the particular house.
- Damage is being assessed and vulnerable tenants and those residing in demountables are prioritised. Assistance will be dependent on the restoration of power.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Agreed that Galway Bay FM and other local radio stations are an effective medium of communication.
- Uisce Éireann is a separate organisation, the comments of the Members will be communicated to them.
- Senior officials from Eir and ESB have confirmed their attendance at the Regional Emergency Meeting to be held the following day.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- It was asked if re-opened roads will be fully cleared.
- The importance of communication was emphasised.
- Hubs should be prioritised in areas where the restoration of electricity is not expected to be imminent.
- Unhappiness expressed at comments made to front line Council staff on social media.
- It was asked that facilities at the Long Point Loughrea be opened to provide hot showers.
- Shock that Uisce Éireann have not posted updates on social media in 3 days.
- A water tanker is needed in Loughrea.
- If there are support measures for electricity dependent Council houses.
- Staff and locals in An Cheathrú Rua were praised for ensuring the R336 remained open.
- A civic reception for An Cheathrú Rua on winning the All-Ireland Junior Football Final was requested.
- Uisce Éireann provided a generator in Ballinasloe but it could not be connected to ESB due to red tape.
- Trees near critical infrastructure must be removed.
- The public are asked to avoid Garbally in Ballinasloe.
- Reintroducing 2-way radio should be considered to avoid communication difficulties in the future.
- Professional expertise is required to unblock a road at, Castletaylor, Ardahan.
- The level of community spirit was commended.
- Coillte need to take responsibility for their trees that fell.
- Radio na Gaeltachta should also be utilised to communicate information.
- Could a waiver scheme or government fund be introduced for businesses impacted by the storm.
- It was enquired as to the amount of energy harnessed by windfarms and turbines during the storm.
- The poor state of ESB poles contributed to the power outages.

- It was asked if Eir had responded to the invitation issued to them to address the Council.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. Brann:

- The response from Eir to the invitation is included in the January meeting correspondence.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- The Council will revisit the roads that are not fully open.
- The priority at the moment is to ensure HSE access, main, regional and isolated local roads that are without alternative routes.
- ESB are working tirelessly to restore power across the whole County.
- Lack of power is compounding the water issues.
- There are constant meetings between himself, Ms. Lowe and the Chief Executive. They are meeting with senior officials in the ESB and Uisce Éireann tomorrow. The HSE and Gardaí are also part of the group. These meetings will continue for a number of days.
- The Crisis Management Team met this morning.
- Councillors are a valuable communication channel for us.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Information on Community Hub locations and facilities available will be circulated to the Members.
- He thanked the Members for their help and assistance dealing with queries from members of the public.

Members raised the following points and queries:

- It was asked what the parameters of the Community Hubs are and what their functions will be.
- Will the facilities at the Long Point, Loughrea be opened.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The hubs will provide power, hot drinks, water, charging and shower facilities, food and other services as needed.
- Information will be distributed through elected members, our normal media channels, local radio and via the Public Participation Network.
- He will inform Ms. Carroll, Director of Services of the facilities of the potential facilities at Long Point, Loughrea.

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that Minister Dara Calleary is due to visit Galway the following day and that the Cathaoirleach and himself will meet the Minister in Connemara.

The Chief Executive reminded the Members of their obligation in accordance with Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended, to submit their Donation Statements by 31st January 2025 and Annual Declarations by 28th February 2025. E-mails have been issued and the link to the online returns have been circulated. If the Members have any queries they can contact the Ethics Team.

ITEM NO. 15 VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS

4507

A resolution of congratulations was extended to the following:

- An Cheathrú Rua Football Club in winning the AIB All Ireland Junior Football Final.
- Mr. Mike Sheil and the Tynagh Abbey Duniry Intermediate Hurling Team on reaching the AIB All-Ireland Intermediate Club Final.

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Anne Qualter, Prospect, Maree, Oranmore, Co. Galway
- Colette Kennedy Walsh, Baunmore, Claregalway, Co. Galway
- Sean Walsh, Baunmore, Claregalway, Co. Galway
- Fiona Seoighe, Rossaveal Láin, Rossaveal, Ballinahown, Co. Galway
- Bertie Costello, Na Creagan, Inverin, Co. Galway.
- Cllr Ivan Canning, Lecarrow, Gortanumera, Portumna, Co. Galway

- Cllr. Cillian Keane, Prospect, Maree, Oranmore, Co. Galway
- Mary Flynn & Family, Hillcrest, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach: Martina Keane

Date: 24/2/2025