

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**

**Galway County Council**

**Ceantar Bardasach Bhaile Átha an Rí**

**Municipal District of Athenry**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Athenry held in the Board Room, Centrepoint, Liosbán, Tuam Road, Galway, on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2019.**

**I LATHAIR:**

**BAILL:** Cllr. J. Cuddy (Cathaoirleach)  
Cllr. G. Cronnelly,  
Cllr. J. Charity,  
Cllr. L. Carroll,  
Cllr. D. Collins,  
Cllr. S. Herterich Quinn,  
Cllr. A. Dolan.

**OIFIGIGH:** Mr. M. Owens, A/Director of Services,  
Mr. J. Cullen, Director of Services,  
Mr. D. Pender, Senior Engineer,  
Ms. P. Higgins, Senior Executive Engineer,  
Ms. G. Healy, A/Administrative Officer,  
Ms. G. Cooley, Assistant Staff Officer

Cllr. Cuddy, Cathaoirleach of Athenry Municipal District Council, welcomed all present at the Meeting.

**To confirm Minutes of the Athenry Municipal District Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2019** **AMD 10**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cronnelly and **SECONDED** by Cllr. Herterich Quinn, the Minutes of the Athenry Municipal District Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019, were **AGREED**.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Cllr. Cronnelly said that since the re-opening of Presentation College Athenry and the newly opened link road, the parking at that location remains dangerous and that local residents and the proprietors of the Raheen Woods Hotel continue to raise this issue. He said that bollards need to be put in place to stop the illegal parking and that there is a need for a pedestrian crossing to allow safe access for the students. Cllr. Cronnelly acknowledged that the Community Warden has had a presence at this location.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn supported Cllr. Cronnelly's views and asked if the Council could support the school in encouraging students to walk to school safely.

Cllr. Dolan said that students should be encouraged to come up with ways to improve their community and they should be consulted regarding the parking problems in order to achieve a solution.

Mr. Mitchell, in reply to the Members, said that the Council has given a commitment to review the parking in the vicinity of the new school once people have time to settle in and he said necessary measures will be put in place to improve safety at this location. He said that engagement with students would be a function of the Department of Education.

Ms. Higgins informed the meeting that she had recently spoken with the Principal of the Presentation College and said she will work actively with the school in order to improve the parking issues.

In reply to Cllr. Cronnelly, Mr. Mitchell said that the bridge adjacent to the site of the proposed new Vocational School building is a protected structure and that the Department of Education is working with the Planning Section of the Council to design a footbridge within planning guidelines.

Cllr. Cronnelly said that the Pairc na hAbhainn Estate was constructed with conditions allowing for a crossing at that location to cater for pedestrian access into town.

#### **Municipal District Director's Business & Correspondence**

**AMD 11**

Mr. Owens referred to letter which had been circulated to the Members, dated 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019, received from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, in reply to the Resolution passed by the Members at the July Meeting of the Municipal District Council in support of the Beef Plan Movement in their opposition to the proposed EU-Mercosur Trade Deal.

Cllr. Charity expressed his disappointment with the reply from the Department of Agriculture as he said the response did not indicate that the Department opposes the deal.

Mr. Owens informed the Members that the Council's application to the Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government (DHPLG) under the Services Sites Fund 2019, in respect of Council lands at Raheen, Athenry, had been successful. He said that €1.5m has been approved, with matching funds required from the Council, in the sum of €165,000. He said that, subject to approval of the DHPLG, a Design Team will be appointed so that proposals to construct approximately 30 Affordable Housing Units can be put through the Part 8 Planning Process.

**CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS**

**AMD 12**

Cllr. Herterich Quinn said she had received over 100 responses to a survey she had sent out on social media regarding the free parking initiative at Backlawn Carpark, Athenry and that 80% of the respondents were in favour of the free parking. She said that there is now an average of 30 cars per day parking at Backlawn Carpark, in comparison with as little as 2 or 3 per day before the free parking was introduced. She thanked Cllrs. Cronnelly and the other Members of the Municipal District Council for supporting her in this initiative, stating that it was proving very successful for the town, freeing up parking on the streets. She thanked the Council staff for erecting signage at three locations to inform the public of the free parking.

Cllr. Carroll also welcomed the success of the free parking initiative at Backlawn Carpark, however he said that three signs advertising the free parking was not adequate and that marketing of the free parking needs to be increased as some people are still paying for parking. Cllr. Herterich Quinn said she will promote the free parking on social media. Cllr. Herterich Quinn asked if the Council would cover up the parking meter or turn it off and Mr. Mitchell replied that this will be investigated.

Cllr. Cronnelly expressed the view that the free parking initiative at Backlawn Carpark on a trial basis up to December 2019 could be extended on a permanent basis from 2020. He also said that the carpark could be used as a set-down area for buses serving both of the Secondary Schools into the future.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn expressed the view that it would be beneficial for Athenry if a discount store be constructed in the town and she asked what was the status of the planning application for a discount store at the former Arrabawn site. Cllr. Herterich Quinn was informed that the Council could not comment on any individual planning applications.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn referred to the Casual Trading Bays in the Market Square in the town centre, stating that the feasibility of pedestrianizing the square to allow for a market to take place is being investigated by the Community Council at present and the results of this Feasibility Study should be available in October.

Cllr. Charity said he received representations from the residents of Abbey Row, Athenry following the recent flooding events. Ms. Higgins said that the Council investigating the river upstream at a number of locations which had flooded and where blockages occurred. She the gauges on the river are being monitored and on a positive note she said that the flood defence walls at Caheroyan worked to prevent flooding at that location.

Cllr. Cronnelly said that Mr. Gavin and Minister Sean Canney walked the river upstream of Athenry and that a report would be prepared following a meeting with the Office of Public Works. Cllr. Cronnelly thanked the Council staff on their prompt action during the flooding.

Cllr. Quinn also thanked the Council staff and members of the community on their actions during the recent flooding and asked if the bridge which had been knocked at the time could be repaired.

Cllr. Carroll said he had representations from the Principal of the Gaelscoil in Oranmore about the overgrown trees on the property next door to the school, and asked if they could be made safe.

Mr. Owens replied that the land was leased to the Oranmore Community Development Association and the matter of the overhanging trees would be investigated.

Cllr. Carroll said that residents in the Cartron-Garraun areas of Oranmore received correspondence from the Planning Section recently regarding the 148 acres between Oranmore and the railway station. He asked if some of this land could be earmarked for a loop line and also if the Council could purchase land for additional parking at the railway station.

Cllr. Cuddy said that the land at the moment is zoned agricultural and a material alteration would be required to the County Development Plan to change the zoning of the said lands.

Mr. Owens said that the Planning Section has commenced preparations for an Urban Design Framework Plan at Garraun, Oranmore to guide future development of the land and any future plans Irish Rail, or the residents would have. He said Consultants will work with the local landowners and the Planning Section and will share their findings on same.

Mr. Mitchell added that any discussions with Irish Rail for future plans would include the landowners.

Cllr. Charity asked about the water works to be carried out at the Ballindooley – Killoughter locations and what the time line was for same as the proposed roadworks that were approved at the Roads Budget Meeting were postponed due to these works. He asked who is in charge of water pressure at these locations.

Cllr. Charity also enquired about the road opening licence being sought for the laying of broadband lines along the N84. He asked what timelines were involved in these licences and what impact the works would have on traffic along this route and requested that the hours should be limited to avoid peak traffic. The Department of Transport should be approached to see if other works such as cycle lanes could be tied in with the broadband works.

In reply, Ms Higgins said that there are standard conditions recommended by the Council in relation to road opening licences which would include working times in relation to work at Ballindooley and Corrandulla of 9.30 a.m to 4.30 p.m, and she said Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is in charge of issuing the road opening licence.

Mr. Mitchell acknowledged Cllr. Charity's view that works on the whole stretch of the N84 should commence at the same time and he said he would investigate same in relation to Irish Water.

Cllr. Dolan said he had received representations in relation to Kilkelly's Boreen, Athenry, as the road has become very busy due to the one-way system at the New Line, and he expressed the view that the existing speed limit of 80 kph is too fast for this stretch of road. He asked if any safety provisions could be made on this stretch as the opening of the ring road is not due for some time yet.

Mr. Mitchell replied that last year's application for funding for the ring road construction was not successful, but he hopes that the next application will receive the funding required. He added that the volume of traffic on the road should reduce the speed and that, as the road is a public road, it is not possible to make it local access only.

In reply to a query from Cllr. Dolan to reduce the speed limit at the village of Attymon, Mr. Mitchell said that the speed limits could not be reduced, given that Attymon is not listed on the County Development Plan as a Village Centre. As the Speed Limit Bye-Laws have recently been adopted by the Members, it will be some time before new Bye-Laws will be adopted given the extensive work involved in this process.

Cllr. Dolan said he had received representations that the small parking area beside Monivea Playground be lined to allow safe parking at this location and Mr. Mitchell replied that ownership of this piece of ground would be investigated.

Cllr. Cuddy said that the residents in the Claregalway area had concerns about the high level of school-going traffic on the side roads stating that the roads infrastructure is not suitable for this traffic level. He also asked if passing bays could be installed at a number of locations for safety reasons.

Cllr. Cuddy also said he had received representations that parking at the Old Cemetery in Lackagh, Turloughmore be improved.

Mr. Mitchell replied that he would investigate same.

In reply to Cllr. Cuddy in relation to recent works carried out at Ruanmore junction, Mr. Mitchell said that these particular works were carried out by the TII.

Also in reply to Cllr. Cuddy, Mr. Mitchell said that works earmarked for completion using Notice of Motion monies allocated by Elected Members normally took place once the major resurfacing road works and the Local Improvement Scheme works are completed.

In reply to Cllr. Cuddy's query regarding flooding at the Coast Road, Oranmore and the condition of the Old Station Road, Oranmore, Ms. Higgins said that the issue of flooding at the Coast Road is more significant than originally anticipated and hoped to include the project for funding under an improvement grant. She said she hoped that some works could be carried out on the Old Station road in conjunction with the Water Services Section.

In reply to Cllr. Cuddy's query regarding the up-to-date position on the provision of a crossing at the Maldron Hotel Roundabout, Oranmore, Mr. Mitchell said that the latest traffic count figures were sent to the TII for their attention.

Cllr. Collins asked if the Council would investigate setting up a Community Employment (CE) Scheme or some similar scheme in the Athenry Municipal District which would facilitate works such as grass cutting and other maintenance works, thus freeing up the outdoor staff of the Council.

Mr. Mitchell said that the Galway Rural Development (GRD) works are suspended at the moment due to an issue with the insurances, but the Council has endeavoured to make some progress on this. However, he is of the view that funding for the setting up of a CE scheme could be sought, and he said that a Supervisor of the Scheme would need to be employed.

Cllr. Charity asked if the timeframes for applying for Community Involvement Schemes could be extended as the timeframe is very difficult for communities to meet due to fund-raising requirements for the applications.

Mr. Mitchell said the timeframe for the projects cannot be extended as the terms of the scheme are that the budget must be spent by end of the relevant year.


The Cathaoirleach acknowledged the briefing provided to the Members by Mr. Cullen and Mr. Pender prior to the commencement of today's Meeting in relation to the Part 8 Proposal for a Traffic Calming Scheme at Baile Chláir. Cllr. Charity welcomed the fact that the issues raised by the Members in relation to the Scheme were taken on board by the officials, stating that the outcome of discussions had been positive.

Cllr. Cuddy thanked the Engineering staff, stating that the Traffic Calming Scheme proposals were very practical.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all for attending the Meeting and for their contributions.

#### CRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN

Approved by:

  
CATHAOIRLEACH

Date:

