

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

Galway County Council

Ceantar Bardasach Bhaile Átha an Rí Órán Mór

Municipal District of Athenry Oranmore.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Athenry Oranmore held in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, on Monday 11th March, 2019.

I LATHAIR:

BAILL: Cllr. F. Kearney (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. G. Cronnelly
Cllr. J. Cuddy
Cllr. J. Charity
Cllr. M. Kinane

APOLOGIES: Cllr. P. Feeney
Cllr. M. Noone

OIFIGIGH: Mr. M. Owens, A/Director of Services,
Mr. D. Mitchell, Senior Engineer,
Ms. M. Ní Chionna, Senior Engineer,
Ms. P. Higgins, Senior Executive Engineer,
Mr. P. Gavin, Executive Engineer,
Mr. P. Carroll, Administrative Officer,
Ms. G. Healy, A/Administrative Officer,
Ms. G. Cooley, Asst. Staff Officer,

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

Item No. 1: To confirm Minutes of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Meeting held on 19th February, 2019 **AOMD 1860**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Charity and **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy, the Minutes of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Meeting held on 19th February 2019, were **AGREED**.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Cllr. Charity referred to the invitation, from the Department of Agriculture, to the Members of the Municipal District Council, to attend a Meeting at the Department Headquarters in Renmore, Galway, which invitation had been accepted by the Members. He said that the Meeting, which took place on 27th February 2019, was in regard to the recurring problem of wandering horses on the N84 Headford Road. He said that it was agreed at the Meeting that a Working Group of the various Agencies with responsibility for dealing with the issue of the control of horses would be established.

Cllr. Kearney said he was aware that work was in progress on setting up the Working Group, in conjunction with the relevant agencies.

Cllr. Charity also referred to the proposal he had made at the Municipal District Meeting on 19th February 2019, which had been agreed by the Members, that fencing be erected on the N84 in the vicinity of Carrowbrowne and he said that the question of funding for this fencing needed to be agreed.

Cllr. Cronnelly referred to his request at the Meeting of 19th February 2019 that the Council look for additional funding for the Athenry Relief Road. Mr. Mitchell replied that an application had been made to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for additional funding in this regard, and additional funding is expected for the Athenry Relief Road, as recorded in the Minutes of 19th February 2019.

Suspension of Standing Orders

AOMD 1861

The Cathaoirleach **PROPOSED** that the Standing Orders of Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Council be suspended so that 2 no. issues due to be raised under Cathaoirleach's Business be taken at this point in the Meeting. The Members **AGREED** to same.

He said the first issue was in regard to the **Road Traffic Special Speed Limits County Galway Bye-Laws 2018** which had been discussed by the Members of the Municipal District at its Meeting held on 12th November 2018 and which had been adopted by the Plenary Council at its Meeting held on 26th November 2018.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Máire Ní Chionna, Senior Engineer, to the Meeting.

Cllr. Cuddy raised an issue in relation to the Road Traffic Special Speed Limits County Galway Bye-Laws 2018 which had been adopted by the Plenary Council at Meeting held on 26th November 2018 (the Plenary Council Meeting). He stated that a motion he had proposed at the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Meeting held on 12th November 2018 (the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Meeting), to reduce the speed limit on the R446 Old Dublin Road from Furey's Cross to the water tower to 80 kmph and from the water tower to Oranbeg Roundabout to 60 kmph for a distance of 300m had been passed at the Plenary Council Meeting, but the distance of 300m was not recorded in the Minutes of the Plenary Council Meeting.

Cllr. Cuddy said there was disquiet in the Oranmore area due to the speed limit signs not being erected at the location submitted by him prior to the preparation of the Speed Limit Bye-Laws

and as agreed by the Municipal District Members and at Plenary Council Meeting. Cllr. Cuddy said that distances of 300 metres were agreed both East of Fureys Cross, Oranmore and East of the Water Tower at Oranmore to allow the speed limits to come into effect at those locations, rather than where the speed limit signs are being erected at present at the junctions.

The Minutes of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Council Meeting held on 12th November, 2018 and the Minutes of the Plenary Council Meeting held on 26th November, 2018 were made available to the Cathaoirleach by the Meetings Administrator. The Cathaoirleach referred to the Minutes of the Municipal District Meeting in relation to Furey's Cross which he said had been brought forward to the Plenary Council Meeting. He said that the Minutes of the Municipal District Meeting recorded that Cllr. Cuddy proposed and Cllr. Kinane seconded a motion to reduce the speed limit to 80kmph on the section of the R446 from the water tower to Furey's Cross and from the water tower to the roundabout to 60 kmph.

He said it was his understanding that no written Motion was brought forward to the Plenary Council Meeting in this regard.

The Cathaoirleach referred to the Minutes of the Plenary Council Meeting held on 26th November 2018. He said that the Minutes recorded that, following a vote, the Members agreed that a speed limit of 60 kmph be inserted from Oranmore roundabout to the water tower and to reduce the speed limit from 100 to 80 kmph on the section from the water tower to Furey's Cross junction with L8101.

He said there was no mention in the Minutes of distances.

Cllr. Cuddy agreed that no written proposal was brought to the Plenary Council in this regard.

The Cathaoirleach said distances had not been agreed by the Members. He said it was unfortunate that this was not raised at the time of the adoption of the Minutes of the Plenary Council Meeting.

Cllr. Kinane said that as the Members had adopted the Minutes of the Plenary Council Meeting, this meant that the Members accepted the Minutes as being an accurate record of what was agreed.

Ms. Ní Chionna said that the Roads Section is obliged to implement the Speed Limits adopted at the Plenary Council Meeting and she had to base the locations of the speed limits on the adopted Bye-Laws

Cllr. Cuddy asked if the Bye-Laws could be amended and Ms. Ní Chionna said that the Bye-Laws which had been adopted could not be amended until the next review of the Bye-Laws takes place. She also said that speed limit signs must be located where they are visible to the public and she is working with the Area Engineer in choosing locations for advance warning signs alerting motorists to the change to the speed limit, in accordance with Department Guidelines.

In reply to a query from Cllr. Cronnelly, Ms Ni Choinna said that the Council carries out checks on the ground when preparing maps rather than relying on *google street view* .

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms. Ní Chionna for attending the Meeting and for her replies to queries raised.

The Cathaoirleach informed the Members that the second Item to be taken under Cathaoirleach's Business was an Item which had been deferred from the previous Meeting - **Report on Burial Grounds**. He welcomed Mr. Paraic Carroll, Administrative Officer, Environment Section, to the Meeting.

Mr. Carroll addressed the Members and presented an update in relation to burial grounds in the County, as follows:

- There are over 230 burial grounds located across County Galway and most have Burial Ground Caretakers who maintain a Burial Ground Register, allocate burial plots and collect fees. Plots are sold only as they are needed.
- The maintenance and general upkeep of burial grounds is carried out by Galway County Council area offices and/or local community groups. He said that over 150 community groups receive an annual burial ground maintenance grant from the Council.
- A high proportion of the burial grounds are almost full, with limited capacity to accommodate new burial plots.
- The Council has undertaken 12 extensions to burial grounds since 2008 at a cost in excess of €500,000.
- There are 12 proposed extensions at various stages of progress currently.
- The Council's approved budget 2019 for burial ground extensions is €50,000, but this would need to be increased significantly in order to ensure that a programme of extensions can be continued in the coming years.
- If communities wish to continue having burial grounds in their parishes, they will need to assist the Council in obtaining land, either free of charge or at agricultural prices.
- A lack of affordable land for extensions to existing burial grounds could lead to the provision of a regional burial ground for the County in the future
- It is evident that without increased local involvement in the financing and development of new burial grounds or providing new or extensions to burial grounds, the Council will only be in a position to provide a limited number of extensions in the coming years.

Cllr. Charity asked if the shortfall was just in respect of the current year, or is over a number of years. He said that the solution to problems where burial grounds, such as Annaghdown Cemetary, have reached capacity, lies with landowners and local committees. He said he is not in favour of regional burial grounds being introduced. He said that families in the Annaghdown area have been forced to re-open old burial plots as no new plots are available. He expressed the view that the funding being provided for burial grounds is inadequate, with only one graveyard in the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District receiving funding at present.

Cllr. Kinane agreed with Cllr. Charity and said that families suffering bereavement do not need the added pressure of inadequate burial space. Cllr. Kinane welcomed the funding for works due to commence at Clarinbridge burial ground.

Cllr. Cuddy complimented Mr. Carroll on the works at Clarinbridge burial ground, but advised that there is an urgent need for expansion at Claregalway Cemetary and asked could a Compulsory Purchase Order be used to acquire lands for same.

Cllr. Cronnelly said that at a recent Environment Strategic Policy Committee Meeting, the question of increasing the price of burial plots was raised. Cllr. Cronnelly also asked if there was any facility in the County earmarked for storing ashes.

Cllr. Kearney said that the shortage of burial plots is very serious for families suffering bereavement and that Annaghdown and Claregalway are two areas in urgent need of additional space while there are also other areas in need of additional plots. He said that the lack of facilities for storing ashes in County Galway, such as urn towers, needs to be addressed, as cremation is becoming more frequent.

Mr. Carroll replied to the Members as follows:

In reply to Cllr. Cronnelly, he said that the income received by the Council in respect of burial plots is well short of what is required, even allowing for a price rise for burial plots. He said it would be a matter for the Members to increase funding for burial grounds when agreeing the Council's annual budget.

He said that the Annaghdown community has located 20 plots in the existing burial ground.

Mr. Carroll acknowledged that the option of providing regional burial grounds is not a popular one.

In reply to Cllr. Kinane, he said that works on Clarinbridge Cemetary are due to commence shortly.

In reply to Cllr. Kearney, he said that numerous sites for a burial ground at Claregalway have been looked at, however landowners in this area are looking for too much money for the land.

In reply to Cllr. Cuddy, he said that a Compulsory Purchase Order could be implemented, but this is not an option that the Council would be comfortable in using for the purchase of land

for a burial ground. He said that while Rinville Cemetary is not a regional burial ground, it is often used by people from Galway City due to proximity.

In reply to Cllr. Cronnelly and Cllr. Kearney, Mr. Carroll said that Galway County Council is in negotiation with a company for the provision of urn space for the storage of ashes, and that funding has been allocated in the Council's budget for such a facility.

Mr. Carroll said that the work carried out by communities in the upkeep of burial grounds is very welcome and necessary as the Council does not have the staffing resources to carry out maintenance works such as grass cutting, path repairs, repairing walls, etc.

In response to Cllr. Charity, Mr. Carroll said a Register is maintained by the Burial Ground Caretakers and copies of same are made available to the Environment Section.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Carroll for attending the Meeting and making the presentation on Burial Grounds.

Item No. 2: To approve the Annual Report of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Council 2018. **AOMD 1862**

The Annual Report of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Council 2018 was presented to the Members by Ms. Healy, Meetings Administrator. She said that the Report outlined the items discussed by the Members during 2018, presentations received by the Municipal District Council, recommendations of the Members brought forward to Plenary Council, Motions agreed by the Members, Resolutions regarding the Declaration of Roads to be Taken in Charge by the Council and the election of Cathaoirleach and Leas Chathaoirleach at the Annual Meeting held in June 2018.

Cllr. Charity thanked Ms. Healy for presenting the Annual Report, stating that it was an accurate reflection of the work carried out by the Municipal District Council during 2018. He also thanked the Director of Service and the Staff for their assistance to the Members during 2018.

Cathaoirleach Kearney also thanked the Executive and Staff for their support and assistance during 2018.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cuddy, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Charity, the Members **AGREED** the Annual Report of the Municipal District Council 2018.

Item No. 3. Municipal District Director's Business & Correspondence **AOMD 1863**

Mr. Owens circulated letter dated 26th February 2019 received from the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in response to the Resolution passed by the Members at the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District Budget Meeting held on 12th November, 2018 as follows:

“that TII fund ‘Driver Feedback Signs’ at both sides of the village of Clarinbridge’

Mr. Owens said that the letter indicates that TII initiated a pilot scheme in January 2019 to determine the effectiveness of Vehicle Activated Signage and this pilot scheme will initially focus on a number of targeted sites and will be expanded to include speed limit Vehicle Activated Signage at certain towns and villages later in the year.

Item No. 4 Cathaoirleach’s Business

AOMD 1864

Cllr. Kinane asked if the Broadband Officer could meet with the Municipal District Members regarding the provision of fibre in certain areas, such as in Rinville Golf Club, to ensure that businesses have adequate broadband.

Cllr. Kinane also asked if the Members could make submissions to an Bord Pleanála for the upcoming planning application in respect of a housing development in Moneymore, Oranmore.

In reply, Mr. Owens said the Broadband Officer would be invited to attend the next Meeting of the Municipal District Council and he confirmed that the Members could make submissions to an Bord Pleanála in respect of housing developments.

Cllr. Charity raised the issue of the Headford Road, which he said is a tourism route from Galway City down to Cong. He said that the ethos and perception of this busy road needs to be changed and that the Council should consider improvements such as landscaping and planting of trees along this route.

The Cathaoirleach agreed that this was a good idea, however he said that the question of funding would be a factor in this regard.

Cllr. Charity made the following **PROPOSAL** *“that the Athenry-Oranmore Municipal District Executive and Roads Department begin work on a plan for landscaping and improvement works along the N84 Headford Road between Clonboo and Ballindooley, with a view to making an application for funding under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme or such other Scheme as the Area Engineer deems appropriate”*. This proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy, and **AGREED**.

In reply to a query from Cllr. Cuddy regarding the flooding in Claregalway and the Traffic Calming Plan being prepared by T.I.I., Mr. Mitchell said he is aware that a number of business people are not in agreement with the plan, but the TII are still working on same and it is expected the Plan will be available within the month.

In reply to a query from Cllr. Cronnelly who said that householders are paying extra for private waste water treatment in certain estates in Athenry, Mr. Mitchell said that the householders were aware that there would be charges for same before they purchased these properties. He said that while the Waste Water Treatment Plant was upgraded for the town, there is a

need to upgrade the network, which will allow for estates to connect to the plant in the future.

Also in reply to Cllr. Cronnelly who raised an issue regarding traffic congestion and parking difficulties being encountered in proximity to the new Secondary School built at Raheen, Athenry, Mr. Mitchell said that a safety audit would be undertaken in the coming months on the road in question, but it is recommended that a certain amount of time be given to allow for a period of settling in.

In regard to the Ard Aoibhinn housing estate, he said that an addendum would have to be made to the existing Athenry Traffic Management Plan to allow for yellow lines preventing people parking outside private houses, if this were to be introduced.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all for their contributions to the Meeting and he said that the next Meeting was scheduled for Monday 13th May. He said the May Meeting will be the last Meeting of the current Members pending the Local Elections at the end of May and the boundary changes being implemented.

Criochnaigh an Cruinniu Ansin

APPROVED BY: Frank Keenan
DATE: 13th May 2019