

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 Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, on Tuesday 12th May 2020.

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. D. Mitchell, Senior Engineer,
Mr. P. Gavin, Executive Engineer,
Ms. G. Healy, A/Administrative Officer,
Ms. G. Cooley, Asst. Staff Officer.

Cllr. Cuddy, Cathaoirleach of Athenry Municipal District Council, welcomed all present at the Meeting. He referred to the Remote Briefing Meeting of the Municipal District of Athenry held through Microsoft Teams on 17th April, 2020 and he thanked Mr. Owens and Ms. Healy for facilitating the Briefing for the benefit of the Members.

To confirm Minutes of the Athenry Municipal District Meeting held on 10th March, 2020

AMD 35

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Collins, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Dolan, the Minutes of the Athenry Municipal District Meeting held on 10th March 2020, were **AGREED**.

To approve the Annual Report of the Athenry Municipal District Council 2019

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cronnelly, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Charity, the Members **AGREED** to approve the Annual Report of the Athenry Municipal District Council 2019.

To fix a date for the Annual General Meeting 2020 of the Municipal District Council **AMD 37**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cronnelly, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Dolan, the Members **AGREED** that the Annual General Meeting of Athenry Municipal District Council be held on 2nd June 2020 at 2pm in the Council Chamber.

Municipal District Director's Business & Correspondence **AMD 38**

Mr. Owens referred to the Covid-19 Protocol for Municipal District Meetings which had been circulated to the Members, Media and relevant Staff prior to the Meeting and he thanked all present for adhering to the Protocol. He referred, in particular, to the 2m distancing requirement and the use of the hand-sanitiser provided in the Chamber. He also referred to the requirement that the Meetings should convene for no longer than is absolutely required and should ideally last no longer than one hour and that the items for discussion would be confined to Statutory Business only. He also said that, as per the Protocol, Staff attendance was kept to a minimum, and therefore, he said that Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Gavin would be asked to join the Meeting at this point by the Meetings Administrator.

Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Gavin then joined the Meeting.

Cllr. Charity referred to the Resolution passed by the Members at their Meeting held on 10th March 2020, as follows:

“that the National Transport Authority be requested to attend a Meeting of the Athenry Oranmore Area to set out public transport and bus service facilities and future plans for rural North Galway areas including those of Annaghdown, Corrandulla, Bawnmore, Lackagh, Cregmore, Claregalway and Castlegar/Killoughter”.

Cllr. Charity asked if a reply had been received from the National Transport Authority and Mr. Owens replied that the letter sent to the National Transport Authority would be followed up.

Cathaoirleach's Business **AMD39**

Cllr. Cronnelly referred to the extra €1m funding promised to Galway County Council by Minister Phelan for spending in Municipal Districts in 2020 and Mr. Owens replied that it is expected that the funding will be made available but the timeline for receipt of the additional funding is difficult to predict at this stage due to Covid-19. He said that this €1m was included

in the Budget adopted by the Members for 2020 as a contra item and the funding was earmarked to strengthen the role of the Municipal Districts.

Cllr. Cronnelly made the following **PROPOSAL**: *“That the money ringfenced by Minister John Paul Phelan of €1m be given a timeframe of allocation and commitment in writing”*. This proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy, and **AGREED** by the Members.

Cllr. Cuddy said it is even more important now, due to Covid-19 implications for the Council’s revenue, that the Council receives this funding of €1m and he said the Council should contact the Department to ensure it is received.

Mr. Owens said that contact would be made with the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in order to follow up on this additional funding.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn asked if there was any progression on upgrading works at Furey’s Cross and Casey’s Cross Athenry. In relation to Furey’s Cross she said that the landowners at that location had given permission to use their land in order to make this junction safer.

Mr. Gavin said that he hoped to start progressing these works once the Covid-19 restrictions were lifted.

Also in reply to Cllr. Herterich Quinn, Mr. Mitchell said that if the Members had a query regarding a particular public lighting location, they could raise this with him separately and he would deal with their queries. He said that a Regional Energy Efficiency Programme is being prepared, with the lead Local Authority being Mayo County Council. He said the proposed Programme would be brought before the Members for consideration and adoption in due course. He said that while there will be initial expenditure involved in retrofitting of lights, this will create savings in the long term.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn asked if there was any update in relation to the installation of the proposed footbridge to facilitate the new Clarin College, Athenry and Mr. Mitchell replied that the Department of Education was preparing the procurement documents for same.

Cllr. Charity welcomed the new public lighting in place at Cloonboo.

Mr. Mitchell, in reply to Cllr. Charity, said that the question of using GAA carparks to facilitate Park & Ride can be problematic as it is normally the GAA Governing Body who has the decision making role for these carparks.

Cllr. Charity also asked about the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) timeframe for 2020 and works earmarked under the Notice of Motion procedure.

Mr. Mitchell said that the Council awaits a revised letter of offer for the LIS from the Department of Rural & Community Development. He said that projects for completion in 2020 will be drawn from the secondary list which was prepared earlier in the year. In relation to Notice of Motion monies, he said that works had been delayed due to adverse weather at

the start of the year and currently Covid-19 restrictions have resulted in works being deferred until restrictions are lifted.

Cllr. Carroll said he wished to appeal to the public to refrain from leaving boxes of bottles etc. at the bottle banks when the bottle banks are full. He said that people should come back at a later date when the bottle banks and clothes banks have been emptied.

In reply to Cllr. Herterich Quinn, Mr. Owens said that prosecutions continue to be taken by the Council in response to illegal dumping where CCTV evidence is available and updates on figures for same are available from the Environment Section throughout the year and this information is also presented at the Joint Policing Sub-Committee. He said the Community Wardens are proactive in relation to dealing with illegal dumping and it is hoped that additional funding will be provided to combat this problem.

Cllr. Carroll asked if there was a timeframe on the spending of the Town and Village Scheme funding and Mr. Mitchell replied that the Department of Rural & Community Development has extended the closing date for the completion of the Town and Village schemes.

Cllr. Carroll said he wished to advise the public to take care due to a number of break-ins which have taken place in the Oranmore/Rinville area by people reputed to be from a pizza delivery company. He advised people to keep doors and windows locked.

Cllr. Herterich Quinn thanked Ms. Nuala Heffernan and Staff of the Housing Section for their assistance in organising a clean-up at the Ballydavid Housing Scheme, Athenry. She also extended her congratulations to Oranmore Arts Group for organising a virtual Arts Festival recently.

Cllr. Dolan asked what is the plan for completing the Roads Programme, having regard to the current Covid-19 restrictions and Mr. Mitchell replied that it is hoped to start work on the programme of works on 18th May. He said that risk assessments are currently being carried out in order to ensure that the staff are kept safe while working.

Cllr. Collins asked if the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) of the Council is in a position to help businesses restarting after the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted in order to give them guidance in adhering to the guidelines issued by Government. Mr. Owens said he would pass on Cllr. Collins' request to the LEO in this regard.

Cllr. Charity acknowledged that the Community Wardens are carrying out their duties regarding the illegal dumping which has become more prevalent in the last few months.

Cllr. Charity then said he wished that it be recorded that he strongly condemned the actions of the people who arranged a blockade on the N84 on Monday night 11th May where emergency personnel were impeded by a group of people from passing on this main road.

He expressed his support of An Garda Síochána and the emergency services and Cllr. Carroll supported Cllr. Charity's views in this regard. Cllr. Cuddy added that it was unforgiveable to

put lives in danger by blocking the road and he complemented all frontline staff for their work in difficult circumstances during Covid-19 restrictions.

In reply to a number of queries from Cllr. Cuddy, Mr. Mitchell said that the School Street Project proposed for Oranmore is a very worthwhile project, however there is a significant body of work to be done as every school member must be assessed on how they get to school before the process can go to public consultation. Mr. Mitchell said that the problem of speeding on the Old Dublin Road, Oranmore, is a matter to be dealt with by An Garda Síochána and he said that no information regarding 5G masts has been brought to his attention.

Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin

Approved by:


CATHAOIRLEACH

Date: 8/9/20

