

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

Ceantar Bardasach Chonamara **Municipal District of Conamara**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Conamara held at the Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae, Galway on the 15th of October 2018 @ 2.00 p.m

ILATHAIR:

Baill:

Cllr. N. Thomas Cathaoirleach, S. O’Cualáin
S. Walsh, E. Mannion, T. Ó Cuarraoin,
N. Byrne, T. Welby, S. O’Tuairisg, T. Healy

Oifigigh:

G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance
D. Mitchell, S.E Infrastructure-Operations
P. Breathnach, S.E.E Conamara
M. Ní Chionna, S.E Infrastructure-Operations
T. J Redmond, Area Engineer, N. Conamara
N. O’Conaola, Area Engineer, S. Conamara.
S. Groarke, Meetings Administrator

Apologies:

1. Minutes of the MD of Conamara Meeting held on the 13-9-2018 **CMD 18047**

The adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13-9-2018 was proposed by Cllr. T. O’Curraoin and seconded by Cllr. S. O’Cualáin

2. Matters arising from the Minutes **CMD 18048**

Cllr. N. Byrne requested an update on the ecological assessment on the footbridge at Oughterard and enquired about the health and safety audit which has been undertaken but had not been communicated to her. Cllr. E. Mannion referred to the Greenway and welcomed the confirmation from the Chief Executive that an application will be submitted to the Department of Transport by the end of November. Comh. T. O’Curraoin enquired about

whether there has been any further progress in regard to the shorewalk at Spiddal. Cllr. N. Thomas requested that his statement in regard to keeping up the momentum on item 5 of the minutes be expanded to include the reference “to maintaining the Footbridge in close proximity with the Roadbridge“He also requested a correction to the statement in regard to the dips on the Barna road to remove the statement “claims that the Council is not doing anything”. He sought an update on the problems associated with the traffic lights at Moycullen and the flooding at the nursing home. D. Mitchell advised that ecologist’s report has been completed in regard to the foot/road bridge but T.I.I have to decide the next stage as regards the appointment of consultants to consider it. In regard to the shorewalk at Spiddal he advised that the matter concerning the ownership of the land has been referred to the Law Agent. He stated that P. Breathnach will examine the situation as regards the traffic lights in Moycullen. P. Breathnach advised that work has been undertaken on some of the dips on the Barna Road and the flooding near the nursing home is due to a blocked pipe-he will examine this situation again. Comh. S. O’Tuairisg on behalf of the Municipal District welcomed Naoise O’Conaola as the new Area Engineer based at Carraroe.

3. Update on the Moycullen Bypass

CMD 18049

D. Mitchell advised that RPS Consultants propose to have the final contract documents completed by Quarter 1 or Quarter 2 in 2019. It is envisaged that the tender process will have commenced by Quarter 3 in 2019. Cllr. N. Thomas referred to the DMURS Design Manual published in 2013 which provides guidance in regard to the design of streets and roads (urban landscapes/streetscapes) for villages and towns. He explained that the approach roads to Moycullen have an industrial like appearance/scape with the stone walls and a wide road with fast moving traffic. He advised that there is an opportunity now to put in an ambient streetscape with features such as street furniture, statues and trees and measures to slow the traffic at the Tullykyne and Oughterard approach roads. He explained that he raised this matter at a previous meeting and the Council cannot miss out on an opportunity to implement features contained in the DMURS manual. Cllr. N. Byrne advised that the bypass is badly needed with the increased influx of traffic and welcomed the fact that a contractor will be appointed towards the end of 2019. She also referred to the importance of streetscapes and the increased use/realignment of the pavement areas for amenity features. Cllr. E. Mannion welcomed the progress on the Moycullen Bypass and referred to the cabinet approval for the submission of the planning application for the N6 Galway City Ring Road to An Bord Pleanála. She also referred to the progress being made on the N59 Maam Cross-Bunnakill road and enquired about the works near Paddy Festys at Recess. D. Mitchell confirmed that the method statements have been agreed and the 5 km Maam Cross -Bunnakill section will go to tender early in 2019 with a contractor to be appointed on completion of the process. -he also advised that an additional overlay is required for the section of the N-59 near Paddy Festys.

4. Consideration of the Draft 3-Year Roads Programme 2019-2021

CMD 18050

D. Mitchell referred to the schedules and maps which were circulated at the meeting in regard to the draft 3- Year Programme 2019-2021 of proposed road improvement works for North and South Conamara. He advised that the expenditure is based on the 2018 road grant of €13.2 m received by the Council for road improvement works apportioned pro rata in accordance with the km length of roads among the 5 Municipal Districts. This amounts to

approx. €2.8 million for Conamara for each of the 3 years. He stated that the road selection process is based on the scrim ratings of which roads with a rating of 1-4 are in the worst condition and the maps indicate a wide geographical spread. He explained that the programme reflects the existing Municipal District boundaries for 2019. He stated that the funding is clearly insufficient and the Council sought extra amounts this year but was unsuccessful. Cllr. E. Mannion sought clarity on the new boundaries and was advised by D. Mitchell that North and South Conamara will still be 1 Municipal District with 9 Councillors. Comh. S. O'Tuairisg enquired about an application for funding in regard to the Doire Fhatharta road near Carraroe and was advised by D. Mitchell that Department of Transport staff visited the site last week and the Council is making an application for €500,000 over a 2- year period. This will involve land acquisition and the use of the Part 8 Planning process. Comh. S. O'Cualáin advised that all the roads marked on the map need to be done and referred to the roads marked CSO7 and CSO8 on the map for South Conamara which are in very bad condition in part due to heavy traffic carrying seaweed. He referred to the bad condition of the R340 which is 50km long from Screeb to Carna onto Recess and that applying overlay to bumps does not fix the problem in the long run. He stated that a €30,000 budget spent on the improvement of minor roads is very little when wages and the hire of machinery is taken into account. Cllr. T. Healy referred to the bumps and dips on the R340 and enquired if scrim testing will be undertaken during the 3-year program. Cllr. N. Byrne welcomed the program and some of the roads included on it and enquired as to what type of works does it specifically entail -is it the tar and chips process for the same job on each road. Comh. T. O'Curraoin advised that the bumps and dips in the roads occur during dry weather and are a result of the boggy terrain they are built upon. Cllr. T. Welby enquired about funding for the LIS schemes. D. Mitchell advised that this is a multi- annual program and as such it is indicative for the present and there may be changes if extra funding is allocated. He confirmed that the Council will continue to undertake scrim tests. He advised that the Council has advertised a public notice in regard to applications for the LIS and details can be requested from N. Heffernan. Cllr. N. Thomas advised that the Council is faced with a difficult task on the selection of the roads for the programme as the funding is inadequate and so many roads are in a poor condition -it is hard to explain to people that there are no immediate plans to undertake works on roads they are concerned with. The adoption of the 3 Year Road Programme 2019-2021 for Road Improvements was proposed by Cllr. S. Walsh and seconded by Cllr. N. Byrne.

5 Draft Road Traffic Special Speed Limits-Co. Galway Bye-Laws 2018 CMD 18051

M. Ní Chionna presented 42 maps including an index at the meeting which outlined the draft Special Speed limits proposed for Conamara under the Road Traffic Act 2004. She explained that Special Speed limits refer to any road where changes are proposed to the default speed limits specified on existing Bye-Laws e.g change from 100km to 80km. In 2015 the Minister for Transport issued new Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland and that that the written consent of T.I.I is required for any change to speed limits on National Roads in accordance with the 2004 Road Traffic Act. On many sections of the N59 T.I.I are proposing an 80km speed limit instead of the default 100km. She advised of proposed changes to the 50km and 60km speed limits in towns and villages and that periodic speed limits will be set at the location of all National Schools on the N59-flashing speed limit signs will operate during school hours. She stated that the proposed changes to

the speed limits were advertised as part of the public consultation process from the 3rd of August to the 7th of September and that representations were made/submissions received from the Gardaí, Councillors, Engineers and the public. Cllr. T. Welby requested clarification as regards the role of Councillors fixing speed limits on National Roads and was advised by M. Ní Chionna that special speed limits are made by the Plenary Council but any changes also require the approval of T.I.I. She advised that the Speed Limits will be included on the agenda for the Plenary Council meeting scheduled for the 22-10-2018. She also explained that the 50km periodic speed limit at the location of National Schools on the N59 will revert to the overall speed limit outside school hours. Cllr. S. O’Cualáin proposed that the 80km speed limit proposed for Maam Cross should be reduced to 50km due to the blind bend on the N59 and the heavy traffic. His proposal was seconded by Cllrs Mannion and Walsh. Cllr. T. Healy advised that the junction at Maam Cross needs to be re-designed and enquired about traffic data and plans to do it. D. Mitchell stated that a survey was undertaken on all the junctions on the N59 but no level of funding has been notified to the Council by T.I.I. Cllr. E. Mannion advised that the speed limit at Paddy Festys should be 50km as it is a very dangerous stretch of road. M. Ní Chionna stated that the Council should identify all road safety issues and the adoption of speed limits is a reserved function but the consent of T.I.I is required to changes affecting the N59. Comh. T. O’Curraoin advised that there is an accident waiting to happen at the Barna junction and proper speed limits should be set at side road junctions -a lot of motorists do not obey speed limits. Cllr. S. Walsh welcomed the periodic speed limit for Roscahill and the change from 50km to 60km in other parts is an improvement. He stated his concern about the reductions from 100km to 80km on sections of the N59 as a cynical exercise in regard to the fact that T.I.I could relax the funding for its improvement as it would be considered a lesser category of road – an improvement in the road quality is required and not a reduction in the speed limits. He stated that the Council wants T.I.I to upgrade the N59 as it is the gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way and vital for tourism in Conamara.

Comh. S. O’Tuairisg referred to the ongoing problem associated with the 50km/60km/80km speed limits along the R336 in areas such as Furbo and the confusion caused to motorists by the conflicting changes-can consideration be given to changing the 60km to 80km. He stated that there is more traffic on the R336 than the N59 and he advised that the 80km speed limit on the side roads which connect to the R336 should be reduced. Cllr. T. Healy welcomed the periodic speed limits for schools and wondered if they would be overruled at the Plenary Council meeting on the 22nd of October by changing some of the 80km limits back to 100km. He stated that the R336 is a busy tourist route that is ruined by too many conflicting speed limits. Cllr. N. Byrne referred to Map C30 and the 50km speed limit at the bridge at Oughterard- and referred to the need for a H & S audit and a reduced speed limit of 20 or 30km. She enquired whether T.I.I will fund the road signage requirements and spoke about the speed limits at Scoil Doire Ghlinne, Killanin, Roscahill and Scoil Baile Nua. Comh. T. O’Curraoin requested that the speed limit at the bad turn at Tully be examined. Comh. S. O’Cualáin recommended that the 80km speed limit at Crosán an Tulaigh on the R336 be reduced to 60km. Cllr. N. Thomas stated that he is not in favour of reducing the speed limits along the national roads but they may be necessary. He referred to the proposed reduction of the speed limit at Power’s Quarry, Roscahill to 80km and the resultant potential increase in revenue for the speed detection van. He explained that speed limits should not be viewed as a target as motorists can be prosecuted for dangerous driving even if they drive under the limits. He advised that a level of consistency is required for the

speed limits on the R336 to address the confusion. Cllr. E. Mannion advise that the Councillors may not support certain changes to the speed limits at the Plenary Council meeting on the 22nd of October but will have to act with responsibility. M. Ní Chionna advised that she will consider the position as regards An Spidéal, Na Forbacha and An Tulaigh Mhór (R336). Cllr. N. Thomas requested her to obtain clarity from T.I.I as regards the matters raised by the Councillors before the next meeting. He advised her that the Councillors will need to further consider the matter before the Plenary Council meeting and will revert back to her with their proposals.

6. Municipal District Director's Business

CMD 18052

G. Mullarkey advised of the forthcoming Municipal District budget meetings.

7. Cathaoirleach's Business

CMD 18053

Cllr. N. Thomas referred to the proposed Sewage Treatment Plant at An Sruthán, Carraroe and advised that it is designed only for primary stage treatment i.e only the solids will be removed from the wastewater and nothing will get treated. He requested that the Council get back to Irish Water as a proper quality treatment plant is needed for the protection of Galway Bay. Cllr. T. Healy stated that this would ruin the aquaculture of Galway Bay which is a protected SAC. Comh. S. O'Tuairisg referred to the proposed new sewage treatment plant for Spiddal and the fact that it is to be built near the school. Comh. T. O'Curraoin advised that there is room to relocate it at Spiddal. Comh. S. O'Cualáin enquired if more wind turbines are planned for the site at Rossaveal.

8. AOB

CMD 18054

Cllr. N. Byrne enquired on the progress in regard to the proposed bus shelters for Conamara and also in regard to the Council sending letters to private landowners in relation to fallen trees which affect public roads as a result of the recent stormy weather. D. Mitchell advised that the Council and the NTA have agreed that the coach park site in Clifden is suitable for a bus shelter- the NTA provided an indicative design but have requested the Council to prepare the final design which is being progressed. He explained that the Council has made representations to the NTA in regard to the site/s in Spiddal as it is not feasible as regards size for disability access. He stated that the site identified by the NTA in Moycullen is on private property and the Council does not consider it a practical convenient location and the matter is currently being discussed with the NTA. In regard to Oughterard the NTA has identified 2 sites but it is not prepared to provide funding which involves land acquisition. Comh. T. O'Curraoin advised of a suitable location at Barna and D. Mitchell advised that he was not aware of this but the Council will consider an application to the NTA. He also stated that Council staff had met with NTA personnel recently. He explained that the sites have to be of a certain size to provide for disability access and that the Council will undertake the work on the basis of funding provided by the NTA. Cllr. E. Mannion welcomed the progress on the bus shelter at Clifden. D. Mitchell referred to the fallen trees originating from private property and advised that the landowners are legally responsible for this and the Council does issue letters to them. Comh. S. O'Tuairisg referred to the construction of wind turbines at Rossaveal and the concern in regard to the over flow of water/flooding even if the culverts are widened. P. Breathnach advised that the Council will make arrangements to deal with

this. Cllr. T. Healy enquired about hedge cutting in Conamara and was advised that there is a contract in place for this. Cllr. E. Mannion expressed her congratulations to Seán Kyne T.D on his promotion to the Cabinet as Chief Whip and Minister of State for Gaeilge, the Gaeltacht & the Islands. Cllr. T. Welby concurred with this and also congratulated Seán Canney T.D on his appointment as Minister of State at the Departments of Rural & Community Development and the DCCAE. The other Councillors also expressed their congratulations to them.

9. Date & Venue for Next Meeting

MD 18055

It was agreed that the next Ordinary Meeting would be held at 2.00 p.m on Monday 10-12-2018 at the Council Chamber in Aras an Chontae, Galway.

CROCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN