

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE

Ceantar Bardasach Chonamara **Municipal District of Conamara**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Municipal District of Conamara held in Room G01, Aras an Chontae, Galway on the 23rd of February 2018 @ 1.30 p.m

ILATHAIR:

Baill:

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

Oifigigh:

G. Mullarkey, Head of Finance
J. Cullen, DOS Infrastructure & Operations
M. Timmins, A/DOS Planning & Environment
D. Mitchell, S.E Roads & Transportation
D. Pender, S.E, N.R.D.O
P. Breathnach, S.E.E Conamara
T. J Redmond, Area Engineer, N. Conamara
Ml Kerrigan, Area Engineer, S. Conamara
N. Heffernan, AO Infrastructure & Operations
B. Dunne, Assistant Planner
C. Hannon, ASO Planning & Environment
S. Groarke, Meetings Administrator

Apologies:

1. Minutes of the MD of Conamara Meeting held on the 6-11-2017 CMD 18001

The adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 6-11-2017 was proposed by Comh. S. O'Tuairisg and seconded by Comh. T. O'Curraoin.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes CMD 18002

Comh. S. O'Cualáin enquired about the current position in regard to the appointment of Engineers to work on piers & harbours. Cllr. E. Mannion welcomed T.J. Redmond back as Area Engineer based at Clifden and stated the position was vacant for a long period. She

acknowledged the work of P. Breathnach & K. Lydon during this period. Comh. S. O'Tuairisg welcomed M. Kerrigan to Carraroe and stated that the recent constant changes in personnel are not satisfactory- he expressed the view that the Council should be deploying higher engineering grades to the offices in Conamara. Cllr. T. Welby referred to an incident at the previous meeting which was not recorded on the minutes which during his comments on in planning issues he was interrupted by Cllr. S. Walsh and called a liar and he requested an apology for this. Cllr. S. Walsh advised that he did not recall using that word but if he said anything in the heat of the moment during the discussion to offend him he will apologise for it. Cllr. T. Welby stated that he will accept his apology.

3. Gaeltacht Plan

CMD 18003

Item No. 5: To discuss the Chief Executive's Report on Submissions received on the Proposed Variation No 2 (a) and 2 (b) to the Galway County Development Plan 2015 – 2021.

Mr. Dunne gave a brief summary explaining the purpose of attending this meeting was to follow on from the meeting dated the 12th February 2018 where Forward Planning Staff met with Conamara Municipal District members to discuss the chief executives report on submissions received on the proposed variation No. 2 (a) and 2(b) to the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021. He summarised that in relation to proposed variation No. 2(a) Bearnna there had been 59 submissions received, 7 of which were from prescribed bodies. He also advised that in relation to proposed variation No. 2(b) Gaeltacht there had been 36 submissions received, 9 of which were from prescribed bodies. He advised that some of the issues raised at the meeting on the 12th February 2018 were contrary to the Chief Executives Recommendations. He stated that there were issues raised regarding the lands being proposed to be zoned as a flood risk. He explained that staff had gone through all the relevant maps and previous plans. He advised members that there has been substantial changes made to this plan compared to the original plan which was previously approved by members. He said that the Planning Authority had carried out a Stage 2 Flood Risk Assessment by qualified consultants and based the Draft Plan on same. He commented that he was concerned that members were going against Ministerial Guidelines in relation to these plans. He reminded members that the Chief Executives Report would be before all members at the February Council meeting on the 26th February 2018. He highlighted to members again that if the Chief Executives recommendation were not adhered to and lands were changed which were proposed to be zoned a flood risk then there would invariably be a Ministerial Direction on the plan. He advised that this would be contrary to Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act. He said the changes would first go on display, submissions could then be made on same and the Department will properly issue a draft ministerial direction then. He stated that it was important that members were aware of this. He reminded members again that the original plan was previously approved by members in 2012 and there had been a lot of changes to the original plan. He advised that it was the role of Forward Planning to take a precautionary role in line with the Ministerial Guidelines on flooding and that's what was done with this plan. He summarised that in the Draft Plan it was proposed that there would be 12 hectares of R1 land zoned and 36 hectares of R2 land zoned. He advised members that if they proceed with changes and there is

Ministerial Direction then it would only be giving false hope to people as these lands will fail justification tests. He stated that it was agreed at the last meeting that members would submit any proposed amendments to the Forward Planning Unit before the 22nd February 2018 and he thanked members for doing same, he said by receiving these proposals at that stage it would allow sufficient time for considering same and mapping. He summarised that he just wanted to be sure that members were aware of the consequences of making significant changes to the Draft Plan. He advised them that based on past experience, i.e. the Headford Local Area Plan – members decided to zone residential on flood zones and the Department got involved and stated that the R2 lands were excessive and lands had to be reduced. He explained that in relation to preparing these plans all submissions were taken into consideration and all individuals were listened to in relation to any concerns they may have had. He advised though that the lands identified as being a flood zone cannot be changed. He stated that the Forward Planning Staff are recommending that these lands are left as is or proposed variation No. 2(a) and 2(b) will be issued with a direction. He explained that any Material Alterations made at the Council meeting on Monday coming would go on display so it will be a few months before a ministerial direction would come into effect and the R2 lands would be affected. He said that the Galway County Development Plan is to be reviewed in 2019 and if a Ministerial Direction is received now on these plans then will be on a back foot next year at the review stage of the County Development Plan.

Cllr. N. Byrne thanked the Forward Planning Staff for the meeting and the time allowed on these plans. She asked in relation to the proposals put forward by the members were there any that Forward Planning were agreeable to. Mr. Dunne confirmed that there was, he stated that the proposal of the additional community amenity could be facilitated and also in relation to Submission No. 59 as this was not on a flood zone then this could also be facilitated. He said apart from the two just mentioned the other proposals could not be supported by the Forward Planning section.

Comh. Ó Curraoin stated that he voted against the adoption of the previous plan in 2012. He said that he does not agree that there is a flooding issue in Bearnna, he agrees that houses should not be built in a flood zone but he feels that the zoning is coming up too far on the map. He asked could the hydrologic reports being provided by people be taken into account. He said that people will end up not wanting to build in Bearnna due to all the issues. He stated that he could not agree with this plan, he did not want to see anyone losing their lands.

Comh. Ó Tuairisg stated that he was informed by the Department that it was up to Galway County Council to do these plans not the Minister so he feels that the Minister will not intervene. He said that houses and jobs are a huge concern with these plans. He advised that he had never seen flooding in Bearnna and would have no concerns in relation to same. He commented that the Stage 2 Flood Risk Assessments are not that accurate. He advised that the hydrologic tests carried out are very expensive as carried out by experienced qualified persons and should be used.

Cllr. Welby stated that the previous Bearna plan did not deliver for the people of Bearna. He agreed that there was a lot of merit in this plan being proposed that could deliver for the people of Bearna. He stated that the number one concern for people is the school. He commented that the submission by the Department regarding the school was a cause of concern. He proposed that 1½ acres of land should be zoned for an individual so it will allow for other lands to be made available for the school with their own access, car park, pitch etc. He said that if the Minister gets involved then the plan provided at that stage will be down to the Minister. He commented that he understands what Galway County Council is trying to do but he would have question marks in relation to same. He said that CAAS are doing all the reports for Galway County Council, he advised that there are significant differences between the reports being provided by CAAS and individual reports. He stated that the public are coming with legitimate plans but they are very different to what CAAS are producing. He said that these two professional groups are providing reports so far apart from each other and he would have serious issues with this. He advised that Burkeway has a 1.694 litre facility deviation underground and he feels this needs to be taken into account. He said he understands where Galway County Council are coming from but people are paying a lot of money for these reports and same should be taken into account. He summarised that the school in Bearna is the number one concern and should be done right this time round.

Cllr. Healy stated that he agrees with the other members. He questioned the premise of the Councilors involvement in the plan, if there was going to be a Ministerial Direction at the end of the process. He advised that he was disappointed with the Burkeway application as there is a huge need for housing at present. He stated that in relation to the zoning issue, he felt that there was not enough leeway for Councilors to select other lands.

Comh. Ó Cualáin asked if the relief road would happen and if so then when. He advised that he also had never seen Bearna or Spiddal to flood. He advised that there had been a serious incident in the past and a lot of works were carried out re drainage at the time and that was back in 1995. He said he wonders if Galway County Council had to have certain number of lands zoned as flood zones.

Cllr. Thomas commented that the Planning Authority should be making use of serviced sites. He advised that in relation to the school he fully agrees with members on this matter. He said that a new school should be put in place on suitable lands as soon as possible. In relation to the flood zones, he advised that he walked the land from the sea which is at the north point and he did not witness any issue re flooding and he couldn't imagine that it would ever be an issue. He stated he was aware that the Council had seen pictures of flooding in the area but it did not show any stream over flowing therefore he feels it would be irresponsible of members to approve this plan as is. He commented that if the Department has to look at the plan then they should and they might allow the independent hydrologic reports be used. He said that there are two reports saying very different things. He commented that he feels members don't really have any say in the plans as if changes are made then it needs to be taken from elsewhere, therefore no freedom of choice. He thinks there should be more consultation before plans are drawn up so people can get involved from the beginning.

Cllr. Mannion stated that she did not want people to have false hope, if it's a flood risk area then there is no changing that. She commented that the development refused by An Bord Pleanala, the only concern was density, there was no mention of flooding concerns. She said that if this plan is rejected and it's handed over for Ministerial Direction then will the Department take into account what the people want, which is a new school. She asked if the Department get involved will they take into account the two hydrologic reports or just the one by Galway County Council. She commented that there is a lot of thinking to be done over the weekend before the council meeting.

Cllr. N. Byrne said she wants to deliver the best plan for Connemara and the number one requirement is the school and additional amenity lands. She stated that in relation to the flooding, she can't understand how there is such a difference between the reports. She asked why the flood maps are being extended in this plan when there was no changes made to the plan for 2012-2017. She asked in relation to the sites with difficulties, could it be engineered to work around the sites in question. She stated that culverts are undersized, could they be engineered around to elevate difficulties. She said she would not want to change zoning if thought there was a risk of flooding but would need significant proof to help make a decision on this matter. She commented that she would hope that the right decision will be made at the Council meeting. She explained that there had been a very positive working relationship so far with the Forward Planning section. She advised that members do not fear the treat of the minister getting involved as this will confirm that the right decision is made.

Comh. Ó Tuairisg stated that the flood risk area is influenced by streams, therefore if the culverts were increased this would help same. He said he agrees with Cllr. Mannion in relation to the Burkeway development, the concern here was higher density not flooding. He feels that any issue with regard to flooding in the Bearnna area could be addressed as it's all downstream to the sea.

Mr. Dunne advised members that CAAS were flood and environmental consultants who had worked on numerous plans. He also advised that in relation to the Portumna Local Area Plan it was a different company which carried out the reports but there was still the same issues present. He said in relation to zoning of lands the Planning Authority need to be cautious. He reminded members that in relation to Submission No. 37 it was stated that the land required to be filled and floor levels of houses would have to be increased, therefore confirming that there was a problem with flooding. He also advised members that there had been pictures and videos received showing flooding at a particular location and as a result same had to be taken into account.

Cllr. Welby stated he would prefer if staff from CAAS and the other consultants used by the relevant people could come in with a definite decision/opinion re flooding.

Mr. Dunne explained that national guidelines re flood risk had to be taken into account. He said that there are reports suggesting that the site needs to be filled, therefore confirming an

issue. He highlighted that flood defense measures can fail so the Planning Authority had to be cautious around same. He said it was the role of the members and staff to zone lands appropriately. He advised members that in relation to the relief road, part 8 was granted and the road is partially constructed and will be finished in the coming years.

Cllr. Walsh asked if it was possible to engineer a solution re the flooding. He asked where in Bearna could a person build and what is classified as a “family member”.

Cllr. Mannion asked if staff from the Planning Authority were out with the consultants from CAAS to see the lands. Mr. Dunne confirmed that staff were out on the land with the consultants.

Cllr. Mannion pointed out that in relation to the Headford Local Area Plan the members made changes to the plan and there was Ministerial Direction and as a result they lost out on zoning.

Cllrs. Healy & Thomas asked in relation to the photos being used as evidence for flooding, would this stand up in a judicial review.

Mr. Dunne advised that there had been photos and videos sent to the consultants and they were independent and made their recommendations on same. He explained that the core strategy is reviewed every 4-5 years, this controls and regulates the number of lands to be zoned based on the population of the area. He advised that as it currently stands there are 12 hectares of land which can be zoned R1, if the area of land goes above this then the plan will be contrary to the development plan and therefore the Department will get involved. He advised members that they should stay in line with the Core Strategy and learn from past outcomes. He said that a family member is classified as a son, daughter, niece, nephew etc. He reminded members that the pre-draft County Development Plan will commence next year and that this variation was to incorporate the Bearna & Gaeltacht Plan into the County Development Plan.

Cllr. Walsh queried if the Planning Authority were imposing stringent rules – can’t build outside town or inside town unless a family member.

Mr. Dunne advised that there was a provision that if R1 lands had not come on stream then R2 lands could be used. He stated that with the majority of the village plans it works well. He said it was envisaged that the R1 lands would be developed during the 5 years of a plan and then in 5 years the plan would be revisited. He advised this had worked well in the larger towns and individuals had got planning on R2 lands.

Comh. Ó Curraoin commented that the only thing stopping Bearna from becoming a part of the City was the wood. He said that the zone was too small and back lands are required which are not land locked so same could be built on. He commented that the Planning Authority needs to see the bigger picture and zone outside the boundary. He also stated that there needs to be proper facilities left for the younger generation.

In relation to the Gaeltacht Plan Comh. Ó Tuairisg raised concerns re Spiddal and the Irish language. He was worried that people were coming in without a housing need.

Comh. Ó Cualáin queried what was the percentage required to be Irish speaking for developments in the Gaeltacht area.

Mr. Dunne explained that 2 or more houses in Cois Fharraige require that 80% are Irish speaking.

Comh. Ó Tuairisg advised that there had been a population drop of 6% since the last plan, therefore housing and jobs are a huge concern in these locations. He commented that it was very costly to get planning permission. He feels that there should be no development charges in order to encourage people to build there. He asked what housing need is, he has seen documents not being sufficient to prove housing need. He also commented that in relation to the Aran Islands, there is clustered buildings in this location and asked that these issues be incorporated into the development plan.

Mr. Dunne said that housing need is based on each individual case, each case is accessed as it comes in. He advised that the objectives of the County Development Plan are up for review next year. He advised that overall there were substantially more planning applications granted than refused. In relation to the development charges, he advised that this is outside the remit of the County Development Plan.

Cllr. N. Byrne thanked the Forward Planning staff for all the information provided and meetings facilitated in relation to these plans.

Cllr. Welby thanked Mr. Timmins for everything during his time working in the Planning Authority and wished him good luck in his next post.

4. Municipal District Schedule of Works 2018 (Including Roads Program) CMD 18004

N. Byrne welcomed J. Cullen to the meeting in his capacity as the new Director of the Infrastructure and Operations Unit. J. Cullen advised that the members are required to consider and adopt by resolution the Municipal District Schedule of Works 2018 which includes the Roads Program 2018 and the Schedules of Repair & Maintenance in regard to Environment, Housing, Recreation and Amenity. He referred to the fact that the Roads Program for 2018 had been circulated to the members and advised that there is an increase of over €3 million or 16% in funding for National Roads in 2018 and an increase of €3.6 million or 19% for Regional & Local Roads. He advised that the Council's contribution from its own resources to the funding of Local Roads maintenance has decreased by €671,000 compared to 2017 in line with the cuts required to balance the 2018 Budget. He explained that the Council intended to transfer an amount from the Restoration Improvement Grant to compensate for this. He stated that D. Pender would outline the details as regards the N59 National Secondary Route and D. Mitchell would make a presentation in regard to the Regional & Local Roads. D. Pender circulated a report on the N59 and advised of current progress as follows:

N59 Clifden-Oughterard (€1 million.) He advised that the €1 million allocated by TII is for the acquisition by CPO of the land required for the Maam Cross-Oughterard section which was approved by Bord Pleanála in December 2013.

N59 Moycullen Bypass (€400,000) This comprises the construction of a 4.3km single carriageway bypass of Moycullen. The project has been progressed up to Phase 5 of the TII Project Management Guidelines where construction documents including tender drawings and documents have been drafted. A full review of this documentation is required to check compliance with current standards. He stated that the GCC design team is drafting a brief for the appointment of consultants to undertake the following:

- Part of Phase 5-Tender and Contract Award
- Phase 6 –Construction & Implementation
- Phase 7-Handover, Review & Closeout.

He advised that the brief is expected by the end of March, the procurement of Consultants to be complete by end of Q2, the full review of the documentation by the end of August and the commencement of the tender process for the appointment of a contractor by the end of Q3.

N59 Maam Cross-Bunnakill (€1 million) He advised that GCC has agreed the Method Statements with NPWS and the Inland Fisheries Ireland to undertake the necessary surveys to complete the design and contract documents. The Ground Investigation was completed in December 2017 and GCC has undertaken a tender process for the archaeological survey which is intended to commence in April. The Council intends to agree the construction method statements with NPWS and IFI with the intention to commence construction in Q4 of 2018.

N59 West of Letterfrack Widening (€200,000) He advised that this will comprise approx. 300 m of realignment of the N59 and associated cut rock slopes and drainage infrastructure west of Letterfrack. A Geotechnical Design Report has been completed by Fehily Timoney & Co who are engaged to design and supervise the site investigations, to aid with the design of the rock cut slopes, excavation methods and material reuse. He stated that negotiations in regard to land acquisitions with NPWS are ongoing and correspondence has been sent to the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht to progress this.

N59 Eastern Approach to Oughterard Pavement Strengthening (€727,520) He advised that further investigations on the road pavement are required. The SCRIM test has indicated that surface treatment for skid resistance is needed. This test is a surface friction tester which is used to measure wet-road skidding resistance. He also indicated that a FWD test to measure the structural capacity of the pavement is planned.

N59 Northern Approach to Clifden Pavement Strengthening (€831,744) This is approx. 1.4 km in length and RoadPlan Consulting Ltd were appointed as consultants to undertake works such as the pavement design, preparation of contract documents, tender assessments and contract supervision. The completion of the construction and the handover is programmed for September 2018.

N59 Western Approach to Maam Cross Pavement Strengthening (€735,536) This is approx. 2.7km in length and RoadPlan were appointed as consultants to carry out the same works as outlined above.

Cllr. N. Byrne welcomed the format of the report and the €5 million to be spent on the N59. She noted that only €400,000 has been allocated to the Moycullen Bypass in 2018 and enquired if more funding can be made available. She expressed her disappointment that the report contains no reference to the proposed footbridge for Oughterard. She referred to the SCRIM and FWD tests and asked if the skidding issue is being prioritized. Cllr. E. Mannion welcomed D. Pender to the meeting in his role as the new SE in the NRDO. She welcomed the report and the progress on the works. She enquired if the Council had applied to T.I.I for funding to repair the road at Letterfrack which was damaged due to weather conditions. She advised that there could be major problems on the N59 for motorists if the works are not undertaken by the tourist season and pointed out the fact that there are 2 sets of traffic lights at Leenane at present. She sought more information concerning the land acquisition west of Letterfrack and highlighted the terrible condition of the road beside Paddy Festys at Recess which is more like a dirt track and not fit for purpose. Cllr. N. Thomas welcomed the positive elements of the report and advised of the bad stretch of road between Moycullen –Roscahill which was not adequately restored following the laying of pipework for wind turbines. He referred to the problem with potholes at Cloonabinna and enquired about the timeframe for the construction of the Moycullen Bypass. He highlighted the problem of the 2 bad hollows/dips in the road at Clydagh, Moycullen- 1 of which is still not repaired. He also referred to the dangerous dip in the corner at the junction of the Barna Road with the N59. He also enquired about progress on the speed limit review for the N59.

Cllr. T. Welby advised that the condition of the N59 is very bad in certain areas such as Recess and Ross Demesne. He also referred to the problem of overhanging trees and hedges in areas such as Glengowla and Ross Demesne which require trimming and requested that the matter be addressed by the Council. He also requested that the Council would progress land acquisition as soon as possible once agreement has been secured with the landowners. Cllr. T. Healy welcomed the format of the report, its concise information and progress on schemes such as Letterfrack. He referred to the terrible condition of the N59 near Paddy Festys at Recess and other areas. He stated that the Bord Pleanála decision in regard to the N59 Clifden –Maam Cross was a major setback and enquired as to when the Council can prepare a new planning application to progress the matter. Comh S. O’Cualáin also referred to the terrible state of the N59 west of Maam Cross and at Recess. He stated that this road has been totally neglected and has not been surfaced since 1994 which is 23 years ago. He referred to the refusal by Bord Pleanála to grant planning permission for the realignment and upgrade of the N59 Clifden-Maam Cross section- which he considered to be based on skimpy grounds. He advised that the Council has power to compel landowners to trim trees and hedges and it should be more active in this regard. Comh. T.O’Curraoin stated that while he welcomed the funding for the N59 it was clearly not sufficient and referred to the disadvantages of Ireland remaining in the EU. D. Pender advised that he drove the N59 last Friday and referred to the fact that he worked as an Area Engineer in Conamara in the past. He advised that TII undertake a survey of the network on an annual basis and do it in reverse the following year. He referred to the SCRIM skid resistant and the FWD pavement survey tests and the 1-10 rating system and the 2 categories. He stated that the approach to Oughterard requires a full pavement and TII have given the Council permission to undertake the FWD test next week. He advised that 2km of the Maam Cross-Recess section of the N59 will be overlaid in 2018. He stated that it is the intention of the Council to progress the Moycullen Bypass to the tender stage this year in order to procure a Contractor. J.Cullen advised that TII want the Moycullen Bypass to progress to construction in the near future and that the Council will endeavor to progress the land acquisition on all road projects.

J. Cullen DOS then requested D. Mitchell to outline the details in regard to the Regional & Local Roads. He stated that the total grant received by the Council for Regional & Local Roads 2018 amounted to €23.2 m (€20 m for improvement works and €3.3m for maintenance works) which is 19% more than 2017. He explained that the allocation for restoration improvement works amounts to €13.2 million (page 12-13) but the Council propose to transfer 9.2% or €1.2 million of this to Regional & Local Road maintenance on request to the Department of Transport. This is to compensate for the reduction in the funding on local road maintenance from its own resources and to aid the repair of roads damaged due to severe weather conditions. The DTTAS have provided local authorities with the flexibility to transfer up to 19% of the R.I Grant to their Discretionary Grant –but this will not apply in 2019. He advised that the R.I grant allocation for the M.D of Conamara is €2.5 m and details of the road works are listed on page 27-30. He referred to the C.I.S and advised that the Department have ring fenced funding for this in 2018 and a separate circular will issue as regards the criteria and application process. He advised that the total grant for Surface Dressing is €3.3 million (page 12-13) of which €692,810 is allocated to Conamara-details of the works are on page 43. He referred to Circular RLR 2/2012 where the DTTAS have applied maximum unit rates of €5.5/m and €4.50/m respectively to surface dressing on Regional & Local Roads. He stated that the Discretionary Grant amounts to €4.8 m to which €1.2 m is being added from the R.I grant giving a total of €6 m- the details are listed on page 15. He advised that €900,000 of the Discretionary Grant will be used for the repair of Tertiary roads and will be allocated on a per km basis to the Municipal Districts- the allocation for Conamara is €267,556 and the details are shown on page 38. He stated that the allocations from the Discretionary Grant for Regional Road Maintenance is €1,827,668 and for Local Road Maintenance is €2,154,832- the breakdown per Municipal District is shown on page 16. The Council has also allocated €200,000 as a contingency fund for severe weather conditions and a separate fund of €265,000 for Winter Maintenance.

He explained that the Department for Rural & Community Development introduced ring fenced funding for LIS schemes in 2017- of which the Council received €1.4 m and a separate circular will be issued by it in regard to the continuation of the scheme in 2018. He advised that there was 2 separate allocations for Non-National Road Bridges amounting to €775,500 and the details are shown on page 17. He referred to the Safety Improvement Works outlined on page 18 and also to the fact that the Council has been allocated a Drainage Grant of €690,000 to be used for the alleviation of road drainage problems- the allocation to Conamara is €144,587. He explained that this will be used to open water tables. He stated that the funding of Regional & Local Roads from the Council's own resources amounts to €5,668,836 which is a decrease of €671,514 from 2017 due to the reduction made in the 2018 Budget and the details are listed on pages 20-21. He explained that the breakdown of the Local Road Maintenance allocation of €1,213,486 is shown on page 21 and that the NOM allocation of €18,500 per Councillor is the same as 2017. He referred to the allocations from the Council's own resources of €930,000 for Town & Village maintenance & improvement and €1,170,000 for Public Lighting –details on page 22.

Cllr. N. Thomas commended the work and detail of the Roads Program but expressed his disappointment at the level of funding for roads which is totally insufficient as regards achieving improvements. He referred to an analysis undertaken of the condition of the Oughterard-Moycullen road and the lack of impact of the level of grant funding. He welcomes the Drainage Grant and the proposal to open waterways in order to improve road drainage. He referred to the tar and chip method used for the repair of potholes in Conamara which is ineffective especially in bad weather and proposed that the Council use a slow cure bitumen product or a similar product to this in the future. He stated that this would be more

more cost effective-he explained that the area around potholes would need to be cut out and referred to the methodology used by Eircom. His proposal was seconded by Cllr. S.Walsh. D. Mitchell explained that the Council would prefer to use DBM on every road with potholes-but could not do so due to lack of funding and the sheer volume of them. He advised that DBM is used on the heavy trafficked roads but the Council is doing the best it can on other roads with the basic resources available. He explained the difficulty in repairing potholes in cold and wet weather and the use of tarmac with clause 804 crushed gravel. Cllr. N. Byrne advised that this explanation made sense and welcomed the fact that the DBM method is used on heavy trafficked roads- however she referred to the fact that tar and chip was used on the Moycullen road 3 years ago and it now contains potholes. J. Cullen agreed that the Council was making the best use of limited resources and referred to the proposal in the context of executive and reserved functions- whereas the elected members set the policy parameters but the day to day operational decisions are a matter for the executive. Cllr. E .Mannion referred to the fact that the outdoor staff have to deal with potholes on a daily basis and the need to proof the roads in regard to climate change-she enquired if the roads could take so much rain. D. Mitchell referred to the €690,000 Drainage Grant which would be used to open water tables. Cllr. S. O’Tuairisg referred to the bad condition of the R340 which is affected by flooding and there are dangerous potholes near Screeb. He advised that seaweed lorries and school buses use this substandard road. He enquired as to when the planning restrictions can be lifted on the Indicative routes for the R336. He referred to the dangerous condition of the Doire Fhatharta Road at Carraroe and the concerns of the community and enquired if the Council can make a start on it. Cllr T. Healy stated that the Council has an uphill battle to keep the roads up to standard due to funding constraints and referred to the removal of the Supplementary grant in 2019. He enquired about efficiencies for the public lighting system and welcomed the funding for contingencies-the Council need an emergency team.

Comh. T. O’Curraoin highlighted the lack of funding for roads and advised that the Drainage grant was needed to open the water tables as it never stops raining and landowners are not draining their land. He explained that the community are blaming the Councillors for the fact that nothing is being done for the Doire Fhatharta Road near Carraroe which carries a lot of traffic-they pay their road tax. Comh. S. O’Cualain welcomed J. Cullen to the meeting and M. Kerrigan as the new Engineer to Carraroe. He stated that more pressure would need to be put on the T.Ds as the Council was not receiving its fair share of funding and enquired if it had made an application for funding in regard to the recent storm damage. He advised that the quality of the tar used for the roads would need to be assessed. He stated that the quality of the roads in Conamara was very bad and referred to the 2 dangerous blind bends at Doire Fhatharta near Carraroe. Cllr. E. Mannion advised of the meeting with Shane Ross T.D Minister for Transport at the Chief Executive’s office 2 weeks ago and referred to the presentation given by D. Mitchell. She enquired if the Council wrote to the Department of Education concerning the funding of roads safety requirements for schools. Cllr. T.Welby raised the issue concerning the registration of roads taken in charge and enquired about progress on the speed limit review, whether the Council was notified about another 3 year rolling program for roads and the filing of applications on file for 3 years concerning the LIS scheme. Cllr. N. Byrne referred to the €50,000 grant allocation for safety improvement works at Barna and enquired if there are plans for a pedestrian crossing. D. Mitchell advised that the Council had sent an application to Sean Kyne T.D and had also written to the Department of Rural & Community Affairs seeking funding for the Doire Fhatharta Road and had also applied for a specific grant but got no result. He confirmed that the estimated cost of the required works would be in the region of €720,000. He advised that in regard to public lighting the Council are introducing LED lights to replace the older inefficient ones. He stated that the Council has applied for €13 m for storm damage and referred to the substantial

damage done to the N59 near Leenane. M. Ní Chionna advised that the public consultation process in regard to the speed limit review will commence in April.

On the proposal of Cllr. E. Mannion, seconded by Cllr. T. Welby it was agreed to approve the Municipal District Schedule of Works 2018 which includes the Roads Program 2018 and the Environment, Housing, Recreation & Amenity Schedules of Repair & Maintenance.

5 Re-establishment of the Islands Committee

CMD 18005

M. Ní Chionna advised that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the Islands Committee should be selected by the Municipal District of Conamara from its members and it was agreed that this item will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. It was also agreed that Comh. S. O'Tuairisg would contact the various Comharchumann on the Islands in regard to seeking nominations for the membership of the Committee- it was agreed that 2 representatives would be sought from Inishmore and 1 each from Inishmeain, Inishere and Inishboffin.

6 Proposed Footbridge/s at Oughterard

CMD 18006

D. Pender advised that a project Engineer in the NRDO will be assigned to engage with NPWS in regard to the environmental issues concerning the proposed footbridge for Oughterard. He stated that TII do not want to spend money on environmental reports if the Bridge is not feasible. J. Cullen advised that while the proposed footbridge is not on the report-there is work being done in the background to progress the matter. Cllr. T. Welby confirmed that the footbridge was mentioned in the recent meeting held in the Council with Shane Ross T.D Minister for Transport.

7. Strategic Development Plans for Housing at Moycullen/Oughterard

MD 18007

M. Owens referred to Rebuilding Ireland the Government Action Plan for the needs of Social Housing and tackling the Housing shortage crisis. He advised that the Council has conducted a review of its land banks- of which 2 of the largest are located at Moycullen & Oughterard. He stated that the Council has been in consultation with the Department of Housing concerning the development of these sites for Social Housing over the next few years and it is intended to produce a master plan for each of them. He advised that the Council has produced an indicative site layout plan for the landbank at Moycullen and he circulated this at the meeting. This envisages the development of a total of 112 housing units on this site together with a community playground and amenity walkways and landscaping as follows:

Phase 1 30 units consisting of Type B - 8 3 Bed Semi-Detached, Type C -11 2 Bed Terraced, And 11 Apartment/Duplex type units.

Phase 2 51 units consisting of Type A - 1 4 Bed Detached, Type B - 18 3 Bed Semi-Detached Type C -15 2 Bed Terraced, Type D-10 2 Bed Detached Single Storey (Retirement/Independent Living Units) and Type D-7 2 Bed Detached Single Storey Units

Phase 3 31 units consisting of Type A - 8 4 Bed Detached, Type B - 12 3 Bed Semi-Detached Type C -11 2 Bed Terraced.

He explained that at the moment this is an indicative outline for the site and the Phase 4 Stage has to be agreed with the Department of Housing. He indicated that the Council may progress this through a number of Part 8 proposals. Cllr. T. Welby enquired as to the number on the Housing waiting list for the Moycullen area and was advised by M. Owens that it is 230 households. Cllr. N. Thomas referred to the need for more community facilities. M. Owens advised that he will revert back at another meeting with details of an indicative plan for Oughterard and a master plan will be produced at a later stage for both sites. He also advised the meeting of the intention to raise a €10 million Capital loan to fund the statutory Minimum Standards and Preventative Maintenance program for its 2,400 housing stock-approval to same is a reserved function of the Council. This is required to fund a work program consisting of items such as electrical testing, fire detection & safety equipment, maintenance of boilers, installation of windows etc. Cllr. N. Byrne thanked M. Owens for his presentation.

8. Municipal District Directors Business

MD 18008

G. Mullarkey advised the elected members of the need to complete and return the declarations required under the ethics legislation. N. Heffernan advised that a meeting has been scheduled with TII on Tuesday 27-2-2018 and that each Municipal District can nominate 2 Councillors to attend. It was agreed that Cllr. E. Mannion & Comh. Seosamh O’Cualáin would attend.

9. AOB

MD 18009

Comh. S. O’Cualáin proposed that a letter of congratulations be sent to Martin McDonagh the noted playwright, screenwriter & director on his achievements on securing international awards & nominations for his work including Bafta & Oscar. He stated that his father Martin Johnny came from Lettermullen and is a Gaelgóir. The proposal was seconded by Comh. S. O’Tuairisg who advised that his father lived near him and noted that many of his works like the “Beauty Queen of Leenane” are based in Conamara. Cllr. N. Byrne advised that all in the Municipal District of Conamara wished to be associated with the congratulations to him and his family and are very proud of his achievements.

10. Date & Venue for Next Meeting

MD 18010

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held commencing at 2.30 p.m on Friday 27-4-2018 at the Parish Rooms in Oughterard.

CROCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIU ANSIN