

MINUTES OF BOYLE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE COURTHOUSE, ROSCOMMON ON MONDAY THE 9TH NOVEMBER, 2015 AT 2.30P.M. TO DISCUSS THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL ALLOCATION AND DRAFT BUDGETARY PLANS FOR 2016.

PRESENT: Councillor Rachel Doherty, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: V. Byrne. J. Cummins, E. Murphy, M. Hopkins, M. Mulligan

OFFICIALS: Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning
Fiona ní Chuinn, Meetings Administrator
Bernard Murray, Senior Executive Engineer

Mr. Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning informed the members as follows that:
The Local Government Act 2001 Section 102, as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014, provides the legislative basis for the revised budget process. It states that "In the case of a county or city council, the Chief Executive shall consult the Municipal District Members for each Municipal District in the Local Authority's functional area in the preparation of a Draft Local Authority Budget and, for that purpose, a Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District shall be prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive and submitted for consideration by the Municipal District Members for each Municipal District in the manner and in the format that may be prescribed by regulations made by the Minister."

The Draft Budgetary Plan refers to discretionary funding only. In producing the Draft Budgetary Plan the following was considered:

1. The needs of, and the resources available or likely to be made available to the Local Authority
2. Resource needs of each Municipal District, including where appropriate km of roads, population, location of facilities and the number of houses

The purpose of a Draft Budgetary Plan is to provide each Municipal District an opportunity to allocate its proportion of the General Municipal Allocation according to its priorities.

The Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures)(Amendment) Regulations 2015 state that Members of the Municipal District must receive a copy of the Draft Budgetary Plan and notice of the meeting of Municipal District Members 7 days prior to that meeting. The meeting of Municipal District Members to consider the Draft Budgetary Plan must conclude no later than 10 days prior to the Local Authority Budget Meeting. **There is no provision for the adjournment of this meeting.**

Schedule of Municipal District Works and Service Delivery Plans

Section 103(A) (1) provides that, following the adoption of the Local Authority Budget, a schedule of proposed works of maintenance and repairs to be carried out during 2016 in each Municipal District shall be prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive, having regard to the availability of resources.

The Schedule of Municipal District Works shall be considered by the Municipal District Members concerned and be adopted by resolution, with or without amendment. In making an amendment, the Municipal District Members shall have due regard to the Local Authority Budget adopted in accordance with section 103(9).

General Municipal Allocation and Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plans

The General Municipal Allocation (the total for the three Municipal Districts) totals €2,946,800. This amount contains new funding of €254,000 in relation to Economic and Community development as well the €100,000 allocated from the Business Innovation Fund. This funding was distributed on a straight line basis with a total of €118,000 made available to each Municipal District.

The local roads contribution is €1,276,900 and has been distributed using a formula of 75% km of road and 25% population, as per discussions with the Corporate Policy Group. This figure takes account of the additional €15,000 made available for verge trimming as discussed at the September Plenary council meeting, when making a decision in relation to the Local Property Tax adjustment factor.

The General Municipal Allocation has been distributed among the Municipal Districts as follows:

- Boyle €1,120,393

Mr. Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning informed the members that the information was supplied to the Corporate Policy Group on 23rd October 2015 which outlined the budget models to them and they in turn were responsible for discussion with all the members on the matter.

Roads grants will issue separately as normal early in the new year with inputs by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the roads engineers. Increasing emphasis in the future will be placed on condition survey data.

Members raised the following issues:

- 2015 allocation for local roads was €598,300 based on the historical information, which highlights a loss of €22,000 for the Boyle Municipal District area.
- Will the funding for economic and community development be at the discretion of the members?
- Does the model change of 75/25 apply to TII funding?
- Dissatisfaction expressed that model was agreed at Corporate Policy Group with no representation from the Boyle Municipal District.
- A lot of work needs to be carried out on drainage and graveyards.
- Department/NRA emphasis on condition survey prioritising should not be at the loss of having regard to local/rural needs issues which local engineer, staff and County Councillors know.
- Since Boyle Municipal District has 40% of land area and 41% of road mileage in the county, it's a huge area with lots of cul-de-sacs and choice of roads should predominantly be by engineers.
- Compliment the work done by CE Schemes throughout the county.
- Dissatisfaction expressed at the town team allocation of €100,000 as the towns of Elphin, Rooskey and Tarmonbarry have been excluded from this funding.
- Proposal that €118,000 allocation be used for smaller areas who get no town team funding.
- The terrain in the north of the county is different to other sections of the county and requires more investment.
- Verge trimming needs to be addressed.
- Need to look at the issue of private forestry and the damage that this does to our roads.
- Need for support in small towns for town teams funding.
- Designated town teams have allocated money for lights.
- Dissatisfaction expressed at the €22,000 reduction in the Boyle Municipal District.

- Need for budget allocation for Kilcolman Cemetery.
- Boyle Municipal District has 3 town teams, Roscommon Municipal District has 2 and Athlone Municipal District has 1 – this needs to be reflected in the funding.
- The 75/25 population formula is not applicable to non-discretionary funding, i.e. Department Grants.
- What works will the €266,000 housing funding cover? Any additional houses?
- Consider a percentage cut in commercial rates instead of town teams?
- Town team initiative does not take account of surrounding villages in our county, such as Ballyfarnon, Keadue, Cortober, etc.
- Concept of town teams was misplaced from the start and all Councillors should be represented on the town teams.
- Businesses in smaller settlements not included in town teams – revise next year?
- Can't have main towns as only beneficiaries.
- Christmas lights in Boyle is no good to outlying villages – needs to be more inclusive.
- Who is the administrator of the town teams?
- Confirmation that town teams will be taking account of smaller towns.
- €22,000 should be taken out of parks and pitches and put into the roads budget.

Mr. Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning responded to the queries raised:

- The Economic and Community Development Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) has responsibility for the town teams' policy.
- Any issues around town teams must be dealt with accordingly and members need to think about match funding in this area.
- The Executive has changed policies of the organisation based on contributions from members.
- No reduction made in the grants for burial grounds.
- The issue of private forestry has been a bone of contention with Roscommon County Council however the local authority are not involved in this matter as the Department of Transport are looking to cut costs.
- With regard to rates, the Economic & Enterprise SPC are currently putting forward a rates initiative policy which will be before the members in November. The policy will have a two strand effect:
 1. any business that pays rates under €5,000 will receive a 5% reduction if they pay by 30th June 2016.
 2. Vacant properties that are brought back into use will pay no rates for Year 1, 20% for Year 2 and so on - on a sliding scale up to 5 years.
- Allocation for burial grounds has been based on a scientific allocation.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

SECONDED by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** to that cul-de-sacs in the Boyle Municipal District need attention.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

SECONDED by Councillor Murphy

It was **AGREED** that the €100,000 allocation for town teams is divided evenly between the town teams and not per Municipal District.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Mulligan
SECONDED by Councillor Doherty

It was **AGREED** that the motion in relation to the division of the town teams funding would be referred back to the plenary meeting for further discussion.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Mulligan
SECONDED by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** that Boyle Municipal District would support the allocation of funding from town teams to the outlying towns.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Murphy
SECONDED by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** that clarification would be sought from Community & Enterprise Department from the Facilitators of the town teams regarding the linking up of business in villages around the town of Strokestown.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Doherty
SECONDED by Councillor Cummins

It was **AGREED** that the allocation of €266,000 for the maintenance of local authority units as outlined would be examined at the next Municipal District meeting.

Mr. Bernard Murray, Senior Executive Engineer confirmed that if Roscommon County Council has any information with regard to intended development of forestry (both private and public), the local authority engages directly with the developer at local level in an effort to minimise road damage during and at the end of the project. This includes a commitment by the developers to deal with necessary repairs to roads during haulage operations, as well as final reinstatements upon completion. In some instances, we have obliged forestry developers to lodge a bond or financial surety to cover costs. There has been an element of success with this approach and we also let it be known that we can resort to using statutory weight restrictions, if necessary.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Mulligan
SECONDED by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** that the Boyle Municipal District Budget would be adopted in accordance with the allocation of funding per kilometre as in 2015 and that the town teams funding would be allocated per town rather than per municipal district.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Hopkins
SECONDED by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Boyle municipal District as amended.

A.O.B.

Ms. Fíona ní Chuinn, Meetings Administrator informed the members of the following:

- Member's Boundary Committee meeting to be held on Friday 11th December in Athlone. Time to be confirmed.
- Requested members to return questionnaire on the review of the operation of Local Government Reform 2014.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:**

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned