

MINUTES OF ATHLONE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD IN THE LOUGHNANEANE SUITE - ÁRÁS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON, ON MONDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2018 AT 10.15 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Laurence Fallon **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr T. Ward, Cllr I. Connaughton, Cllr P. Kilduff and Cllr J. Naughten.

OFFICIALS: Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Diarmuid MacDonnacha, Athlone Municipal District Co-ordinator
Eugene Dwyer, Head of Roads & Transportation
Martin Lydon, Director of Services
Fiona Fallon, Staff Officer
Fiona Fallon, Staff Officer

Apologies: Cllr J. Keogh

53.18 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR ATHLONE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2019.

Martin Lydon, Head of Finance opened the meeting to discuss the Athlone MD Draft Budget for 2019.

Documentation was already circulated.

He advised that the Draft Budgetary Plan does feed into process. Estimates what goes into each area. We are governed to provide a Plan.

Biggest issue for a number of years is allocation of road funding.

The Corporate Policy Group reviewed 6 different models based on

1. 75% km/25% population
2. Population
3. KM of Road
4. Road Condition
5. 50% KM of Road 50% Road Condition
6. 33.3% Population, 33.3% KM Road, 33.3% Condition

It was Agreed to distribute funding based on Condition of Road.

The benefit for Athlone is an increase of funding in comparison to other years, €453,700 in 2019 increased from €315,600 in previous year (overall €138,000 increase)

Removal of General Municipal Allowance (GMA), €85,000 for each area. However, there is other Funding available. Should review options for Urban & Rural Regeneration which is not just for main towns, it is also for all villages.

To try to do match funding we need a loan. The only way to do this is to take away GMA, without changing property tax or increase tax.

Athlone Municipal District will be given €629,100 in 2019 compared to €576,000 in 2018.

Eugene Dwyer advised that we cannot allow roads to deteriorate to an unsafe standard. The additional money proposed for local roads will be of benefit especially in the area of corporate risk involved in allowing more deterioration of our roads.

Reasons why Athlone is worse than other areas:-

- Huge amount of bog
- Subject to flooding
- South Roscommon bore the brunt of heavy snow
- Hot spell in the summer caused shrinkage in the bog, even though we did works on some of these

roads.

Councillor Fallon welcomed the additional money and thanked the CPG for the needs basis. However the loss of GMA is a severe blow, in particular to weakest areas. Matching funding to Leader funding has been a huge benefit.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Fallon
SECONDED by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** to suspend GMA temporarily and at a stage in the future when more funding becomes available that GMA should be reinstated as a priority.

Councillor Fallon also suggested that there is a gaping gap in drainage monies and that we should review €96,000 funding for cemeteries (€22,000 for South Roscommon) as there are no staff there.

Councillor Kilduff welcomed the Budget and said it was great to see an increase in allocation, but disappointing that there is nothing in it for small villages. He confirmed that if there was no increase in allocation he would not be supporting the budget.

Councillor Naughten also welcomed the Budget. He acknowledged there was an issue in South Roscommon from a safety point of view particularly since last winter. We need significant additional money from National level for South Roscommon and the county. We have outlined our case to the Minister and hopefully we will see the benefits in 2019 when the allocation is given.

It is unfortunate that GMA funding is now gone. There was significant money leveraged for Monksland, and local villages, to develop as an economic hub and attractive with community facilities. These facilities will be beneficial to the county in the future. Cllr Naughten agreed that we should look to reinstate GMA fund in the future.

Councillor Ward welcomed the Budget and the increased funding for Athlone. However, there is a still a gap. He confirmed he travelled the roads in South Roscommon with the Chief Executive with a view to getting increased funding. He was hoping that the CPG and Councillors see a 3 way equal divide between the areas.

He had a motion to the Council in February to meet with Minister Ross and Minister Naughten. This meeting took place in early September. Disappointed on the day that Minister Ross didn't say he would review the condition of the roads in South Roscommon.

€8m per year has been withdrawn for Roads in Roscommon for the past 10 years, i.e. €80m. Any other business could not sustain this reduction in investment.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** that a letter issue to Minister Ross to review increased funding for Roads in South Roscommon in 2019 and 2020.

Councillor Ward expressed his disappointment that €85,000 MD Funding was gone. This funding was invaluable to community groups in County Roscommon. He wasn't at the last plenary meeting or would have made a proposal to increase property tax by €5 or €10.

Councillor Connaughton thanked Councillor Naughten for an excellent presentation at the plenary meeting and advised it was easier to make the decision that was made after seeing this presentation.

He asked if there was any further progress on any further allocations in light of upcoming elections. It would be beneficial for Councillors canvassing. €85,000

While it would be nice to increase LPT charge, Fianna Fail and Independents gave a commitment not to increase LPT or rates during their term of power.

Councillor Connaughton confirmed that he would not be seeking re-election next year but will still do things for the benefit of the county. He also thanked the staff

Martin Lydon, Head of Finance, confirmed if the CPG had distributed funding based on population, the allocation would be €395,000 compared to €453,000. He also confirmed he would look into the maintenance of burial grounds as part of the Plenary Budgetary process.

Councillor Fallon welcomed the additional funding for South Roscommon and the 1 Town Team that were successful

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Kilduff

It was **AGREED** that if funding does become available, that the Roads Department will distribute based submission made to the Department

Taking in Charge Money

Councillor Naughten queried that €10,000 was received for Taking in charge, where will this be spent?

Diarmuid MacDonncha confirmed that 1 Taking in Charge motion is coming before the Council and that there will be no problem spending this money on this road and others that have been taken in charge recently.

Councillor Kilduff hoped that the Crancam Road can be expedited and that the notice appears in the papers quickly.

Local Improvement Schemes

Councillor Ward advised that he has had a few motions. Huge concern is Local Improvement Schemes (LIS). If a landowner on that road and happen to have dwelling, they do not qualify for an LIS. They are being excluded from the scheme.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** to look to take roads in charge where LIS have works have been carried out.

Councillor Naughten queried what criteria, passed through SPC and Council.

1. Disability
2. No. of houses
3. No. of landowners

Eugene Dwyer confirmed that there must be 2 landowners before an application can be considered.

The next Plenary meeting will be held on 21st November 2018

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 15th October, 2018.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Diarmuid Mac Donncha,
Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Diarmuid Mac Donncha,
Countersigned