



MINUTES OF ROSCOMMON Municipal District HELD IN THE COUNCIL Chamber - Áras an Chontae, ON TUESDAY, 26th October, 2021 AT 2.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Kathleen Shanagher **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr M. McDermott, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice and Cllr O. Leyden.

OFFICIALS: Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Breeda Burke, Staff Officer
Neal Geraghty, Roscommon Municipal District Co-Ordinator
Sean Mullarkey, Acting Head of Finance

APOLOGIES:

52.21 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST (SECTION 177 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED)

There were no declarations of interest from the Members.

53.21 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR THE ROSCOMMON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2022

Sean Mullarkey introduced the draft budget and informed the members as follows:

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 plans for municipal districts refer only to discretionary funding available to each municipal district, as discussions on strategic and non-discretionary expenditure of the Council form part of the plenary draft budget process. The plenary budget meeting is scheduled to be held on 25th November, 2021.

The total General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for 2022 is €2,669,300 with Roscommon MD receiving €991,400.

Local Property Tax (LPT) Variation

The decision taken at the Plenary meeting on the 26th July to vary the LPT basic rate upwards by 15% allowed for the following items to be included in the GMA for 2022

- €219,000 of Community & Enterprise funding for distribution by members, however €85,000 will be available in 2022 for each MD as €12,000 is carried over as part of the AFS.
- €150,000 for street cleaning

- €120,000 of funding has been allocated to the general roads maintenance budget.
- €34,000 in funding has been granted to assist Tidy Town programmes and combat illegal dumping. These services are no longer funded from grant allocations.
- Town Team funding has been maintained at €10,000 for each of the six town teams.

Rationale for Allocating Funds

In considering the draft budgetary plans for the municipal districts as attached, the following was considered:

1. The needs and the resources available or likely to be made available to the Council.
2. The resource needs of each Municipal District, including where appropriate, condition survey, population, location of facilities, etc.

The model used in 2021 for apportioning roads expenditure (33.3% Population, 33.3% Km Road, 33.3% Condition) has once again been applied in 2022.

There is a budget allocation of €80,000 relating to the River Suck to improve drainage and amenities. This allocation is in line with 2021 and is split between Athlone and Roscommon Municipal Districts.

The purpose of the draft budgetary plan meeting is to provide each municipal district an opportunity to allocate its proportion of the General Municipal Allocation according to its priorities.

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 2022, 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 to be adopted in accordance with section 103(9).

General Municipal Allocation (GMA) and Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plans

Local Authorities have limited capacity in relation to discretionary type expenditure with the majority of costs being non-discretionary in nature and being reflected in the Plenary Council Budget as opposed to the municipal districts' draft budget plans.

When the Plenary Council budget has been finalised and formally adopted a schedule of municipal district works will be prepared and submitted to each municipal district.

The members welcomed the draft budget and acknowledged the contribution of the Local Property Tax payers in the delivery of essential services. The following comments were made –

- Requests for more local autonomy as regards emergency requests for additional winter maintenance
- The importance of verge trimming and minimising delays with the programme
- Request for future town team funding to be increased up to €17,000 per each town team
- The importance of the funding for the River Suck drainage and the huge potential it offers to develop tourism in addition to its drainage function
- Request that discretionary MD funding is ring fenced to ensure its continuity
- Praise for the voluntary work of tidy town's groups and town teams

Majella Hunt and Neal Geraghty responded to the matters that were raised

- Majella Hunt explained how the winter maintenance programme is funded and our constraints due to our staffing capacity to deliver the plan in addition to the costs involved. She stated concerns about making commitments on an adhoc basis especially as the public would have an expectation that the road is gritted when it may not be. Gritting of dangerous hills and junctions may be considered in emergency situations on a case by case basis within available resources.
- Neal Geraghty clarified that there are limited resources and that there are only two trucks equipped with gritters and two trained members of staff in each area who work on a rota basis.
- Neal Geraghty clarified that hedge cutting will run right up to Christmas and will start again in February 2022.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Roscommon Municipal District Budget as presented.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:



Meetings Administrator



Cathaoirleach



Countersigned