

MINUTES OF ROSCOMMON Municipal District **HELD IN THE LOUGHNANEANE** Suite - Áras an Chontae, Roscommon, **ON THURSDAY**, 20th October, 2022 **AT 10.00** am

PRESENT: Councillor Marty McDermott **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr K. Shanagher, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice and Cllr O. Leyden.

OFFICIALS: Breeda Burke, Staff Officer
Neal Geraghty, Roscommon Municipal District Co-Ordinator
Sean Mullarkey, Acting Head of Finance
Fiona Ni Chuinn, A/Director of Services

APOLOGIES:

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

There were no declarations of interest from the Members.

61.22 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR THE ROSCOMMON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2023

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 24th November, 2022.

The total General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for 2023 is €2,791,300 with Roscommon MD receiving €1,032,100.

Local Property Tax (LPT) Variation

The decision taken at the Plenary meeting on the 26th September, 2022 to vary the LPT basic rate upwards by 15% allowed for the following items to be included in the GMA for 2023

- €225,000 of Community & Enterprise funding for distribution by members.
- €180,000 for street cleaning
- €120,000 of funding has been allocated to the general roads maintenance budget.

- €42,000 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 of €5,000 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 2022 for apportioning roads expenditure (33.3% Population, 33.3% Km Road, 33.3% Condition) has once again been applied in 2023.

There is a budget allocation in 2023 of €75,000 relating to the River Suck to improve drainage and amenities. This allocation is split between the 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 2023, 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 –

- Request for additional hedge cutting to be carried out
- Call for extra gritting of footpaths during periods of severe weather
- Explore ways on how we can improve street cleaning
- Welcome additional funding for essential works at graveyards
- Concerns were raised about the reduction of the town team funding to €5,000 in the draft budget and discussion regarding why some town teams may not have drawn down funding
- Calls to restore the funding to a minimum of €10,000 for each town team as all towns team funding is fully accounted for and transparent
- Tributes were paid to all town team volunteers and a discussion took place regarding the important

work carried out by all the town teams and how Roscommon County Council has been used as a model for good practice by other counties

- Request for more collaboration between a designated liaison person with the Town Teams
- Approval for additional funding for street lighting and calls for lights to be replaced in all estates both private and public
- Disappointment at the reduction in the budget for the River Suck Drainage and request to have the budget restored to 2022 figures
- Enquiries regarding funding to maintain Roscommon Town Square and if a machine should be purchased to maintain this area
- Welcome funding for the upkeep of the CCTV system

Fiona Ni Chuinn, Neal Geraghty and Sean Mullarkey responded to the matters raised:

- Sean Mullarkey agreed to look for figures from the Assets & Energy Management department regarding the public lighting and bring this information back to the plenary meeting
- Sean Mullarkey confirmed that there was no problem with the drawdown of town teams funding in the Roscommon Municipal District and that the members were free to move budgets from one area to another
- Neal Geraghty explained how we have to clean up areas after illegal dumping
- A discussion took place regarding the hedge cutting and ways on how we can better the procurement process with Neal Geraghty clarifying that the hedge cutting will continue this year again right up until Christmas
- Fiona Ni Chuinn clarified that there is a designated liaison person to work with the town teams and there will be a more hands on approach now that we are post Covid-19

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** to increase the River Suck Drainage budget by €5,000 and the Town Teams budget by €10,000

A discussion took place about the various elements of the budget and the following amendments to the budget were put forward –

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Shanagher

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** to reduce the illegal dumping budget by €5,000 and move it to the River Suck Drainage increasing that budget to €50,000.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Shanagher

SECONDED by Councillor McDermott

It was **AGREED** to reduce the Burial Grounds Emergency Repairs budget by €10,000 and increase the Economic Development budget (Town Teams) by €10,000 to €20,000.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Roscommon Municipal District Budget for 2023 with the amendments as agreed above.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:



Meetings Administrator



Cathaoirleach



Countersigned