

MINUTES OF ATHLONE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COURTHOUSE, ROSCOMMON ON MONDAY THE 6th OCTOBER, 2014. AT 9.30 A.M.

PRESENT: Councillor Paddy Kilduff, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: I. Connaughton, L. Fallon, J. Keogh, J. Naughten and T.Ward

OFFICIALS: Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning.
Pat Murtagh, A/Director of Services.
Fiona ni Chuinn, Meetings Administrator.

4.14. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Keogh
It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the AGM held on 12.6.2014.

5.14. MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS – DRAFT BUDGET 2015:

Martin Lydon, Head of Finance & Planning informed the members 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. The Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District has been prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive and submitted for consideration to the Municipal District Members for each Municipal District in the manner and in the format that has been prescribed by regulations made by the Minister.”

The Draft Budgetary Plan refers to discretionary funding only but includes grant funding that is allocated to the Municipal District. In producing the Draft Budgetary Plan the following was considered:

The needs of, and the resources available or likely to be made available to the Local Authority.

Resource needs of each Municipal District, including where appropriate, kilometre of roads and the number of houses.

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

The Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures) Regulations 2014 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 21 days prior to the Local Authority Budget Meeting. **There is no provision for the adjournment of the meeting.** He continued that, following the adoption of the Local Authority Budget, a schedule of proposed

works of maintenance and repairs to be carried out during 2015 in each Municipal District will be prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive, having regard to the availability of resources.

The Schedule of Municipal District Works will 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).

The General Municipal Allocation (the total for the three Municipal Districts) totals €13,854,300. This amount contains €12,578,000 which is in relation to Road Transport and Safety, with the balance of €1,276,300 distributed to Housing and Building, Public Conveniences, Property Management, Maintenance of Burial Grounds, Open Spaces and Land Drainage.

The local roads contribution is €1,262,700 (this figure was €1,187,700 in 2014) from the Roads Transport and Safety amount, with €75,000 made available for hedge trimming and grass cutting and a further €60,000 allocated for lighting in estates not yet taken in charge, for which a new policy is required.

The remainder of the roads funding is grant funded and is in line with what was agreed and approved by members in the 2014 Road Works Scheme and so is not transferable. However, as in previous years members will have an active role in deciding where work should be undertaken when the 2015 Road Works Scheme is being adopted.

The General Municipal Allocation for Athlone is €3,147,100.

It should be noted that in allocating the budgets, members need to be cognisant of the fact that staff costs will need to be met. So, if for example costs are transferred from housing to roads, the staff costs and resources would also need to transfer.

Members raised the following issues:

- Clarification requested on the level of funding from the Department.
- Need for extra funding for Athlone Municipal District as there is more of a population in South Roscommon than in the other Municipal Districts.
- The population factor needs to be taken into consideration when making the allocation.
- Clarification needed on the electoral area – is the money allocated on the same basis as it was in previous years.
- When people pay the Property Tax they expect the road network to be maintained and the hedges cut.
- Every estate needs to be evaluated for public lighting.

Martin Lydon Head of Finance & Planning responded to the queries raised and stated that

- The Councillors have always had an input into the Roads Programme.
- Figure for the Property Tax in each area is not available.
- An extra €20,000 per municipal area has been allocated for public lighting in 2015 with a view to prioritising housing estates in greatest need. The funding will meet some basic public lighting needs, such as replacing light bulbs.
- The Council will devise a policy on the application of the funding for public lighting effective from January onwards.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Ward

That Roscommon County Council take into consideration the population in the Athlone Municipal District when allocating the finances for 2015.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Ward

That three Supervisors be assigned to the Athlone Municipal District.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Naughten

SECONDED by Councillor Keogh

That funding be allocated for the upgrading and provision of additional equipment in the playground in Monksland.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Athlone Municipal District Draft Budget 2015 as circulated.

6.14. NATIONAL CYCLE ROUTE – DUBLIN –TO- GALWAY – PRESENTATION ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND ROUTE SELECTION:

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Hugh O’Sullivan and Daniel Coleman from Roughan & O’Donovan – AECOM Alliance Consulting Engineers to the meeting to make a Presentation to the members on the National Cycle route.

Hugh O’Sullivan informed the meeting that under direction from the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, the National Roads Authority (NRA) have the responsibility to delivery the first long distance off-road cycle-route (greenway) between Galway and Maynooth. Upon completion, this project will deliver the first cross-country national cycle-way from Galway to Dublin and establish a significant tourism investment that will assist in regional and local employment. The concept of the greenway is , similar in character to the Great Western Greenway in Mayo, will have significant potential to be marketed internationally and attract new tourists who may wish to walk or cycle across Ireland.

Mr. O'Sullivan also highlighted to the members the next steps for the project as follows:-

- Elected member briefings – September, 2014.
- Public consultation events in October, 2014 – venues in Galway City, Oranmore, Loughrea, Ballinasloe, Moore & Athlone.
- Opportunity for landowners along the corridor to meet with the local authority.
- 2nd public consultation events in Q1 of 2015 to finalise the route, prior to application to An Bord Pleanála for planning permission in Q3 of 2015.

Members raised the following issues:

- Any route through farm lands should be fenced off in the interest of safety.
- Should consider designing mini routes on ring roads in the area.
- Consideration of tourism potential for the entire area along the route.
- No consultation with local Councillors in relation to the withdrawal of the proposed cycle route on the R446.
- Route should have the least amount of impact on farm lands.
- Level of compensation for farmers where farms have to be severed?
- Need for discussion with each land owner on the route.
- Presentation of the route as a 'walking route' is also important.
- Farmers may have a reduction in their Single Farm payments if their lands are severed.
- Details of the design for the Cycleway.

Hugh O'Sullivan and Daniel Coleman responded to the queries raised.

- Letters will issue this week to land owners giving them the up to date position.
- The route will be fenced with the agreement of landowners.
- Penalty in farm payments needs to be considered.
- Funding for the National Cycle route is provided by Europe.
- The design provides for a 3m. cycleway and a 10m. Corridor.

Eugene Dwyer informed the members that the funding for the N6 'Smarter Travel Programme' was withdrawn by the Department. Funding for the National Cycle Route will be accessed through Europe.

Ms. Annmarie Johnston, Executive Engineer, is the designated contact person on the project for Roscommon County Council and Councillors may wish to consult with Annmarie on the route proposal and matters of clarification.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Hugh O'Sullivan and Daniel Coleman for the very informative presentation and wished them well with the project and looked forward to seeing it come to full fruition.

**7.14. ROADS ACT, 1993, SECTION 11 & ROADS REGULATIONS 1994,
PART 2 –**

DECLARATION OF PUBLIC ROADS –

- **Road that connects the R362 New Tuam Road to the LT75841 at Monksland Td, Athlone, Co. Roscommon – Road length 398m.**

Majella Hunt, Director of Services, informed the members that a request was received to have the road that connects the R362 New Tuam Road to the LT 75841 at Monksland Td, Athlone declared to be a public road. No objection or representation was received. The declaration of a road to be a public road is a reserved function.

Members raised the following issues:

- Sought an assurance to be given that the road will be fully upgraded.
- Confirmation that there will be no delay in the upgrading of footpaths and lighting.

Eugene Dwyer confirmed that it is the intention that upgrade works will commence as soon as possible.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Keogh

It was **AGREED** that the road that connects the R362 New Tuam Road to the LT75841 at Monksland Td, Athlone, Co. Roscommon – Road length 398m. be declared a public road.

**8.14. ADOPTION OF DRAFT MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS STANDING
ORDERS - 2014 – 2019:**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Kilduff
SECONDED by Councillor Fallon

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Draft Municipal Districts Standing Orders – 2014 – 2019 as circulated.

9.14. QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO. 135.

Replies to the Questions submitted by members were circulated (see schedule).

10.14. NOTICES OF MOTION:

1. **NEW TUAM ROAD – ADDITIONAL FOOTPATHS & LIGHTING: Notice of Motion from Councillor Naughten – 1/14.**

“That Roscommon County Council provide additional footpaths and lighting on the new Tuam road between River Village roundabout and Clonakilla National School, Bealnamullia, Athlone.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

The provision of additional footpaths and public lighting on the New Tuam Road between the River Village Roundabout and Cloonakilla National School would incur significant capital investment to be sourced from Development Levies. Funding of the works will be dependent on the availability of finance from Development Levies

The need for the provision of a pedestrian crossing at Cloonakilla School was highlighted by Councillor Naughten. He expressed disappointment that funding was not available to provide footpaths and lighting given that a number of areas along the New Tuam road were particularly dangerous. Councillor Naughten requested the Council to cost interim safety measures at this location.

Members raised the following issues:

- That the Council provide a pedestrian crossing at the national school in Knockcroghery which has similar road safety issues to Cloonakilla.
- Lack of public lighting between the Mill Bar and the Waterville estate.
- Pedestrian crossings need to be prioritised.

Majella Hunt, Director of Services responded that the provision of a standard pedestrian crossing would cost an estimated €25,000 and the situation at Cloonakilla will require additional works including footpaths, public lighting, signage and road markings. The scheme in its entirety will require significant investment. Plans to develop a new school at Cloonakilla would address many of the issues raised.

2. **DANGEROUS JUNCTION AT LACKEN CROSS, RAHARA (R362) Notice of Motion from Councillor Ward – 2/14.**

“I am calling on Roscommon County Council and the NRA to carry out improvement works at Lacken Cross junction, This is an extremely dangerous junction with no visible view of oncoming traffic when approaching the Rahara-Roscommon road (R362) from the direction of Ganaveens, Carrowmoney and Sandfield (L2006).

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

Following a recent call for submission of projects under the Low Cost Safety Improvement Works on Regional & Local Roads 2015 a scheme for the improvement of this junction will be submitted to the National Roads Authority before the submission dated of Oct. 7th 2014.

Members stated that a land owner was disposed to co-operate with Roscommon County Council to carry out improvement works at this location . There is a directional sign blocking the view of drivers at Lacken Cross which needs to be addressed.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Fallon

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council call on the Department of Transport to carry out improvement works at Lacken Cross junction, This is an extremely dangerous junction with no visible view of oncoming traffic when approaching the Rahara-Roscommon road (R362) from the direction of Ganaveens, Carrowmoney and Sandfield (L2006).

11.14. CIVIC RECEPTION:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** to adopt the List of participants for a Civic Reception as circulated.

12.14. A.O.B.

Area Engineer:

Members expressed concern that there was no Area Water Engineer in the Athlone area.

Green Flag:

Members raised an issue surrounding the raising of the Green Flag and requested that Roscommon County Council inform Schools involved in the Green Flag Programme to invite elected members as a matter of common courtesy.

Advertising Signage:

Members expressed dissatisfaction that small business are not allowed to advertise their business on approach roads and requested that a 'common sense' approach be adopted for signage for small businesses.

Sewerage Scheme in Four Roads:

Councillor Fallon enquired if Contractors employed by the Council are confined to working Council working hours.

C'FRAM Study:

Councillor Fallon requested an update on the C'FRAM Study for Athleague.

Road Contracts:

Councillor Keogh expressed concern that Contractors are leaving a drop of 2 – 3 inches into peoples houses when road resurfacing is being carried out and this needs to be addressed especially on the Old Tuam road.

Water:

Councillor Naughton requested an update on developments in relation to Kileglan Springs.

Hoarding.

Councillor Naughten informed the meeting that it was necessary to have the hoarding in the parkway opposite the Waterville site secured so as to avoid the problem of anti-social behaviour at this location.

Derrycahill Bridge:

Members requested Roscommon County Council to prioritise the carrying out of repairs to Derrycahill Bridge given the number of people affected by the current road diversions. Repair works should be carried out to assist local people who are facing 14 mile round trips at present.

Cluain Broc Residents:

Members raised the issue of the closing of the right-of-way over the railway bridge and requested a commitment for works to be done.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned

