

**Minutes of the May Monthly Meeting of Clare County Council held in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2019 at 3:45 p.m.**

**Present:**

Councillors J. Breen, J. Flynn, P. Daly, A. Norton, T. McNamara, M. Howard, P. Murphy, C. Colleran Molloy, J. Cooney, P. Hayes, M. Begley, T. O'Brien, P. Burke, A. O'Callaghan, C. Crowe, J. Crowe, G. Flynn, P.J. Ryan, P. McMahon, C. Curtin, R. Nagle, I. Lynch, M. Hillery, P.J. Kelly, B. Chambers, G. Keating.

- Mr. Pat Dowling, Chief Executive.
- Ms. Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator.
- Ms. Margaret O'Rourke, Assistant Staff Officer.
- Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development.
- Mr. Liam Conneally, Director of Economic Development.
- Mr. Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development.
- Ms. Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development.
- Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald, A/Head of Finance.
- Mr. John Leahy, Senior Engineer, Roads and Transportation.
- Mr. Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer, Project Management Offices.
- Ms. Siobhán McNulty, Senior Executive Officer, Social Development.

**Apologies:** Cllr. M. McKee.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael Begley presided.

**Vote of sympathy.**

At the outset a vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- The Burke family, Barefield on the death of Brendan Burke.
- The McMahon family, Lissycasey on the death of Cormac.
- McNulty family, Ballina, Co. Mayo on the death of Mary McNulty.
- Glynn family, Toureen, Kilnamona on the death of Gerry Glynn.
- Guilfoyle family, Ennis on the death of Tommy Guilfoyle.

**Get Well Wishes.**

Get well wishes were extended to Cllr. Mike McKee from the elected members and staff.

**National Planning Framework.**

P. Dowling, Chief Executive informed the members that the South Clare Economic Strategic Development Zone at UL has been included in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 following a meeting of the Southern Regional

Assembly held on Friday last. Mr. Dowling stated that this is a positive outcome for the future of our county and acknowledged the work and lobbying carried out by Cllr. P. McMahon and Cllr. B. Slattery who are Clare County Council's representatives in the Southern Regional Assembly.

Cllr. P. McMahon thanked Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Liam Conneally, Director of Economic Development and Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner for the ongoing work and support in relation to this issue. Cllr. McMahon also acknowledged the support received from the members of Clare County Council, Senior Management in UL and the IDA.

**Item 1: Minutes of Council Meetings.**

a. Ar moladh Cllr. B. Chambers  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. T. McNamara agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the April Meeting of Clare County Council held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 be adopted and signed.”

b. Ar moladh Cllr. B. Chambers  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. T. McNamara agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the adjourned April Meeting of Clare County Council held on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 be adopted and signed.”

**Item 2: Matters Arising.**

- Cllr. J. Breen referred to his previous notice of motion inviting the Joint Policing Authority to address a future meeting of Clare County Council and asked that a formal request issue calling for an armed response unit to be based in Shannon. This was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn and agreed.
- Cllr. P. Hayes expressed disappointment that Eir has not responded to invitation issued in January to update the members on the present rollout of broadband in the county and requested follow up.
- Cllr. P. Hayes expressed dis-satisfaction with the reply received from the National Transport Authority in relation to Clare Accessible Transport.

**Item 3: Minutes of Municipal District Meetings.**

a. Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. T. McNamara agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District Meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 be noted.”

b. Ar moladh Cllr. T. O’Brien  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. A. O’Callaghan agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Killaloe Municipal District Meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 be noted.”

**Item 4: Minutes of S.P.C. Meetings.**

a. Ar moladh Cllr. P. Hayes  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Crowe agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Rural Development S.P.C. meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2019 be noted”.

b. Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Burke agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Social Development S.P.C. meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 be noted”.

c. Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Burke agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Social Development S.P.C. meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 be noted”.

d. Ar moladh Cllr. C. Curtin  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. A. O’Callaghan agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Physical Development S.P.C. meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 be noted”.

**Item 5: Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meetings.**

The members noted the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019 as presented.

**Item 6: Monthly Management Report.**

The monthly management report attached to the agenda included key activities in the principal service areas and was noted by the members.

Cllr. C. Curtin commended the works being carried out in West Clare and welcomed proposed works on the Mullagh to Miltown Malbay Watermains Scheme.

Cllr. J. Flynn referred to traveller encampments on heavily trafficked roads and expressed concern in relation to the health and safety risks posed from vehicular traffic.

Cllr. J. Flynn requested that Irish Water be requested to resolve the noise pollution problem associated with the Clonroadmore Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Cllr. M. Begley welcomed progress on the UL pedestrian and cyclist access and the update on the Springfield Flood Defence Scheme.

**Item 7: Disposal of property pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000. Proposed disposal of area of land at Co. Clare.**

Report dated 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of an area of lands measuring 0.039 hectares at Ballyveskill, Tiermaclane, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Murphy  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Keating agus glacadh leis

“Notice having been served pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Clare County Council approves pursuant to the powers vested on it at Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended, of disposal of lands at Ballyveskill, Tiermaclane, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019.”

**Item 8: Annual Report 2018.**

The Draft Annual Report 2018 was circulated in advance of the agenda and was noted and approved by the members present.

**Item 9. CLÁR Programme 2019.**

Report dated 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development was circulated with the agenda. The report states that the Action Plan for Rural Ireland met in April 2019 and recommended the CLÁR projects to the May meeting of Clare County Council for submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development. A list of projects was attached to the report. The report was noted by the members present having been proposed by Cllr. P. Hayes and seconded by Cllr. C. Curtin.

**Item 10. Local Festivals and Participative Events Funding.**

Report dated 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development was circulated with the agenda. The report states that the Council's Working Group for the Action Plan for Rural Ireland met in April and recommended projects to the May meeting of Clare County Council to be submitted for Fáilte Ireland funding. A list of projects was circulated with the report. The report was noted by the members present having been proposed by Cllr. P. Hayes and seconded by Cllr. T. O'Brien.

**Item 11. Review of Community Support Scheme.**

Report dated 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development was circulated with the agenda. The report states that the Council's Working Group for the Action Plan for Rural Ireland met in April and reviewed the Community Support Scheme Grants. They recommended the inclusion of additional grant categories in the future grant scheme in the areas of Tourism and Community Development. This can be considered as part of Budget 2020.

As an interim measure the Working Group recommended applicants for the 2019 scheme be re-considered as funded projects if additional funding were to become available. A list of projects was circulated with the report. The report was noted by the members present having been proposed by Cllr. P. Hayes and seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

**Item 12. Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements.**

Report dated 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2019 from Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development was circulated with the agenda. The report provides a briefing for elected members on Affordable Purchase Arrangements under the following headings:

- Legislative basis for the new Affordable Purchase Arrangements,
- Where will affordable homes be delivered?
- What is the Service Site Fund?
- Who qualifies for an affordable home?
- What discount is being provided and what are the repayment arrangements?
- What is a scheme of priorities and why is it required?

The draft Scheme of Priority which outlines how the order of priority will be determined for eligible households where the demand for affordable housing exceeds the dwellings available was also circulated with the report. When the draft scheme is approved by Council, it is to be submitted to the Minister for approval. It then becomes the basis for determining the priority of applicants for affordable dwellings when they become available in the future.

Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“Pursuant to Section 85 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 and the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 (Part 5) Regulations 2019, S.I. 81 of 2019, Clare County Council hereby approves the Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements.”

Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development provided a summary of the report and outlined the legislative requirements associated with approving this scheme.

In relation to query raised, Ms. Haugh stated that in relation to lands at Gaurus, a submission of interest will be made after a master plan of the entire site is completed.

The elected members acknowledged that this is a complex document and stressed the importance of access to affordable homes in the future.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive noted the comments made by the elected members and referred to work ongoing on the Economic and Spatial Plan for Ennis 2040 which will result in a proper mix of housing being available going forward including private, public and affordable housing.

### **Item 13. Annual Financial Statement 2018.**

The Annual Financial Statement for 2018 together with a report was circulated in advance of the agenda and was noted by the members.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Breen  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy agus glacadh leis

“In accordance with Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001, the approval of Council is sought for additional expenditure by Division as set out below:

	Exp €000
Division A – Housing and Building	1,944
Division B – Road Transport & Safety	7,909
Division C – Water Services	1,069
Division D – Development Management	3,364
Division E – Environmental Services	92
Division F – Recreation and Amenity	894
Division G – Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	28

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“That Transfers to reserves as set out below is hereby approved:

	Total €000
Division A – Housing and Building	1,005
Division B – Road Transport & Safety	998
Division C – Water Services	524
Division D – Development Management	4,392
Division E – Environmental Services	793
Division F – Recreation and Amenity	924
Division H – Miscellaneous Services	220
Division J – Support Services	<u>1,656</u>
	<u>10,512</u>

The elected members acknowledged the work done by Noeleen Fitzgerald, A/Head of Finance and the finance team in balancing the finances.

It was agreed that Items No. 14, 17 and 21 would be taken together.

#### **Item 14. Interim Report on the Management of Beaches in County Clare.**

Report from Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development and Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development was circulated with the agenda. The report states that further to a request to extend the availability of services at Clare Beaches the purpose of this review is to examine

- Maintenance Practice
- Litter Management
- Collaboration with local community groups
- Engagement with other statutory agencies
- Health & Safety Facility and Electric Charging Points
- Opening Hours

initially at blue flag beaches in County Clare.

For the purposes of this initial review, the scope was limited to beaches which had received a blue flag accreditation: namely Kilkee, Cappa, White Strand Doonbeg, White Strand Milltown Malbay, Spanish Point, Fanore, Lahinch, Mountshannon, and Ballycuggeran. These beaches fall under the Municipal District offices of Kilrush, Ennistymon, and Scariff.

A summary of the Blue Flag Beach Criteria was provided under the following headings:

- Environmental Education and Information Provision
- Water Quality

- Environmental Management
- Safety and Services.

The report as circulated was noted by the members present.

Cllr. J. Flynn requested that a lifeguard hut be installed at Ballyalla Lake. C. Kirby, Director of Physical Development informed the members that a feasibility study is being prepared for Ballyalla at present.

**Item 17. Management of Public Amenity Facilities.**

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Curtin

Cuidithe ag Cllrs. G. Flynn agus J. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“That the Director of Services report on the review undertaken by the management team of the Council on the proposed model of Management of Public Amenity Facilities (beaches, parks, piers and lakes) in the county. (As requested by notice of motion).”

**Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development and Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development replied as follows:**

“Further to the notice of motions previously submitted the review has initially centred on the 9 Blue Flag Beaches across County Clare.

An Interim Report on the Management of Beaches in County Clare with recommendations is on the agenda for the May Council Meeting for consideration.

It is intended to address other public amenity facilities in the next phase of this review.”

**Item 21. Toilet facilities at the county’s beaches.**

Ar moladh Cllr. M. Hillery

Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Keating agus glacadh leis

"That the management of Clare County Council would change the policy to have the toilet facilities at the county's beaches available to the public on more days throughout the year."

**Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development replied as follows:**

“The opening of the public conveniences currently varies between beaches. The formal opening times are set out below. However, flexibility is demonstrated by the Municipal District Offices who will open the toilets outside of these times either on demand, or if the weather is good.

- Kilkee: Full time May to September
- Cappa: Full time during bathing season
- White Strand Doonbeg: Full time during bathing season
- White Strand Milltown: Weekends from Easter to end May, Full time June to September



- Spanish Point: Weekends from Easter to end May, Full time June to September.
- Fanore: Weekends from Mid-March to end May, Full time June to August, Weekends September
- Lahinch: Open all year around
- Mountshannon: Open full time St. Patrick's weekend to October bank holiday
- Ballycuggeran: Open full time St. Patrick's weekend to October bank holiday

Public convenience opening hours will be discussed at the Beach Management Committee level, the membership of which will be expanded to include voluntary groups (such as Clean Coast Ireland). This would allow for expanded communication and consultation, as well as determining how such voluntary groups can both assist the council, and vice versa. This is a recommendation incorporated in the Interim Report on the Management of Beaches in County Clare on the agenda for the May Council meeting.”

Cllr. G. Keating requested that a wheelchair be made available at Carrigaholt Beach.

**Item 15. Customer Satisfaction Survey 2019.**

Clare County Council's Customer Satisfaction Survey 2019 was circulated with the agenda. The report states that the survey was designed using surveymonkey software. Questions were based on a similar customer satisfaction survey that was conducted in 2010. Modifications were made to reflect changes to services within the Council since then. The survey was open from 25<sup>th</sup> March to 7<sup>th</sup> April. 649 respondents completed the survey. The report included survey results in graphical format.

The report as circulated was noted by the members present.

Cllr. C. Curtin acknowledged the work done by the executive in responding to notice of motion submitted by him and noted that the public are engaging in a positive manner with the Council.

**Item 16. Sewerage Schemes.**

Ar moladh Cllr. G. Keating

“That this Council provide an update on sourcing funding for sewerage schemes for towns and villages which currently lack this vital infrastructure. This basic service is vital to sustain and promote the communities which live in rural Clare.”

**Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development replied as follows:**

“Clare County Council has sought funding for sewerage schemes for towns and villages that had no infrastructure under the Governments Water Services Investment Plans (W.S.I.P.). A number of schemes were discontinued under the W.S.I.P. 2010-2012:

Since 2014, Clare County Council has prepared and submitted Business Cases to Irish Water (I.W.) for infrastructure of this nature to be considered and included in their Capital Investment Plans (C.I.P. 2014-2016) and (C.I.P. 2017-2021). Clare County Council also submitted Asset Needs Briefs (A.N.B.) to Irish Water so that these towns

and villages could be considered under Irish Water's Minor Works Programme. Again, these submissions were unsuccessful.

Irish Water have stated that they are unable to provide new infrastructure projects of this nature due to competing objectives and obligations agreed with the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (C.R.U.).

Department of Heritage, Planning and Local Government funding initiatives such as the rural water programme conclude that it is not structured to provide this type of infrastructure.

Applications submitted under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund in 2018 (R.R.D.F. 2018) have not been successful and discussions would indicate that the Department of Rural and Community Development are of the view it is a matter for Irish Water (I.W.).

It is the view of Government Departments that water and waste water infrastructure projects should be funded through Irish Water. Over recent weeks delegations from Clare County Council have met with both Irish Water and various Government Departments to advance initiatives to fund such projects and these discussions are ongoing.

#### **Current Capital Investment in Waste Water Infrastructure in Clare:**

##### **Clare U.T.A.S.:**

The Clare U.T.A.S. (Untreated Agglomeration Study) project is ongoing with the primary aim to end the discharge of untreated wastewater from coastal agglomerations in county Clare. The following towns and villages are at advanced stages of detail design and are programmed for completion by the end of 2021:

Kilrush, Kilkee, Liscannor, Ballyvaughan and Clarecastle with the provision of appropriate waste water treatment plants.

##### **Clare Capital Investment Programme (C.I.P.) 2014-2016:**

The Clare C.I.P. 2014-2016 included for Ennis/Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme – Phase 1 Clonroadmore Wastewater Treatment Plant which is now completed. Quin Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade, Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade and Shannon Town Sewerage Schemes and been continued and have been added to the 2017-2021 C.I.P.

##### **Clare Capital Investment Programme (C.I.P.) 2017-2021:**

The Clare C.I.P. 2017-2021 includes for;

Ennistymon Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade, Lahinch Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade and Newmarket and Fergus Outfall Upgrade. In addition an interim upgrade of Shannon Town Wastewater Treatment Plant has been added to the C.I.P. which is expected to advance to tender stage shortly.”

Cllr. G. Keating requested that Carrigaholt be included in the Councils programme for sewerage scheme infrastructure works going forward.

**Item 18. Action Plan for flood risk remedial works.**

Ar moladh Cllr. A. O’Callaghan  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. McMahon agus glacadh leis

“In view of the increased popularity and usage of Limerick/Ennis/Galway railway corridor (public rail services) with recorded figures. I propose that Clare County Council would consider and discuss as matter of priority an Action Plan and specified time line for carrying out much needed flood risk remedial works on the line especially at Ballycar, and thus reassure the public of Clare no further disruption going forward.”

**John Leahy, Senior Engineer, Roads and Transportation replied as follows:**

“The joint Oireachtas sub-committee for Rural Development convened a meeting in Dublin in November 2018 in relation to the flooding of the Limerick/Ennis/Galway Irish Rail line in Ballycar, Newmarket on Fergus. Irish Rail as the lead authority were invited to update the committee in relation to the issue. Other statutory agencies were also invited such as O.P.W., G.S.I., Clare County Council and N.P.W.S. A number of reports had been commissioned by Irish Rail in relation to the flooding issue.

The outcome of the meeting was that Irish Rail as the lead agency was tasked with developing a technically feasible solution to the flooding issue of the rail line at Ballycar. Clare County Council were requested to facilitate a process and to bring Irish Rail together with the other agencies/stakeholders (listed above) and also including Shannon Group and the Irish Aviation Authority to develop a solution.

Clare County Council has convened regular meetings over the past six months and Irish Rail have commissioned a Consultant RPS to develop a solution to the flooding issue at Ballycar.

This work is now well advanced by Irish Rail with their Engineering consultants.”

The elected members discussed the impact on people when this railway line is forced to close due to flooding and emphasised the necessity to undertake works to ensure that it remains open all year round.

**Item 19. Safe walking and cycling routes.**

Ar moladh Cllr. P. McMahon

“Ask Clare County Council to report on future plans for safe walking and cycle routes.”

**John Leahy, Senior Engineer, Roads and Transportation and Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer, Project Management Office replied as follows:**

“A number of projects which include improved cyclist and pedestrian safety are being undertaken by the Road Design Office.

Low Cost Safety funding was secured for the following:

- a cyclist and pedestrian scheme from St. Flannan’s College to Kilrush Road in Ennis. This is currently under construction by Ennis Municipal District. It ties

into the R458 Ennis Active Travel Town route 2 Clareabbey to Kellys Corner provided in 2016.

- pedestrian crossing at R352 Ballymacahill, Ennis.
- pedestrian crossing at R458 Carmody Street, Ennis.

GMA funding was provided for pedestrian crossings in Newmarket and Cratloe. Section 38 public consultations took place and the two schemes were approved in March 2019. The Road Design Office has issued the safety files for both schemes to Shannon Municipal District and they will be constructed by Shannon Municipal District.

A Specific Improvement Scheme has been completed at O'Briensbridge in east Clare which has allowed the reopening of the riverside walk. The walk was closed a number of years ago due to safety issues. Walkway protection structures were constructed over the walkway beside the bridge and traffic signals were installed which provides for one way traffic flow across the bridge. Pedestrians now have a lined walking zone across the bridge from O'Briensbridge to Montpelier.

N85 Clareabbey Roundabout a project to include Design, Drawings and Feasibility Report for traffic calming and pedestrian/cyclist facilities is ongoing. This will also tie in to the R458 Ennis Active Travel Town route 2.

EuroVelo is a network of 15 long distance cycle routes in Europe and has enormous tourist potential for Clare. A 300km route for EuroVelo 1 has been assessed in Clare by the Road Design Office/Sport Ireland in accordance with European Cyclist Federation criteria. Evaluation and action planning to develop the route is being carried out. At present the assessed route is primarily along low traffic Local roads. It has coastal sections but also travels through inland villages such as Carran and Quin. Works on site will consist mostly of information boards, signage and cycle maintenance stands and some works could be completed during 2019 if funding is available. The proposed EuroVelo route coincides in parts with some of the Doolin Cycle Hub routes and the Loop Head Cycle route.

Bunratty – the Road Design Office has produced draft designs for improved pedestrian connectivity between Bunratty Folkpark entrance/carpark and the businesses south of the Castle Junction.

Lahinch – Pedestrian crossings being installed in Lahinch in 2019 by the Ennistymon Office.

### **General Design Office**

Lough Derg Amenity Trail - This is an Amenity Trail which involves the Development of a new 3.5km path to a hardcore finish on the verge of the R465 from Bealkelly to Tuamgraney. This project is being managed by the General Design Office. The design and the planning process is at an advanced stage and a Part VIII application will be lodged over the next 4 weeks. This is a strategic project in that it is built on the various initiatives and infrastructural investments which have been implemented in East Clare over the years. It involves the following Stakeholders: Clare County Council, Waterways Ireland, Clare Local Development Company, Ogonneloe Exchange, Lough Derg Marketing Group, National Schools in the Area, GAA Club, Local Business, and Killaloe Sailing Club.

### **Project Management Office**

West Clare Railway Greenway Project – This project is being advanced by the Project Management Office. The Project Management Office are and will continue to consult with key stakeholders affected such as landowners, their representative groups, business and community groups, etc. It may be possible to deliver smaller sections where owners are favourably disposed to such works being carried out as a pilot phase and we would welcome input from interested parties in this regard. In the meantime, funding will be sought from all suitable sources so that we can advance the design and delivery of this proposal.

University of Limerick -The Project Management Office is also at an advanced stage and shortly to commence works in conjunction with the University of Limerick to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and minimise potential for traffic conflict adjacent to the Clare Campus in South East Clare. This will involve the treatment of invasive species and the upgrade of the existing toe path from the Gillogue Road to the UL Clare Campus along by the Errinagh Canal. It is proposed that this work will be completed over the coming weeks.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass - The Cross Section for this scheme also includes for cycle-ways and footpaths.

There are projects in the pipeline outlined in the Chief Executive Report that are at the early stages of design and development across each Municipal District.”

**Item 20. West Clare Greenway.**

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Murphy

“What progress, if any, is there to report on negotiations regarding the acquiring of lands along the route of the proposed West Clare Greenway?”

**Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development replied as follows:**

“The delivery of a Greenway, principally along the route of the old West Clare Railway has been, and continues to be, a key objective of Clare County Council as referenced in the current County Development Plan.

The entire route is approximately 85km so the costs would be significant. We were unsuccessful in our funding applications under the Rural Regeneration and the Greenway Specific Funds in late 2018/early 2019. However, it has been agreed that the Greenway Project will be a priority Category B application for the Council under the Rural Regeneration call for funding applications later in the year. If successful, we will be in a position to carry out the detailed design, engage and negotiate with affected landowners, obtain the necessary consents and be in a position to apply for the Category A construction costs thereafter.

In the meantime, it may be possible to deliver smaller sections where owners are favourably disposed to, and environmental conditions allow for, such works to be carried out on a pilot basis and we would welcome input from interested parties in this regard. In the meantime, funding will be sought from all suitable sources so that we can progress the project.”

**Item 22. LED bulb replacement programme.**

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Crowe

“To ask Clare County Council

I) what progress is being made in terms the LED bulb replacement programme throughout the county?

II) is there a schedule for the roll-out of the bulb replacement programme?

III) what annual cost savings are likely to be made as a result of transitioning to LED bulbs?

IV) what funding streams are available for the installation of new streetlights?”

**John Leahy, Senior Engineer, Roads and Transportation replied as follows:**

- (1) At present 2,563 LED bulb replacements have already taken place in Co. Clare and this equates to 18.2% of overall lighting stock.
- (2) It was announced in late 2018 that the Road Management Office (R.M.O.) have been successful in securing €17.5 million in support from the Climate Action Fund for the LA Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project nationally. This will form part of the funding necessary for the delivery of the project. Clare has confirmed its participation and has signed up to be included in region 1 of the Local Authority Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project. The current programme indicates that the project will commence in 2020.
- (3) Energy savings from transitioning to LED will be significant but will depend on the lighting designs. Predicted energy savings will range from 20% to 60%.
- (4) Regular maintenance and replacement is funded through our own resources. Replacement projects on National Roads are funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland. The LED retrofit regional project being delivered by the Project Management Office for Clare will require loan funding.”

Cllr. C. Crowe requested that savings accrued from energy saving lighting be ringfenced for new lighting in the county.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive acknowledged that there are lighting challenges in villages and towns in the county and stated that the Council are examining areas where new infrastructure and capital works are required.

**Item 23. Job creation.**

Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Kelly

“That the following details be made available by the Local Enterprise Office

- (a) Number of jobs created in the years including 2016, 17, 18,
- (b) Location of jobs created
- (c) Type of jobs created.”

**Padraic McElwee, Head of Enterprise replied as follows:**

- a) The net jobs created for the three year period 2016-2018 is 426
- b) Based on current Municipal Districts, the location of net jobs created is as follows:

<b>Municipal District</b>	<b>Net Jobs Created</b>	<b>% Distribution</b>	<b>Net Jobs Created (Adjusted)</b>	<b>% Distribution (Adjusted)</b>
Ennis	64	15%	64	21%
Killaloe	34	8%	34	11%
Shannon*	229	54%	106	35%
West Clare	99	23%	99	33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\* One company in Shannon accounted for 123 net jobs in 2016. The numbers have been adjusted to provide a more balanced analysis of net job creation around the County.*

- c) Our annual employment survey does not capture any data on the type of jobs created and therefore this information is not available to us. Anecdotally, based on the business sectors in which the net jobs are created we estimate:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Net Jobs Created</b>
Tertiary Services	185
Food and Beverages	78
Manufacturing	67
Software Development	43
Other	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>426</b>

Cllr. P.J. Kelly expressed dis-satisfaction in relation to the reply received and requested clarification on the jobs included under the business sectors types.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive informed the meeting that Clare Local Enterprise Office is one of the most successful Local Enterprise Offices in the country in relation to job support and creation. He stated that he is the Chair of the Evaluation Committee and that information on all beneficiaries of Local Enterprise Office grant aid can be made available to the elected members if required subject to GDPR.

**Item 24. Social Housing Support.**

Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P.J. Ryan agus glacadh leis

“That in view of the difficulties some people have in qualifying for social housing support and also the thresholds set at Government level, that Clare County Council carry out a full review of the policy as quite a number of people employed are caught in a situation where they can be earning above the limits for social housing support but not enough to raise a mortgage.”

**Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development replied as follows:**

“Income limits for social housing support were introduced in 2011, through the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 (as amended). There are 3 income bands, and Clare is one of the counties in the lowest band.

The income limit for a single person seeking social housing support is €25,000 (this is a nett of PAYE, PRSI, USC). An additional 5% is allowable for each additional adult in a household (up to a max of 10%) and 2.5% for each dependent child (again up to a max of 10%).

So the max income limit in Clare is €25,000 plus 20% = €30,000. Local Authorities do not have discretion with regard to this income limit.

Obviously the housing market, especially the rental market, has changed significantly since the regulations were introduced and the income limits have remained static. It is up to the Minister to amend the regulations and increase the income limits. That said there is a pilot ongoing in Dublin on a Cost Rental scheme to test the model and to inform policy in the area of cost rental. The idea behind cost rental is that the rent paid by the tenant relates to the cost of providing their home, not its market value. This distinction is crucial. Currently social housing supports are based on market values, such as market rents therefore the sectors of the rental market are in competition for available properties. If social housing supports were based on the cost of provision of same then this in theory removes the element of competition.

The Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme was introduced to support the ‘squeezed middle’ in attaining a mortgage. The scheme offers fixed interest rate mortgages to credit worthy low to middle income first time buyers with a view to making home ownership more affordable. Single people earning under €50,000 per annum are eligible for the scheme or in the case of a joint application both incomes shall not exceed €75,000. Mortgages of up to €225,000 are available in Clare at a fixed interest rate of 2% for up to 25 years and 2.25% up to 30 years. Details of the scheme are available on [www.rebuildingirelandhomeloan.ie](http://www.rebuildingirelandhomeloan.ie) or through the loans team in the Housing Department.

As a further measure to address supply the Department has recently announced new affordable house purchase arrangements. Affordable homes are to be delivered where there is a local authority residential land bank available with no significant loans and where there are affordability challenges for low to middle-income households. Clare County Council made a submission in respect of two sites at Ennis and Shannon and resulting there from have been invited to submit further information in order to obtain funding from the Serviced Site Fund. If approved, the funding, which is capped at €50,000 per affordable home, will assist in the provision of infrastructure such as roads, water, drainage, community facilities etc. This financial assistance will enable



the Council to sell affordable homes at a discount to eligible purchasers. The level of discount to be provided will be on a site by site basis and will depend on the costs of construction of the dwellings and the level of subsidy approved but it is recommended at between 10% and 40%. It is now intended to submit further information in relation to both projects but it is anticipated that the Ennis site will only be approved when a masterplan for the area has been prepared which is being undertaken by the Economic Development Directorate. The Council is required to make a Scheme of Priority that will determine the order of priority given to eligible households in relation to the purchase of affordable dwellings and this will be before elected members for consideration at the May monthly Council meeting.”

**Item 25. Decade of Centenaries Series.**

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Curtin  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“That the County Librarian would arrange for the extension of the “Decade of Centenaries Series” of historical lectures scheduled to commence in September to branch libraries as appropriate in the county.”

**Helen Walsh, County Librarian replied as follows:**

“The Decade of Centenaries lecture series is an on-going initiative of the national programme to commemorate the period 1916-1923. In 2018, Clare Libraries hosted 6 lectures in 6 branch libraries in Ennis, Shannon, Ennistymon, Killaloe, Kilrush and Sixmilebridge. The speakers included Joe O’Muircheartaigh, Joe Power, Lucille Ellis, Mary Clancy and Ger Browne. The topics covered were World War 1, Clare women in 1918 and a talk on Women’s Suffrage.

A similar programme has been planned for 2019 – Dr. Paul O’Brien has already delivered a talk on the “Barrett Archive”, a former Commandant of the mid-Clare Brigade during the war of Independence – his archive was discovered recently and has been acquired by the Kilrush District Historical Society. This talk was delivered in DeValera Library, Ennis on 16<sup>th</sup> April and will be repeated in Kilrush Library later in the year.

Other lectures in the series include: a lecture by Tomás Mac Conmara on “The Scariff Martyrs: History and Meaning” in Scariff Library on 27<sup>th</sup> May and a lecture by Sinéad Mc Coole on “100 years of women in Politics and Public Life” in DeValera Library in Ennis on 4<sup>th</sup> June.

The remainder of the lectures are in the planning process, there are 10 in total. In addition to the lecture series, Mike Hanrahan formerly of Stockton’s Wing continues to research and develop a show based on the War of Independence in Clare called “Clare - Songs of Independence” which will be performed in 8 venues (mostly libraries) but including Cultúrlann Sweeney on 20<sup>th</sup> September and Clare Museum on 13<sup>th</sup> November. Two of the recipients of the Creative Ireland grant scheme this year included Oidhreacht an Chláir in Miltown Malbay for Eigse Thomais Uí Aodha – during which a lecture will be delivered on Dáil Eireann and the Merriman Winter school in Ennis which also had a theme of “Dála Eireann 1919-2019”.

In summary, the programme is a county wide initiative which attempts to place speakers in areas of the county relative to their subject interest and numerous branch libraries as venues will be included.”

It was agreed to discuss Items No. 26 and 27 together.

**Item 26. Centralised placement for County Clare secondary schools.**

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. A. Norton agus glacadh leis

“That Clare County Council request the Department of Education to institute a “centralised” placement for County Clare secondary schools akin to the Co. Limerick system to ensure equity and fairness is maximised, and to avoid multiple placements bookings by individual students.”

**Item 27. Places for secondary school students in Ennis.**

Ar moladh Cllr. A. Norton  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy agus glacadh leis

“That Clare County Council write to the Minister for Education to investigate and address the lack of places for secondary school students in Ennis for this coming academic year 2019/20. 40 children still waiting on a school place is not acceptable.”

**Item 28. Replace concrete manhole covers on public footpaths.**

Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Ryan  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. G. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“That this council would request Eir to replace all concrete manhole covers on public footpaths as a number of them, because of their age, are deteriorating.”

**Item 29. Flood lighting for Clare Abbey Site.**

Ar moladh Cllr. M. Howard  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“Clare County Council requests, Mr. Kevin Moran, Minister of State for the Office of Public Works and Flood Relief to consider flood lighting for the Clare Abbey site.”

**Item 30. Delivery of health services for County Clare.**

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Daly  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Breen agus glacadh leis

“I call on the five Oireachtas Members in Clare to call a Special Meeting with the Minister for Health and Department Officials in relation to the delivery of health services for County Clare and in particular the upgrading of Ennis General Hospital as

a Model 3 Hospital which will alleviate the continuous overcrowding at the A & E in the University Hospital of Limerick.”

### **Item 31. M18 Motorway.**

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Hayes  
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Cooney agus glacadh leis

“I am asking that Clare County Council contact T.I.I. (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) for an update into their recent survey's at the Tulla and Barefield exits on the M18 motorway and what proposals they have to upgrade them as a matter of urgency.”

The elected members present expressed concern in relation to safety issues at junctions 13 and 14 on the M18. P. Dowling, Chief Executive acknowledged the concerns of the elected members and stated that the context of these junctions has changed significantly since the motorway was constructed. Mr. Dowling assured the members that further engagement will take place with Transport Infrastructure Ireland as future plans for these junctions merit further discussion with Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

### **Tribute to retiring Councillors.**

P. Dowling, Chief Executive led in paying tribute to Cllrs. C. Curtin, M. Hillery, J. Breen, R. Nagle and T. McNamara on their retirement from politics at county level. He thanked them for their contribution to the life of Clare and communities in Clare during their collective service of 130 years. Mr. Dowling wished everybody well on the 24<sup>th</sup> May and stated that he looked forward to working in partnership in the next five years.

The retiring members thanked management and staff in Clare County Council for the respect, courtesy and co-operation shown to them during their periods as elected members and wished their colleagues well in the upcoming local election.

The elected members present paid tributes to the retiring Councillors and stated that their contribution to the people of Clare and their Municipal Districts was immense. The retiring Councillors were thanked for their guidance and friendship and they were wished health and happiness in retirement.

### **Item 32. Comhfhreagras. Correspondence.**

#### **Correspondence.**

#### **The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda:**

1. Correspondence dated 29<sup>th</sup> Marcy, 2019 from the Office of the Minister with responsibility for Defence regarding Defence Forces Pay and Conditions.
2. Correspondence dated 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Road Safety Authority in relation to a second National Car Test centre in Clare.
3. Correspondence dated 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Department of Health in relation to Sláintecare Action Plan 2019.

4. Correspondence dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2019 from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in relation to Community Employment (CE) Schemes.
5. Correspondence dated 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation in relation to access and cost of SME financing.
6. Correspondence dated 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in relation to building control.
7. Correspondence dated 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the National Transport Authority concerning Clare Accessible Transport.
8. Correspondence dated 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2019 from Shannon Group in relation to examining the potential to leverage spin-off employment for the strong aviation cluster based in Shannon.
9. Correspondence dated 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from An Garda Síochána in relation to the Future of Policing in Ireland.
10. Correspondence dated 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Office of the Taoiseach in relation to a vote of no confidence on the Minister for Health.
11. Correspondence dated 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Department of Health in relation to a vote of no confidence on the Minister for Health.
12. Correspondence dated 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Department of Health concerning a Suicide Prevention Authority.
13. Irish Water's Connection Charging Policy.
14. Correspondence dated 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from Irish Rural Link in relation to National Broadband Plan.
15. Correspondence dated 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to the review of the Regulation of Lobbying Act.
16. Resolution from Kilkenny County Council in relation to the Irish language.
17. Resolution from Donegal County Council in relation to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.
18. Resolution from Kilkenny County Council in relation to extending the scheme for the provision of the cancer drug Pembro.
19. Resolution from Kilkenny County Council in relation to Climate Strikes.

## **Conferences.**

### **Reports on Seminars/Conferences attended.**

With regard to seminars/conferences attended, reports completed in accordance with Section 142 of the Local Government Act 2001 were made available at the meeting.

**AILG training taking place in Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2019.**

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €52.82 including conference fee of €5.

It was agreed that Cllr. T. McNamara attend this Conference.

**AILG training entitled “120 years of Irish Local Government” taking place in Longford Arms Hotel, Longford on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019.**

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €94.19.

It was agreed that Cllr. T. McNamara attend this Conference.

**LAMA 2019 Spring Training Seminar taking place in the Bush Hotel, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim on 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2019.**

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €73.29 including conference fee of €80.

It was agreed that Cllr. T. McNamara attend this Conference.

**AILG training taking place in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2019.**

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €25.05 including conference fee of €5.

It was agreed that Cllrs. A. Norton and T. McNamara attend this Conference.

The meeting then concluded.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Riarthóir Cruinnithe**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Cathaoirleach**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_