

**Minutes of the July Monthly Meeting of Clare County Council held in the
Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare and via
MS Teams on Monday, 11th July, 2022 at 3:45 p.m.**

Present:

Councillors M. Howard, C. Collieran Molloy, P. Daly, J. Cooney, A. O’Callaghan, T. O’Brien, J. Crowe, M. Begley, P.J. Ryan, P. McMahon, G. Flynn, D. McGettigan, P. O’Gorman, S. Talty, J. Killeen, J. Garrihy, B. Chambers, G. Keating, C. Murphy, I. Lynch.

- Mr. Pat Dowling, Chief Executive.
- Ms. Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator.
- Ms. Margaret O’Rourke, Assistant Staff Officer.
- Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development.
- Dr. Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development.
- Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald, Director of Finance and Support Services.
- Ms. Siobhán McNulty, Senior Executive Officer, Social Development.
- Mr. Padraic McElwee, A/Director of Economic Development.
- Mr. John O’Malley, A/Director of Rural Development.
- Mr. Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer, Physical Development.
- Mr. Liam O’Connor, Administrative Officer, Physical Development.

Present via MS Teams: Cllrs. J. Flynn, P. Murphy, A. Norton, P. Hayes, P. Burke, P.J. Kelly.

Apologies: Cllrs. M. Nestor and L. Grant.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Tony O’Brien presided.

Votes of sympathy.

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

- The Foudy family, Inagh on the death of Susan Foudy RIP
- The Lenihan family Miltown Malbay on the death of Michael Lenihan RIP
- The Dooley family Mountshannon on the death of Joe Dooley RIP
- The Shanagher family Newmarket on Fergus on the death of Carmel Shanagher RIP
- The Kennelly family Newmarket on Fergus on the death of Margaret Kennelly RIP

Item 1: Minutes of Council Meetings.

- a. Ar moladh Cllr. A. O’Callaghan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Crowe agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the June Meeting of Clare County Council held on 13th June, 2022 be adopted and signed.”

- b. Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Murphy agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Clare County Council held on 24th June, 2022 be adopted and signed.”

Item 2: Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

Item 3: Minutes of Municipal District Meetings.

- a. Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Daly agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District Meeting held on the 3rd May, 2022 be noted.”

- b. Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Daly agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District Meeting held on the 17th June, 2022 be noted.”

- c. Ar moladh Cllr. P. Daly
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District Annual General Meeting held on the 17th June, 2022 be noted.”

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

- a. Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Ryan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. McMahon agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Economic Development S.P.C. meeting held on 7th March, 2022 be noted”.

- b. Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. D. McGettigan agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Social Development S.P.C. meeting held on 9th March, 2022 be noted”.

Item 5: Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meetings.

The members noted the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June, 2022 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. G. Flynn welcomed the completion of housing estates and the allocation of houses in these estates. Cllr. G. Flynn noted that each house advertised under C.B.I. has more than 150 hits and sought clarification on this. Cllr. G. Flynn also sought clarification in relation to the drawdown of housing loans.

Siobhán McNulty, Senior Executive Officer, Social Development responded and stated that eligible C.B.I. applicants can bid on several properties. Ms. McNulty also stated that there are many reasons why housing loans are not drawn down and that the primary reason is lack of available properties to purchase.

Cllr. J. Flynn referred to decisions around future delivery of water services and queried if outdoor staff will be re-located if they decide to remain in the local authority sector. Cllr. J. Flynn requested an update in relation to the Ennis Flood Relief Scheme south of the barrage.

Cllr. P. Hayes expressed concern in relation to the future delivery of water services and felt that clarity is needed on issues around group water schemes and bored wells. Cllr. Hayes also asked where staff will be deployed.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive addressed the meeting and informed the members that extensive discussions and negotiations have been ongoing in relation to water services transformation and stated that the framework provides for the following:

- that Irish Water will assume responsibility for the management and direction of water services operation and activities.
- the voluntary transfer of existing local authority water services staff to Irish Water as permanent employees between now and 2026.

- the identification of opportunities for water services staff not transferring to Irish Water and to avail of opportunities to re-deploy to other areas within local authorities.
- A voluntary redundancy scheme for local authority water services staff who do not wish to transfer.

Mr. Dowling stated that staffing is a matter that Clare County Council will continue to deal with appropriately between now and 2026 and that the welfare of staff members will be kept to the fore.

Cllr. P. Burke welcomed the information on the Inis Cealtra Visitor Experience - site visit and expressed hope for a positive response to the submission made to the Department for further funding.

Cllr. C. Murphy welcomed the recent announcement in relation to measuring and monitoring tourism in the county. Cllr. C. Murphy acknowledged the work done on the rising main in Kilkee as it is a critical piece of work in the town. Cllr. C. Murphy also welcomed the work being done on the WWTP in Kilkee.

Cllr. C. Murphy noted the departure of Margaret Cotter as Community Rural Development Officer in West Clare.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive informed the members that two Community Rural Development Officers have resigned and are moving on to other opportunities and that the positions will be filled as soon as possible.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. T. O'Brien complimented work being done on the Killaloe Bridge and Bypass project.

Item 7: Disposal of property at Ard na Gréine, Ennis, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 21st June, 2022 from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of property at Ard na Gréine, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 21st June, 2022.

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Flynn 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 property at Ard na Gréine, Ennis, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 21st June, 2022.”

Item 8: Disposal of lands at Ballyvally, Killaloe, Co. Clare pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000.

Report dated 30th June, 2022 from Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer, Project Management Office was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of an area of lands measuring 0.156 hectares at Ballyvally, Killaloe, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 30th June, 2022.

Ar moladh Cllr. T. O'Brien
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Cooney 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 Ballyvally, Killaloe, Co. Clare subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 30th June, 2022.”

Item 9: Section 85 Agreement with Limerick City and County Council - Limerick City & Environs Flood Relief Scheme.

Report dated 27th June, 2022 from Pat Dowling, Chief Executive was circulated with the agenda together with Section 85 Agreement with Limerick City & County Council. The report states that the OPW, working in partnership with Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council and other local authorities, commissioned and have completed the Shannon Upper and Lower River Basin Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. Limerick City & Environs was included as an area for further assessment and it was concluded that a flood relief scheme would be viable and effective for the community. The Flood Risk Management Plan for UoM 25/26 was adopted by Council in 2018.

Limerick City & County Council have a signed memorandum of understanding with the OPW on the Limerick City & Environs Flood Relief Scheme. This was signed in May 2020 and is provided as an appendix to the Section 85 Agreement. This memorandum includes that Limerick City & County Council act as the lead authority to carry out the required management responsibilities for the project. This will entail managing the relevant statutory procedures, procuring the necessary design, acquiring land where necessary and carrying out of the construction works for the project in the functional areas of both Limerick City and County and Clare County Councils.

In this regard, the report states that it will be necessary for Clare County Council to enter into an agreement with Limerick City & County Council in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended). The purpose of this agreement is to give Limerick City & County Council all the powers, duties and functions of Clare County Council in relation to the delivery of the Limerick City & Environs Flood Relief Scheme.

Ar moladh Cllr. A. O'Callaghan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P.J. Ryan agus glacadh leis

“That Clare County Council agrees to the making of an agreement, as presented to it, under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) with Limerick City

and County Council for the carrying out by Limerick City and County Council of the relevant statutory procedures, procuring the necessary design work, acquiring the land and carrying out the construction works and any other powers, functions, and duties necessary for the Limerick City & Environs Flood Relief Scheme. The making of an agreement by a local authority under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) is a reserved function.”

Item 10: Clare Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2021.

The Clare Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2021 was circulated with the agenda. The report highlights the main activities of the Clare LCDC during the year, which included

- Covid-19 Emergency Fund
- Social Enterprise Fund
- Climate Change
- Community Wealth Building
- Local Economic & Community Plan
- Community Activities Fund
- Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
- Healthy Clare

The report as circulated was noted by the members having been proposed by Cllr. G. Flynn and seconded by Cllr. C. Murphy.

Item 11: Ratification of the Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements for Glór Music DAC for financial year ended 31st December 2021.

Report dated 28th June, 2022 from Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development was circulated with the agenda together with the Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements for Glór Music DAC for the year ended 31st December, 2021, as approved by the Board of Directors at its AGM on 19th May, 2022.

The report states that as Clare County Council has 100% shareholding in the company, the attached report is presented to the elected members in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act, 2014. The report continued that Clare County Council is represented on the Board of Glór by Cllr. M. Howard and Cllr. L. Grant and two members of the Executive, currently Anne Haugh, Director of Service and Helen Walsh, County Librarian.

The report as presented was noted by the members present having been proposed by Cllr. G. Flynn and seconded by Cllr. P. McMahon.

Item 12: Approval of draft memorial policy for Clare County Council.

Report dated 6th July, 2022 from Mary McMahon, Administrative Officer, Corporate Services was circulated with the agenda together with the Draft Clare County Council Memorial Policy. The report states that a revised Memorial Policy was drafted and considered by the Memorial Committee on 30th June 2022.

The policy was agreed by the Memorial Committee at that meeting.

Approval of the draft policy is hereby sought from full Council.

The Draft Memorial Policy was approved by the members of the Council having been proposed by Cllr. J. Cooney and seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.

Item 13: Report from Memorial Committee – approval of memorial applications.

Report dated 1st July, 2022 from Mary McMahon, Administrative Officer, Corporate Services was circulated with the agenda. The report states that at a Memorial Committee meeting dated 30th June, 2022 it was agreed that the following applications be forwarded to the full Council for approval.

1. Plaque in honour of victims of the Star of Cairo plane crash on Inis Mac Naughton island, Newmarket on Fergus and the efforts of rescuers.

Proposal to place 2 plaques on wall of private property at Carrigerry, overlooking the island. Proposed wording in the case of plaques are:

Plaque 1 – In memory of the 9 passengers and 4 crew members who died in the Star of Cairo airplane crash on 28th December 1946 on Inis MacNaughton Island, Co. Clare.

Plaque 2 – In appreciation of the valiant efforts of all Rescuers who worked diligently during the early hours of 28th December 1946 on Nis MacNaughton islan, Co. Clare.

2. Memorial to commemorate Captain Mattie McGrath and members of the 6th Battalion at Fortane Beg, O Callaghan's Mills.

Proposed wording of Roadside memorial at above location as follows:

Centenary of the East Clare Brigade

At this location Captain Mattie McGrath was wounded but escaped the Black and Tans in June 1921. Captain Mattie was shot dead in Listowel in September 1922, aged 21 years.

Erected in memory of Mattie, his brother Dinny & Heroic Comrades of the 6th Battalion by McGraths Annaghneal & Friends September 2022.

3. Plaque at Promenade, Lahinch, to acknowledge Community Service given by Pat Conway.

Proposed location of plaque is at Promenade Wall, at Slipway to beach.

The plaque will be worded as follows:

‘In recognition of the lifetime achievement of local man, Pat Conway. Acknowledging an outstanding contribution to various charities and our community. Marking 50 years swimming across the bay. Lahinch to Liscannor.’

These were approved by the members of the Council having been proposed by Cllr. G. Flynn and seconded by Cllr. S. Talty.

Item 14: Briefing by Barry O’Sullivan, Chairman, Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce and Padraic Rattigan – members of Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Secretariat.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. T. O’Brien welcomed Mr. Barry O’Sullivan, Chairman, Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce and on behalf of the members and executive of the Council thanked Mr. O’Sullivan for his intervention which resulted in Pat Dowling, Chief Executive joining the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce.

Mr. Barry O’Sullivan addressed the meeting and provided details of his background and experience. Mr. O’Sullivan informed the members that there is currently a consultation process underway and requested that the members submit any advice and input they may have in relation to potential opportunities for the Shannon Estuary. Mr. O’Sullivan stated that the estuary is a great resource which has many opportunities that should be optimized.

Mr. O’Sullivan stated that the Taskforce will scope potential areas of opportunity for the Shannon Estuary and specify policy and investment requirements to exploit those areas of potential. Mr. O’Sullivan referred to the areas that can be focused on over the next 5, 10, 15 or 20 years in order to create employment and felt that there is a need to take advantage of the move to renewable energy. Mr. O’Sullivan informed the members that initially the Taskforce are looking for 4-5 tasks that can be supported and accelerated locally and nationally.

Mr. O’Sullivan referred to the scope of work and provided details of the four key areas identified as offshore energy; onshore energy; transport and logistics and tourism.

Mr. O’Sullivan outlined the composition of the core Taskforce and welcomed Pat Dowling as a member. Mr. O’Sullivan stated that the Taskforce were anxious that the Chief Executives of the counties were included as they are key to the implementation of the objectives and he thanked them for their strong ongoing support. Mr. O’Sullivan stated that the members of the taskforce are voluntary, are very committed and they believe in the potential of the Shannon Estuary.

Mr. O’Sullivan stated that he has briefed Oireachtas members and will meet with the County Councils during the month of July. Mr. O’Sullivan informed the members that the closing date for receipt of submissions is the end of July and that the Taskforce will consider submissions during August and September. Mr. O’Sullivan continued that the interim report will then be produced and forwarded to An Tánaiste and that the final report will be produced in October/November.

Pat Dowling, Chief Executive thanked Mr. O'Sullivan and Mr. Rattigan for the presentation and noted that the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan was shared with the members of the Taskforce previously. Mr. Dowling stated that the Shannon Estuary is a unique location which has yet to deliver tangible economic projects. Mr. Dowling stated that it is significant that the Government has set up the Economic Taskforce and that it has now been agreed to include local authorities. Mr. Dowling stated that he represents the Chief Executives from Clare, Limerick, Tipperary and Kerry and that the role will alternate with the Chief Executives. Mr. Dowling noted that a significant number of management team will participate in sub-groups. Mr. Dowling acknowledged that Mr. O'Sullivan is very committed to the area and is committed to jobs in the area. Mr. Dowling referred to the quick turnaround for submissions and felt it is important to focus on a few deliverables as tangible deliverables are needed. Mr. Dowling expressed confidence that the report will deliver a positive outcome.

The elected members thanked Mr. O'Sullivan for his presentation and wished the Taskforce well going forward. The elected members felt that the LNDR is crucial to economic development in the region and that a rail link to Shannon airport is important for sustainable transport. It was also requested that the Fergus Estuary be examined. The elected members requested that positive discrimination be exercised for County Clare in relation to wind energy and welcomed future development in Clare. The members also felt that smaller areas in proximity to the Shannon Estuary should benefit economically and that local networks should be included. The members agreed that training for future job creation is key as the skilled personnel are available in County Clare. The members also agreed that the potential of Moneypoint should be maximized and that a trans-shipment area should be developed on the Shannon Estuary. The members referred to the Maritime Centre in Kilrush and felt that it is best placed to attract industry for Clare. The members felt that environmental protection is key and that it is essential that tourism is to the fore with the Taskforce. The members emphasized the need to ensure that objectives are delivered.

Mr. Barry O'Sullivan thanked the members for their comments and stated that ultimately a number of projects have to be selected. Mr. O'Sullivan agreed that the Shannon Estuary is a European and national resource and he stated that the Taskforce will establish a list of 4-5 key objectives and will prioritise items to be completed each year and that national support will be requested. Mr. O'Sullivan encouraged the members and the people of Clare to make submissions as this is an opportunity to start and expand their businesses.

The Chief Executive, Pat Dowling undertook to distribute information in relation to making submissions to the elected members.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. T. O'Brien again thanked Mr. O'Sullivan and stated that it is time to engage and be pro-active and that he looked forward to further engagement with the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce.

Item 15. Public Liability Claims.

Ar moladh Cllr. P.J. Kelly

“That the following information with regard to public liability claims be made available with regard to years ending 2020 and 2021

- (a) Total number of successful claims
- (b) Total cost of successful claims
- (c) Highest award
- (d) Lowest award
- (e) Average award
- (f) Largest category of claims
- (g) Number of claims not contested
- (h) Number of non-successful claims
- (i) Cost of insurance
- (j) Legal cost of processing claims.”

Liam O’Connor, Administrative Officer, Physical Development replied as follows:

“The information requested in relation to public liability claims for 2020 and 2021 is set out below;

| | 2020 | 2021 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Total | | |
| (a) Total number of successful claims (claims settled) | 88 | 71 |
| 159 | | |

159 claims were settled during 2020 and 2021, payments were made in 127 of these cases.

| | 2020 | 2021 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Total | | |
| (b) Total cost of successful claims (claims settled) | €498,999 | €1,009,173 |
| €1,508,172 | | |

Please note that a significant element of the costs relate to ancillary costs and would not have been paid to the claimants.

(c) Highest award

The Council’s insurers IPB have advised that award amounts should not be reported as it may breach GDPR regulations, and the Council could be exposed to a further claim for breach of confidentiality and a potential sanction under GDPR.

(d) Lowest award

Zero

| | 2020 | 2021 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2020/2021 | | |

| | | |
|--|-----------|------------|
| (e) Average award (includes ancillary costs) | €5,670.44 | €14,213.70 |
| €9,485.39 | | |

(f) Largest category of claims

Footpath slips/trips

(g) Number of claims not contested

Please note that our insurers contest every claim through the various stages of the claims process.

(h) Number of non-successful claims

The number of claims settled for zero during 2020 and 2021 was 32.

| | 2020 | 2021 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| (i) Cost of insurance (Public Liability Insurance premium) | €1,761,732 | €1,466,316 |

(j) Legal cost of processing claims

There are no separate legal costs incurred by Clare County Council in relation to the processing of public liability claims. IPB pay the legal costs associated with these claims.”

Cllr. P.J. Kelly expressed concern at the emerging practice whereby many smaller claims are going uncontested which is leading to increased insurance premiums for communities.

Item 16. Tenancy management.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Flynn

Cuidithe ag Cllrs. C. Colleran Molloy agus P. Daly agus glacadh leis

“In the interest of public safety that Clare County Council elected members

1) call on Clare County Council, in support of the good estate management work currently being done by the Council’s Tenancy Enforcement Officers to set up a multi agency emergency response team to quickly & effectively deal with, and if necessary to evict the small number of tenants across County Clare whose persistent serious anti-social behaviour comes under the terms of the adopted Clare County Council Behaviour Strategy 2020-2026 * in order to

- protect adjoining residents & community
- Prevent damage to badly needed housing stock.

and also we

2) call on the appropriate State Agencies with related responsibilities to consider the care and protection of underage children in such households

* This strategy was adopted in 2021 to prevent and reduce anti-social behaviour in the 3,000 plus tenancies in areas across Clare where the Council has Tenancy Dwellings and Chapter 4 Tenancy Dwellings (RAS & Social Leasing)”

Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development replied as follows:

“The framework to address non-compliance with Tenancy Agreements is a judicial process which must be followed to secure an eviction or repossession of a Council property. There is no mechanism under law for a multi-agency team to take on this role.

The Council work closely with state agencies in dealing with complaints of anti-social behaviour and have a robust process for onward referral of complaints.

The Council has a duty to manage and control dwellings let under the Housing Acts, with a view to securing and protecting the interests of tenants and their families in the peaceful occupation of their homes. In accordance with our Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, adopted by the Council last year, Clare County Council is committed to the preservation of the peaceful occupation of all dwellings for which it is responsible and will not tolerate anti-social behaviour.

Our Tenancy Enforcement team will investigate all complaints of anti-social behaviour in an efficient, fair and impartial manner and will take all appropriate steps, in accordance with best practice as set out in our ASB strategy, to prevent anti-social behaviour. Clare County Council will carry out such investigations and inquiries as it considers necessary to establish whether there is substantive evidence to suggest that the respondent is or has engaged in anti-social behaviour. Upon investigating any such complaints of alleged anti-social behaviour and having the necessary evidence to support such breach the Council can decide on an appropriate remedy in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy ranging from:

- Advice
- Verbal warning
- Tenancy notification
- Written warning.
- Eviction.”

The elected members expressed disappointment that there is no mechanism under law for a multi-agency team to be established to deal with tenants across County Clare who persistently engage in serious anti-social behaviour. The members felt that communities are in crisis and that this is unfair on residents in the estates affected. The members noted that most of the Councils 3,000 tenancies are compliant and that the Tenancy Enforcement Team are in place to support officials in the Council and to deal with issues on a one-to-one basis. The members agreed that enhanced powers are required to deal with the issues that are arising.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive stated that behaviour of people has to be managed in all aspects of our work and that there is a process to go through and engage with other agencies. Mr. Dowling stated that a key part of the Tenancy Enforcement Unit is to develop relationships and engagement with tenants and that they will continue to deal with situations that develop around the county.

Item 17. Upkeep of local authority housing estates.

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Murphy

Cuidithe ag Cllrs. I. Lynch, S. Talty agus P. O’Gorman agus glacadh leis

“That a specific allocation be made in the 2023 budget to the Municipal District offices with regards to a) road improvement works in, and b) general upkeep of, local authority housing estates across the county.”

Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development replied as follows:

“As local authority estates are completed and taken into charge by the local authority it has been custom and practice that these are maintained by the respective Municipal District with the associated budgets incorporated into the various service divisions within the annual budget. Maintenance of the properties themselves is a budget heading centrally controlled within the Housing division.

While the roads within Local Authority estates have always traditionally been acknowledged as part of the Municipal District roads network and maintained and funded accordingly, the situation re maintenance of green areas within estates is more ambiguous with different arrangements having evolved in various parts of the county over the years. While some Local Authority estates are part of the annual grasscutting contracts operated by the Shannon and Ennis Municipal Districts in particular, it is the case that in many of the older estates maintenance of the green areas is undertaken voluntarily by proactive residents associations and has not been an issue in the past.

As the number of new estates completed has grown in recent years and with a very ambitious housing delivery programme underway, the issue of estate maintenance is becoming more relevant of late and the Housing Section in recognition of the importance of maintaining such significant and valuable assets has committed to ensuring that all newly completed schemes under the Rebuilding Ireland and Housing For All programmes will have a grass cutting regime in place for the summer season. A modest additional allocation was provided in the 2022 Budget under Estate Maintenance which allows for this to be undertaken, however it should be noted that the costs are significant when considering this arrangement only covers nine out of a total of 145 estates in the county. A further 63 estates are already included in existing grass cutting contracts by the relevant Municipal Districts. The Housing Department will continue to work with the Municipal Districts in addressing needs in some areas where complaints or issues of local capacity may arise and there maybe potential to extend existing contractual arrangements.

It is acknowledged that costs in the area of housing maintenance and estate maintenance will continue to increase as the local authority stock expands significantly over the coming years.”

The elected members stated that the condition of roads in several housing estates is below standard and felt that this issue is falling between two directorates. The members agreed that an annual maintenance programme with allocated funding is required. The members appealed for funding to be allocated for the upkeep of these estates.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive informed the members that this can be examined in the context of the budget for 2023.

Item 18. Sustainable living options in rural towns and villages.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Garrihy

Cuidithe ag Cllr. S. Talty agus glacadh leis

“In the context of increasing or indeed prompting the development of much needed housing in our Rural Towns and Villages I call on Clare County Council to engage with all stakeholders to identify any and all options that can be pursued to deliver sustainable living options that would both provide homes for those in need and bring life back into these areas.”

Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development and Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development replied as follows:

“Clare County Council’s approach to housing in rural towns and villages - both planning and provision - is aligned to National Government Policy and Government allocated resources. A comprehensive series of local Clare County Council strategies and programmes of work deliver on this National programme. On a cross-Directorate basis, the Planning, Housing, Municipal District Offices and Rural & Community Departments are directly involved in leading aspects of this service area together with other sections of Council. By necessity, this requires engagement with stakeholders in the marketplace and community.

- The Government’s recently announced ‘Town Centre First Programme’, being led by Planning Department, offers an opportunity to research and deliver housing projects in rural towns and villages in new ways with a particular focus on vacant properties. Government support is imminent in order to create staff capacity for such.
- The ongoing Government investment in social housing is a key factor in local authority delivery in rural towns and villages.
- The rural housing aspect of the solutions to the Ukrainian refugees’ housing needs offers a similar opportunity for Government investment and local provision.

Housing for All supports the re-generation of towns and villages as a means of delivering sustainable housing solutions. To that end we await the publication of Croi Conaithe for Towns to ascertain the exact nature of the supports which will be available to address dereliction/vacancy in town centres as well as providing serviced sites for development within or adjoining rural towns and villages.

In relation to the options for addressing vacancy to deliver social housing, the Vacant Homes Officer is available to advise those with vacant properties on the relevant schemes to support the return of the unit to productive use. A recent change to the Repair and Leasing scheme has now opened up this option to owners of vacant commercial properties also.”

The elected members acknowledged that the complexities of housing is a major challenge that merits specific focus and engagement of key stakeholders. The members felt that when choosing a rural location to live in, people need assurance regarding the viability, sustainability and level of investment in the area.

Item 19. Shannon Heritage sites.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. McMahon

Cuidithe ag Cllr. P.J. Ryan agus glacadh leis

“In view of Clare County Council involvement with the Shannon Heritage sites, I will ask the Chief Executive to examine the opportunities and to ensure all the county benefits from the tourism product.”

Donnacha Lynch, Head of Commercial Services, Shannon Heritage Project replied as follows:

“Clare County Council continues to engage with the Government and Shannon Group PLC as part of a detailed and robust due diligence process to consider the potential transfer by Shannon Group PLC of Shannon Heritage (Clare-based sites) to Clare County Council as a subsidiary company.

As part of the Due Diligence process Clare County Council has engaged experienced specialist services to examine a range of topics including Human Resource, Operational and Financial, Property and Assets, Capital Investment, ICT, Legal and Taxation relating to the Shannon Heritage properties, namely Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park, Knappogue Castle & Gardens, and the retail unit within Cliffs of Moher Experience. As a number of the Shannon Heritage Clare Sites include a number of Heritage assets, Technical Due Diligence (TDD) reports are required as part of the potential transfer of Shannon Heritage DAC to Clare County Council as a subsidiary company.

The diligence process is nearing completion with a number of reports at final draft stage, Clare County Council have met with the Department of Transport, who have been engaging bilaterally with other Departments regarding the funding package required in order for the transfer of Shannon Heritage DAC.

From a Clare County Council perspective, the transfer of Shannon Heritage DAC cannot have a financial burden on Clare County Council's budgeting process, the provision of statutory services or impact negatively on Clare's Ratepayers.

As a result, and in order to move forward, a Nationally funded financial package will be required. Clare County Council is not in a position to proceed with the transfer without this National funding package. A decision is awaited.

Clare County Council and Shannon Group must agree on a schedule and transfer date as the ambiguity surrounding Shannon Heritage ownership is having a negative influence on operations and the morale of the 170 no. employees.

In anticipation of national government approval, Clare County Council have commenced the recruitment process for number of permanent tourism roles, which will be created in County Clare and will form part of a subsidiary company of Clare County Council.

Clare County Council currently oversees the management, development, and promotion of a portfolio of signature visitor attractions and sites throughout Clare, including the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience, Loop Head Lighthouse, Vandeleur Walled Gardens, the transfer of Shannon Heritage Clare sites and development of Inis Cealtra Visitor Experience offers the opportunity for further balance of the extensive Tourism portfolio of Clare County Council amongst the four Municipal Districts.

In 2019 Clare County Council embarked on the development of an “*evidence based, forward looking, innovative tourism strategy which would set the direction for tourism product development, marketing / promotion and public and private investment over the next ten years*”. This aligned also with the formation of a new Tourism Department within the Rural Development Directorate. The core objective of the 10-year strategy, known as the **Clare Tourism Strategy 2030 – Guiding our Journey to a Vibrant New Future in Tourism** was to maximise the potential of tourism to deliver net economic benefit to the communities across the county without negatively impacting the natural, social, cultural, and environmental assets which provide the cornerstone of the tourism product in Clare.

Regular communication and consultation with Shannon Heritage staff and Elected Members is a key part of the ongoing process.”

The elected members suggested that new branding would enhance marketing of Clare’s tourist attractions. The members felt that local people should benefit from our tourist attractions. Referring to the upcoming KPMG Women’s Irish Open in Dromoland the members felt that Shannon Airport and tourism within the county should be promoted and that the area should be enhanced before this event begins. The members welcomed the decision taken by Shamrock Rovers Football Club to use Shannon Airport when travelling to their away games.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive informed the members that work is ongoing in securing a decision and funding from Government in relation to the potential transfer by Shannon Group PLC of Shannon Heritage and that meetings are scheduled with three Government Departments. Referring to the upcoming KPMG Women’s Irish Open Golf event in Dromoland, Mr. Dowling stated that Shannon Group will promote Shannon Airport and that plans are in place to prepare for this event in order to grow our tourism product.

Item 20. Host Community Pillar within the Cliffs of Moher Strategy.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Garrihy

Cuidithe ag Cllrs. L. Grant agus J. Killeen agus glacadh leis

“We call on Clare County Council to take all steps necessary, in continued consultation with the communities of North Clare and other partners, to implement its commitment to the development of a sustainable Host Community Pillar within the Cliffs of Moher (2040) Strategy by:

1. Addressing legacy issues, particularly as they pertain to traffic management and mobility planning that impact on the communities, Small Towns and Villages of North Clare.
2. Undertake the development of the Cliffs of Moher site in conjunction with the Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark and other major tourism attractions and activities so as to consolidate a diversified foundation for the tourism industry and enhance the long term direct and indirect employment and economic benefits of tourism in the local host community across the county of Clare first and foremost.

3. A continual mechanism of involvement in oversight in the implementation of the Strategy for representatives nominated by the host community of Ennistymon LEA.”

Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development replied as follows:

“1. Addressing legacy issues, particularly as they pertain to traffic management and mobility planning that impact on the communities, Small Towns and Villages of North Clare.

Elected Members recently visited the Cliffs of Moher site, received a presentation of the vision for the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040 and participated in a discussion workshop in the Council Chamber. As part of that discussion it was already agreed that the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040 will include a ‘towns and villages pillar’ in the Strategy. This refers to the hinterland of the Cliffs of Moher including mobility solutions.

2. Undertake the development of the Cliffs of Moher site in conjunction with the Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark and other major tourism attractions and activities so as to consolidate a diversified foundation for the tourism industry and enhance the long term direct and indirect employment and economic benefits of tourism in the local host community across the county of Clare first and foremost.

The Cliffs of Moher operated under the strategic objectives of the Clare Tourism Strategy 2030. This aims to integrate the efforts of all tourism products /attractions and services across the county.

All of the existing economic benefits of the Cliffs of Moher Experience will be significantly increased as the 2040 strategy is developed and implemented. It is important to recognise that Cliffs of Moher Experience is currently a major economic engine for County Clare including the towns, villages and the UNESCO Geopark, underpinned by sustainable tourism practices. As a strategic national asset, the Cliffs of Moher plays an important role in the County economy and the tourism industry being one of the main attractors to Co. Clare. In 2019 the Cliffs of Moher Experience site employed 170 people (around 45% full-time permanent positions). This included direct employment of 75 staff (44 permanent and 31 seasonal) at an estimated total annual employment cost of all employment €5million.

The local impact of this employment is highly significant – it is estimated that 90% of staff live within 20 miles of the Cliffs, playing a significant role in sustaining local spend, livelihoods and communities in a rural area that depends on tourism and agriculture predominantly. Cliffs of Moher Experience spend on food, drink, art, craft design, operational and maintenance services that have a significant impact in supporting the local economy – 70% of this other expenditure is spent with local businesses. There are over 40 Co. Clare Craft and Design suppliers and 15 Clare food suppliers at Cliffs of Moher, most of which have emerged or grown over the last 15 years since the site was last developed.

In 2019 the Cliffs of Moher Experience site generated an estimated overall income of €18m from visitor spend in the local economy. The site is committed to year round 363 days per annum with extended opening hours maximising opportunity direct and indirect benefits and drawing attention to the West of Ireland being open for business

in the winter period. Fáilte Ireland research suggests that Overseas Holidaymakers on average spend €6 per day and Domestic Overnight Visitors spend €74 per day. Applied to visitors to the Cliffs of Moher Experience this would generate an estimated total economic impact of €41million euros. While it's acknowledged there is economic leakage outside of County Clare, there is still a considerable level of indirect benefit to the County. This includes the towns and villages around the Cliffs of Moher Experience through overnight accommodation, food and beverage, spin off cottage industries, micro industry, service suppliers and employment expenditure. Furthermore, the Cliffs of Moher Experience has an international market reach and long term relationships which are used along with use of the marketing budget to leverage business for Shannon Airport, Clare attractions, accommodation providers and other tourism related businesses.

Most coach licences issued by Clare County Council stop in another location within the County as well as the Cliffs of Moher Experience. Fáilte Ireland estimates that every €1 million of tourism expenditure supports 27 tourism jobs. The scale of the economic impact of the Cliffs of Moher Experience from direct expenditure and visitor expenditure is considerable. Cliffs of Moher Experience supports tourism and community related activities and continue to build relationships with local communities providing opportunity to engage with Cliffs of Moher Experience across a multitude of items.

3. A continual mechanism of involvement in oversight in the implementation of the Strategy for representatives nominated by the host community of Ennistymon LEA.

Clare County Council has the function for management and operation of the Cliffs of Moher experience, policy development and oversight of the implementation of the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040. This executive function is overseen by the Rural Development Directorate with cross-directorate and Management Team involvement as per local government functions.

At a policy level, the Rural Development SPC provides policy oversight together with the external policy perspective of the board as such a mechanism. The Clare Tourism Advisory Forum also has a strategic role in this regard and particularly in relation to the interaction of the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040 and the Clare Tourism Strategy 2030. The Forum involves representation from industry, business, community. There are also Elected Members represented on the Forum, who carry a direct link to the Council.

In order to create a broad representation of expertise and input to the future of the Cliffs of Moher, the board of the Cliffs of Moher DAC was expanded four years ago by Clare County Council. The Board fulfils this oversight mechanism. The Board's function is advisory in relation to strategic direction and responsible in terms of full compliance with company law as a host employer. The Elected Members of Clare County Council have two representatives on the Board of the Cliffs of Moher DAC (Cllr. Shane Talty and Cllr. Gabriel Keating). Both are very active and involved in the oversight of the Strategy. The executive of Clare County Council are also represented on the board and accordingly manage all aspects of the Cliffs of Moher. The Board already includes two community representatives from the North Clare Area both of whom have a broad range of community experience. They contribute hugely on issues and concerns of the local community, who communicate regularly with them and directly entrust the raising of

their community concerns. They also raise opportunities for collaboration and coordination on marketing and projects. This input of the community representatives dovetails with that of two Elected Members who also fulfil this role. Any ideas and inputs from the host community can certainly be inputted through this structured and well-tested approach. The Board benefits from other members' expertise including business, legal, HR, marketing, strategic management, commercial development etc.

Clare County Council is committed to ongoing engagement with local host communities on the implementation of the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040. This has been the hallmark of the consultation phase. The immediate next step is the preparation of a draft Strategy. Further consultation with the community and stakeholders will follow the publication of a first draft Strategy before preparing a final draft. The feedback from the host community, and indeed the wider community of Clare, has been very positive towards the Cliffs of Moher at all workshops held to date."

The elected members agreed that the Cliffs of Moher is the economic driver for the entire county and noted its value to tourism. The elected members welcomed the agreement to include a 'towns and villages pillar' as part of the Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040. The members felt that the Cliffs of Moher should be managed in a way that will continue to contribute to the enjoyment for the people who live there permanently.

Item 21. Offshore wind/wave energy.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Killeen

Cuidithe ag Cllr. I. Lynch agus glacadh leis

"We call on Clare County Council, our Oireachtas Members, our Members of the European Parliament to outline efforts made/to be made to promote the harnessing of offshore wind / wave energy and efforts to position Clare as the location that companies throughout Europe will choose when considering investment in renewable energy.

We further call for a seminar in the Autumn on the subject of renewable energy both large scale and smallscale involving experts in this field, Oireachtas Members, M E P s and other relevant parties."

Brian McCarthy, Senior Engineer replied as follows:

"The Members will be aware that currently the Shannon Estuary Economic Task Force, which the Chief Executive is a member of, is examining all opportunities for economic development with respect to the Shannon Estuary. It is noted that the Terms of Reference for the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce are to:

- a. Assess the strategic strengths and comparative advantages of the Shannon Estuary from an investment and enterprise development perspective, in a national and international context;
- b. Scope potential areas of opportunity for the Shannon Estuary and specify policy and investment requirements to exploit those areas of potential;
- c. Assess the current connectivity of the region and make recommendations as to how this could be enhanced;

- d. Specify the actions required from national and local government, as well as from other stakeholders, to exploit those areas of potential; and
- e. Produce a Report and associated Action Plan with specific steps in areas of potential.

Whilst the focus of the Task force naturally is on the opportunities that can benefit the entire estuary, it is clear that opportunities and prosperity can accrue to County Clare.

Noting the sentiments of the Notice of Motion, and notwithstanding the ongoing consideration of the Task Force and its focus on the entire estuary, from a County Clare perspective, members will be aware that Clare County Council led the development by a multi-agency steering group of the *Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP)*. The land and marine-based plan, the first of its type to be developed in the country, has informed decisions, policy and in particular significant investment decisions along the entire estuary. Moneypoint and Cahercon are identified in the SIFP as Strategic Development Locations. The Chief Executive is the Chair of the SIFP implementation group.

Moreover, Clare County Council, through its Strategic Economic Initiatives unit (SEI), has proactively led a number of initiatives to increase the proposition and attractiveness of County Clare for inward investment and economic development arising from opportunities from off-shore renewables. These include the assistance and collaboration with a tidal test device company to locate a tidal test device off Cahercon – currently under assessment for a Foreshore Licence; the proposal to establish a Maritime Training Centre in Kilrush to provide a location for training for the undoubted opportunities for employment and training that the off-shore sector will require; and the management by the SEI of large scale scientific data gathering across the estuary to ensure that availability of scientific data to assist with project development and assessments.

Clare County Council is seeking to maximise all efforts and advantages that Clare's natural and infrastructural resources and talented workforce have to ensure that off-shore renewables can be harnessed sustainably for the county. There are also several factors and stakeholders at national and EU level and from the private sector, international corporations, wind energy developers and infrastructural providers necessary to realise the opportunities. It is also vital that communities and stakeholders are central to the consideration and benefit of opportunities from renewable energy.

The Shannon Estuary Taskforce Report is anticipated to be completed by the end of this year and will be presented to the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. It will subsequently be considered by Government. In that context, the Task Force Report is a key next step and regarding the request for organising a seminar it may be appropriate to also wait until the publication of the Report and any recommendations.”

The elected members felt that Clare County Council should promote renewable energy as the highest wind speeds in Europe are in the West coast of Ireland. The members expressed concern at the short time available to prepare submissions for the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce as they felt expert advice is necessary as well as the need to ensure that the submission is cohesive and strong as this is a key opportunity for County Clare. The members agreed that there is merit in hosting a seminar in the autumn on the subject of renewable energy both large scale and small scale involving experts in this field.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive stated that engagement has taken place with companies in relation to offshore wind wave energy on the Shannon Estuary. Mr. Dowling stated that the Government has set up the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce who will bring ideas back to Government after the public consultation phase has been completed. Mr. Dowling undertook to ask Brian, McCarthy, Senior Planner to liaise with the elected members before the end of July and compile a submission. Mr. Dowling stated that it is possible to host a seminar at the end of August and that the draft report will be compiled by then.

Item 22. Smart ID card.

Ar moladh Cllr. M. Howard
Cuidithe ag Cllr. A. O'Callaghan agus glacadh leis

“Clare County Council requests Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly to investigate the possibility of creating a "Smart ID Card" especially for elderly people.

These Smart ID cards would contain information like date of birth, PPS number, allergies, health conditions, surgeries etc these would be especially useful if they need to attend hospital or A&E.”

The members agreed that “Smart ID card” containing peoples personal information and medical history would benefit people being brought to hospital and protect people’s dignity in busy waiting rooms. It was also felt that it would reduce the cost of storing paper files.

Item 23. National Anthem.

Ar moladh Cllr. M. Howard
Cuidithe ag Cllrs. A. O'Callaghan agus D. McGettigan agus glacadh leis

“Clare County Council request the GAA to use local bands like Ennis Brass Band or the Tulla Pipe Band to play the National Anthem - "Amhrán na bhFiann" before important home games.”

The members felt that as Clare is the home of traditional music that local bands should play the national anthem before home games.

It was noted that there is a positive partnership between Clare County Council and Clare GAA and that the present executive are open to ideas on how to improve matters going forward.

Item 24. Provision of facilities on the N18/M18.

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

“That this council would request that the Minister for Transport and the TII would provide toilets and parking facilities on the N18/M18 in the Clare section.”

The elected members agreed that parking and toilet facilities should be provided on the N18/M18 as the current situation whereby people are using the side of the

motorway as a toilet is a safety issue. It was also felt that parking should be provided for commercial vehicles and buses to enable drivers take the rest period stipulated.

Item 25. Housing emergency.

Ar moladh Cllr. D. McGettigan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P.J. Ryan agus glacadh leis

“I call on this Council to call on the Government and Minister for Housing to declare a housing emergency and use emergency powers to introduce an immediate moratorium on evictions, similar to that during covid, to be reviewed after 3 months and that the Minister increase the income threshold limits for social housing support, during this time.”

The members noted that people are facing eviction and are unable to source accommodation as the rent is unaffordable and that families who are taking family members into their homes is leading to overcrowded conditions. It was also noted that many people getting mortgage approval cannot afford to buy and are earning too much to get housing support. The members agreed that people need accommodation security.

Item 26. C.S.O. figures.

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Murphy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Hayes agus glacadh leis

“That the forward planning section of Clare County Council seek clarity from the ‘Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage’ and/or the ‘Office of the Planning Regulator’ as to the consequences of the recently announced preliminary CSO census figures on the proposed core strategy population allocations for the County Development Plan. The current core strategy allows for a projected growth of 9.94% (to 130,454) above the 2016 figures up to 2029, however, given the recent preliminary CSO census figures show a population growth of 7.2% (127,419) for Co Clare from 2016 to date, clarity is required as to whether County Clare will be restricted to the same population allocation, a growth of 3,035 in real terms, over the 6 year lifetime of the plan.”

Helen Quinn, A/Senior Planner replied as follows:

“The preliminary data published by the Central Statistics Office relating to the Census conducted in 2022 showed that Ireland’s population on census night was 5,123,536, an increase of 7.6% from 2016. The population in Co. Clare in 2022 is 127,419, an increase of 8,602 person on the 2016 figure, representing a 7.2% change.

I have sought clarity from both the OPR and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on the content of this motion as requested.

The OPR have responded to say that they have no comment to make on foot of the motion. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage have indicated that they do not intend to review the Housing Supply Targets Methodology for Development Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) in December 2020 on foot of the preliminary CSO data from this year’s census. The census data is due to be finalised

in 2023 and at that stage the Department will consider further any reviews that they consider necessary.

I can confirm to the members that the Planning Department have had regard to the CSO census preliminary figures published on Thursday, 23rd June 2022 in the preparation of Chief Executive's Report to the Elected Members on the submissions received on the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029, which will have been with the members ahead of this meeting for their consideration. I would also like to direct the members' attention to the Housing Supply Targets Methodology for Development Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, from which the Planning Authority will derive a target number of housing units to be delivered over the life of the upcoming plan 2023-2029. This housing supply target will be unchanged as a result of the recent CSO census preliminary figures as it does not directly correlate to population allocation. In the interests of clarity, the members are reminded that the land zoning objectives for the upcoming plan will reflect the Housing Supply Targets rather than a population allocation.

There will be ample opportunity for the members to engage in discussions relating to the CSO census data, the Housing Supply Target Methodology and the quantum of zoning to be included in the upcoming development plan over the coming months, while the members consider the Chief Executive's Report referred to above. I consider that this consideration stage is the most appropriate forum to have discussions relating to the development plan and I look forward to the members participation in the upcoming workshops."

The elected members expressed disappointment that population projections on which future social, economic and environmental development are based are not being taken into account. It was noted that Clare has already reached 75% of its future projected population growth until 2029 and that no clarity is being provided. The members felt that the recent change in population information from the CSO is a significant material alteration of the assumptions used to plan for how this county will develop over the next development plan timeframe.

P. Dowling, Chief Executive acknowledged that this aspect of the County Development Plan has dominated for a few years and supported the view to set ambitious targets going forward. Mr. Dowling stated that 1,015 valid submissions have been received in relation to the draft County Development Plan and that the report produced on submissions received has issued to the Councillors.

Item 27. Housing support measures.

Ar moladh Cllr. G. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. D. McGettigan agus glacadh leis

"I am calling on the Minister dealing with Housing to urgently address the issues facing members of the public in Clare who are denied access to housing support measures due to the failure by the Government to address the very low income thresholds in Clare as a result of the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 that are seriously out of touch with the current economic realities where the cost of rent and the availability of rental property is contributing to homelessness for a lot of people who are struggling to survive on their current income."

The members agreed that the anomaly that exists in relation to income thresholds needs to be addressed urgently. The members noted that the income threshold was last addressed in March 2011 and that it is out of touch with reality. The members outlined details of constituents who are PAYE workers and cannot receive supports and felt that these restrictions are unjust. The members agreed that the current policy needs to be amended in order to provide support to people.

Cllr. G. Flynn requested that this notice of motion be forwarded to Clare Oireachtas member and this was agreed by the members present.

Item 28. Early childcare sector availability.

Ar moladh Cllr. S. Talty

Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. O’Gorman agus glacadh leis

“Ask that Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Roderick O’Gorman urgently address the lack of availability in the early childcare sector. Publicly supported facilities are operating far beyond capacity while small individual private operators are opting out of the sector. Much public debate centres on affordability, but availability is rapidly becoming a greater obstacle for parents.”

The elected members stated that growing population has exacerbated demand for childcare in some private operated and government funded services and there are hundreds of children on waiting lists to access services. It was noted that there are highly skilled, employable people moving back to County Clare and that many cannot take up employment as they have to care for their family due to the absence of sufficient availability of childcare.

Item 29. Comhfhreagras/Correspondence.

Cllr. J. Garrihy passed on comments he received from members of the public commending the front line Council staff working in Lahinch who carry out their duties in an exemplary manner.

Correspondence.

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda:

1. Correspondence dated 27th June, 2022 from the Department of Transport regarding implementation of proposals by the Independent Postmasters Group.
2. Correspondence dated 16th June, 2022 from the Department of Housing in connection with standards in private rental sector.
3. Correspondence dated 16th June, 2022 from the Department of Housing in connection with energy retrofitting.
4. Correspondence dated 30th June, 2022 from the Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in relation to local property tax.
5. Correspondence dated 22nd June, 2022 from John Shaw, County Solicitor in relation to Michael Houlihan & Partners LLP.

6. Correspondence dated 27th June, 2022 from Pat Dowling, Chief Executive in relation to Water Sector Transformation Update.
7. Resolution circulated by Sligo County Council in relation to passport applications.
8. Resolution circulated by Sligo County Council in relation to national Abhaile Service.
9. Resolution circulated by Kerry County Council in relation to long covid clinics.
10. Resolution circulated by Limerick City & County Council in relation to long covid clinics.
11. Resolution circulated by Cork County Council in relation subsidy for the Irish fishing fleet.
12. Resolution circulated by Limerick City & County Council in relation to the introduction of a moratorium on evictions.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____