

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, 12th May, 2014 at 3:45 p.m.

Present:

Councillors J. Flynn, P. Murphy, S. Scanlan, P. Daly, T. Brennan, J. Breen, T. Mulqueen, T. McNamara, B. Meaney, B. Slattery, M. Hillery, R. Nagle, M. Kelly, J. Arkins, J. Cooney, P. Hayes, P. Burke, P. Fitzgerald, M. Begley, C. Crowe, C. Curtin, O. Garry, P.J. Kelly, P. Keane, B. Chambers, G. Keating, J. Crowe, S. McLoughlin, P. McCarthy, P.J. Ryan, P. McMahon, G. Flynn.

- Mr. Tom Coughlan, County Manager.
- Mr. Michael McNamara, Meetings Administrator.
- Ms. Siobhan Garvey, Staff Officer.
- Mr. Ger Dollard, Director of Service.
- Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Service.
- Mr. Niall Barrett, Head of Finance.
- Mr. Gordon Daly, Senior Planner.
- Mr Eddie Power, Senior Executive Officer.
- Mr. Adrian Kelly, Chief Fire Officer
- Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald, Financial Accountant
- Ms. Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer.
- Mr. Sean Ward, Senior Engineer.

The Mayor, Cllr. Joe Arkins presided and advised the meeting that both he and the County Manager had that morning met with Mr. Donald Trump in Shannon Airport and welcomed Mr. Trump's announcement that he hopes to invest in up to €45 million in the County. The Mayor is impressed with his commitment to Doonbeg and on behalf of the Council wished him well in further developing his property and looked forward to working with him in the future. These sentiments were echoed by other Elected Members.

Item 1: Minutes of Council Meetings.

a. Ar moladh Cllr. B. Chambers
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. McCarthy agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the April Meeting of Clare County Council held on 14th April, 2014 be adopted and signed.”

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

“That the Minutes of the adjourned April Meeting of Clare County Council held on 22nd April, 2014 be adopted and signed.”

Item 2: Minutes of the Electoral Area Meetings.

a. Ar moladh Cllr. P. Burke
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Fitzgerald agus glacadh leis

“That the Minutes of the Killaloe Electoral Area Meeting held on the 12th March, 2014 be noted.”

Item 3: Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meetings.

The members noted the minutes of the meeting held on 7th April, 2014 as presented.

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

a. Ar moladh Cllr. B. Chambers
Cuidithe ag Cllr. R. Nagle agus glacadh leis

“That the minutes of the Planning, Land Use and Transportation S.P.C. meeting held on 19th February, 2014 be noted”.

Item 5: 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 Kilcornan, Ennistymon.

Report dated 30th April, 2014 from Michael McNamara, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of a small area of land to the rear of house in Kilcornan, Ennistymon.

Ar moladh Cllr. B. Slattery
Cuidithe ag Cllr. R. Nagle 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 the disposal of the area of land adjacent to a house in

Kilcornan, Ennistymon and subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 30th April, 2014.”

Item 6: 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 one house at Glaise na Rinne, Shannon, Co. Clare.

Report dated 30th April, 2014 from Mairead Corbett, Administrative Officer, Housing Directorate was circulated with the agenda together with map. The report states that it is proposed to dispose of one house at Glaise na Rinne, Shannon, Co. Clare under the Affordable Housing Scheme.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P.J. Ryan 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 the disposal of one house under the Affordable Housing Scheme at Glaise na Rinne, Shannon, Co. Clare and subject to the conditions as set out in the notice served on the members dated 30th April, 2014.”

Item 7: Annual Financial Statement 2013.

The Annual Financial Statement for 2013 together with a report outlining relevant details were circulated in advance of the agenda. The members considered the report and statement and noted same.

Ar moladh Cllr. T. Brennan
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. McCarthy agus glacadh leis

“Pursuant to the provisions of Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001, additional expenditure incurred in 2013 in the amount set out below in respect of the following is hereby approved:-

Additional Expenditure Division B	€429,765
Additional Expenditure Division C	€868,296
Additional Expenditure Division D	€133,460
Additional Expenditure Division E	€ 64,654
Additional Expenditure Division F	€ 86,394
Additional Expenditure Division J	€141,444

Ar moladh Cllr. P. McCarthy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. T. Brennan agus glacadh leis

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

A	Housing & Building	€275,548
B	Transportation and Infrastructure	€147,945
C	Water Supply & Sewerage	€800,512
D	Development Incentives & Controls	€1,264,117
E	Environmental Protection	€870,621
F	Recreation & Amenity	€119,476
H	Miscellaneous Services	(€119,030)
J	Support Services	€1,177,989

Item 8: (a) (i) Consideration of the Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017 to inter alia incorporate the “draft Clare County Renewable Energy Strategy”.

(ii) Consideration of the “Managers’ Report to the Elected Members on Submissions received to the proposed Variation No. 1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2017” dated May 2014.

(b) the adoption by resolution of variation no. 1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017.

Cllr. J. Flynn withdrew from the meeting for this item.

Report dated 6th May, 2014 from Tom Coughlan, Clare County Manager was circulated prior to the meeting. The report states that the proposed Variation No. 1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017, to incorporate the Clare County Renewable Energy Strategy 2014-2020, was placed on public display from 14th March to 11th April. A total of 20 submissions were received within the statutory period.

Cllr. P.J. Kelly proposed that this item be deferred for further consideration. This was seconded by Cllr. C. Curtin. Gordon Daly, Senior Executive Planner pointed out that the new Council will have an opportunity to review the matter in six months time.

Ar moladh Cllr. B. Meaney
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. McCarthy agus glacadh leis

“Following consideration by the Elected Members of:

The proposed Variation no.1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017, dated March 2014;

The associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (Environmental Report) and Habitats Directive Assessment, dated March 2014;

The “Manager’s Report to Elected Members on submissions received on the proposed Variation no.1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017”, dated 6th May, 2014;

The Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022;

The policies and objectives of the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017;

The policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the Guidelines prepared under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended);

Any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or Minister for Government;

The statutory obligations of any local authority in the area;

The proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the plan relates; and

Our determination that the proposed variation, subject to the modifications recommended in the Managers Report, is not likely to have any significant adverse effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site within, or adjacent to, the plan area.

therefore, in accordance with the provisions of Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) this Council hereby resolves to make the Variation no.1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017, subject to the following:

To include all recommendations in the “Manager’s Report to Elected Members on submissions received on the proposed Variation no.1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017”, dated 6th May, 2014;”

The Mayor called a vote and on a show of hands it was agreed to put the above resolution proposed by Cllr. B. Meaney and seconded by Cllr. P. McCarthy to a vote which resulted as follows:

In favour: Cllrs. P. Murphy, P. Daly, T. Brennan, J. Breen, T. Mulqueen, T. McNamara, B. Meaney, B. Slattery, R. Nagle, M. Kelly, J. Arkins, J. Cooney, P. Burke, P. Fitzgerald, M. Begley, C. Crowe, O. Garry, B. Chambers, G. Keating, J. Crowe, P. McCarthy, G. Flynn. (22).

Against: Cllrs. M. Hillery, C. Curtin, P.J. Kelly. (3).

Abstentions: Nil.

The Mayor declared the motion carried.

Item 9: Consideration and noting of the “Draft Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2017.

Report dated 6th May, 2014 from Brian McCarthy, Senior Executive Planner was circulated with the agenda. The report states that the Draft Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2020 was placed on public display from the 2nd April, 2014 to the 22nd April, 2014. As part of this public consultation process, three submissions were received.

The Draft Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2017 proposes measures to conserve the biodiversity of County Clare, through raising awareness of County Clare’s biodiversity, co-ordinating a targeted biodiversity education programme for all ages and abilities, recording the biodiversity of County Clare, the production of best practice guidance for biodiversity management

and conservation, and supporting individuals and organisations working towards biodiversity conservation in County Clare.

Cllr. P. McCarthy raised some concern with regard to the omission of the wetlands in Shannon from the plan which was noted by Gordon Daly, Senior Planner who advised this would be incorporated during the completion of the final draft.

Subject to the above the members considered and noted the Draft Plan as presented.

Item 10: Activities/achievements of Clare County Council from 2009-2014.

Report on the major achievements of the current Council was circulated with the agenda. The report outlined the principal achievements of the Council over the period 2009-2014. The report as circulated was noted by the members present.

Item 11: Draft National Implementation Plan on homelessness.

Cllr. P. McCarthy advised the meeting that this plan was currently before the Government and that it is expected to be presented to the Council in the coming weeks for amendments or adoption. Homelessness Forum is endorsing the plan and will meet on the subject in a matter of weeks.

Item 12: Attendance of Clare C.L.D.C. at 3:00 p.m.

Dorin Graham provided a presentation to the Council outlining the functions of Clare Local Development Company, which highlighted the great work achieved in the County over the years. Initiatives spearheaded by C.L.D.C. include the Clare Voluntary Group, Social Inclusion Programme, Local Training Initiatives and the Tus and R.S.S. Schemes.

Stephen Walsh, Chairman of Clare Local Development Company spoke about the proposed changes which would align Local Development Companies with Local Authorities.

Both representatives from Clare Local Development Company responded to queries and concerns from the elected members who supported the retention of the present structures for administering LEADER funding.

The following proposal was submitted by Cllr. B. Chambers, Cllr. J. Flynn and Cllr. P.J. Ryan:

“That the local Community Development Committee in Co. Clare would have a planning, oversight, co-ordination and monitoring role for local development, and would not seek to have an implementation role in the management and delivery of the Leader Programme”.

This proposal was supported by the majority of the members present.

Item 13: Signs.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Crowe agus glacadh leis

“Clare County Council commit to introducing more Irish of equal size lettering and status in its signage of new public equipment such as road signs, bin lorries. In addition receipts and other public materials given out of automated machines, etc. should give dual respect to Irish.”

Michael McNamara, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services replied as follows:

“The Council has certain obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003 as have all public bodies. In keeping with these obligations new road signs and vehicles being acquired have signage of equal prominence in both Irish and English displayed.

The Council does not have bin lorries as we have not been involved in refuse collection for a number of years.

Parking tickets are in both Irish and English Languages.”

Item 14: Information signs.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Murphy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Curtin agus O. Garry agus glacadh leis

“With reference to the widespread damage to information signs (directional, speed limits, etc.) across the county’s road network as a result of the severe storms experienced this winter we would like to be briefed as to who is responsible for the erecting of and maintenance of these signs. We also believe that guidelines should be introduced to ensure that this kind of damage will not be replicated in the future, i.e. ensuring that poles are sunken to an appropriate depth and that adequate amounts of concrete are used. Finally, we are requesting that all of the damaged signage is reinstated as a matter of urgency.”

Tom Tiernan, Senior Engineer replied as follows:

“Most of the damage to road signage through the storm period earlier this year occurred along the N67 and, therefore, I am assuming that this notice of motion relates to the N67. In this context, the responsible authority is the N.R.A. who have contracts in place to facilitate maintenance of signage along the National Route network. Given the foregoing, I asked the N.R.A. for observations on the notice of motion and its response is summarised as follows:

- All affected signs have been made safe and remedial works are underway.
- The winds earlier this year were exceptional particularly on the west coast and deficiencies were exposed in sign support systems – particularly fingerpost signs. The systems used heretofore by the N.R.A. are C.E. approved but they have engaged with the industry with a view to developing an appropriate means of strengthening sign support systems.

- Where overturning of signs occurred – due to poor construction or poor ground conditions – the relevant contractor has been required to rectify the problem as soon as possible.
- On foot of the severe storm experience earlier this year, measures are being taken to replace damaged signs with higher quality replacements to minimise the likelihood of recurring problems. Unfortunately this has added to the time taken to carry out the requisite remedial works but should result in a more satisfactory outcome in the longer term.”

Item 15: Fire and Emergency Operations Plan.

Ar moladh Cllr. J. Flynn
Cuidithe ag Cllr. T. Mulqueen agus P. McCarthy agus glacadh leis

“To ask the County Manager (Chief Executive Officer) to provide an Annual Service Development Plan Review of Clare County Council's "Fire and Emergency Operations Plan" to allow for binding changes at National level to be taken into account”.

Anne Haugh, Director of Services replied as follows:

“The National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management approved a Project Initiation Document (P.I.D.), issued in May 2013, setting out guidance on the implementation process and projected timescales for the Keeping Communities Safe project.

Following the adoption of the Fire & Emergency Operations Plan, the next steps provided for in the P.I.D. will include the preparation of an Annual Service Development Plan by the Chief Fire Officer to prioritise and address the implementation of changes to current practices identified in the Plan. This will include for both changes at a local and at a regional level.

As the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management continue to provide guidance on Fire Service matters, implementation of same will be included in the Annual Service Development Plans. Where there may be policy changes required to the adopted Fire and Emergency Operations Plan, these will be brought to the attention of the Elected Representatives.

As set out in the Project Initiation Document it is intended that a review should be carried out of the Annual Service Development Plan, with a report prepared for the Local Authority Management Team. This review can be made available to the Elected Representatives for their information.”

Item 16: Household tax, property tax and motor tax.

Ar moladh Cllr. C. Curtin
Cuidithe ag Cllr. C. Crowe agus glacadh leis

“That the Head of Finance inform the Council of Household Tax, Property Tax and Motor Tax collected in Clare for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 (to date)”.

Niall Barrett, Head of Finance replied as follows:

“The table below sets out the amounts collected in Clare for Household Charge, Local Property Tax and Motor Tax in 2012, 2013 and early 2014.

Household Charge, Local Property Tax and Motor Tax.

The table below sets out the amounts collected in Clare for Household Charge, Local Property Tax and Motor Tax in 2012, 2013 and early 2014.

	2012	2013	2014
	€000	€000	€000
Household Charge	3,414	677	
Local Property Tax		5,100	6,400
Motor Tax	28,496	30,548	8,375

Household Charge was a charge levied on properties in 2012. This was collected by the council in 2012 with arrears of household charge collected up to the 1st July 2013. From the 1st July 2013 Revenue took over collection responsibility. From 1 July 2013, any outstanding Household Charge liability was included as part of the Local Property Tax liability for the property

Local Property Tax (L.P.T.) was a new tax introduced to replace the Household charge. This tax is collected by the Revenue Commissioners. In 2013 the tax was levied on a half year basis only, with a full year payable in 2014. The table above reflects the amounts published by Revenue as collected in 2013 and 2014 to April.

Motor tax collected includes on line transactions through the central website. 2014 amounts collected are up to 31st March 2014.”

Item 17: Water Charges.

Ar moladh Cllr. B. Meaney
Cuidithe ag Cllr. J. Flynn agus glacadh leis

“This council requests that house holders and occupiers liable for the water charge but dependent on a septic tank are only charged the water element of the proposed water charge and can this be provided for in the Service level agreement between Irish Water and Clare County Council.”

Anne Haugh, Director of Services replied as follows:

“The issue of charging house-holders for domestic water services does not form part of the Service Level Agreement and this function will be carried out directly by Irish Water.

At present, the Commission for Energy Regulation has a public consultation document issued on the charging for water services for domestic use in respect of which submissions may be made. The consultation and information documents, listed in the Table below, are accessible on www.cer.ie.

- Water Charges Plan and Customer Protection Consultation Phase 1 17/04/2014
- Information Paper on Water Consultation Plan 2014 Timelines 19/02/2014
- Economic Regulatory Framework for the Public Irish Water Services Sector 30/10/2013”

Item 18: Commercial rates.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Murphy
Cuidithe ag Cllr. O. Garry

“As a means of boosting town centre business across County Clare I am proposing that commercial rates are levied on car parks at out of town retail centres. This would "level off the playing field" and promote smaller traders and businesses.”

Niall Barrett, Head of Finance replied as follows:

“The amount payable by ratepayers is determined by two factors: the valuation of the property as set by the national Valuation Office and the Annual Rate on Valuation (multiplier) set by the council each year as part of the budget process.

The Valuation Act 2001 determines the basis for the valuation of properties by the national Valuation office. Car Parks where there is no charge levied are not separately valued for valuation purposes. Clare County Council cannot levy Commercial Rates where the property is not included in the valuation list (rate book).

It is a matter for national legislation for there to be a change to the basis of inclusion or exclusion of properties to be valued. I understand that this topic has been raised at a National level in recent months with a Private Members Bill proposed in the Seanad to amend National Legislation for the valuation for commercial rates of Car Parks at out of town retail centres.”

A discussion took place surrounding this topic with some members expressing that they were opposed to this motion and following a vote by a show of hands the motion was lost with 9 voting against and 6 in favour of the motion.

Item 19: Health & Safety Policies.

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

“That details of the Health & Safety Policy for workers in contact with the following be made available for discussion:

- Asbestos.

- Toxic waste
- Chemicals in both liquid and powder form.”

Anne Haugh, Director of Services replied as follows:

“Clare Local Authorities operates an Occupational Health & Safety Management System in accordance with the internationally recognised OHSAS 18001 Standard. This system comprises Occupational Health & Safety Policies, Procedures and Forms and has been externally validated and registered to the 18001 standard for CCFRS by the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

Please find attached the details of the following documents which outline the relevant policies and controls for Asbestos including disposal requirements and Hazardous Substances including chemicals in both liquid and powder form;

- Clare Local Authorities Occupational Health & Safety Policy.
- Procedure for the Management of Asbestos.
- Risk Assessment for working with Asbestos Cement Pipes.
- Risk Assessment for Hazardous Substances.”

With reference to the Clare Local Authorities Occupation Health & Safety Policy, a query was raised with regard to when this policy came into effect and if any policy had been in place prior to the effect date. The County Manager advised that the Council are in compliance with all Health and Safety requirements which are prior agreed with the Health & Safety Authority.

Item 20: Housing Grants.

Ar moladh Cllr. M. Hillery
Cuidithe ag Cllr. P. Hayes agus glacadh leis

“That Clare County Council would provide the number of applications awaiting approval and the grant allocation by the Government in 2014 for the following schemes;-

- Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme.
- Housing Aid for Older People Scheme.
- Housing Adaptation Grant for People with Disabilities.”

Niall O’Keeffe, Administrative Officer, Housing Department replied as follows:

“Housing Adaptation Grant for Older People and People with a Disability (H.A.G.)

Housing Aid for Older People (H.O.P.)

Mobility Aids Grants (M.A.G.)

The Department of Environment Community and Local Government notified that the capital allocation €1,614,763, (including €322,953 from own resources) to Clare County Council to fund grants under the abovementioned schemes in 2014. The apportionment of this allocation under the respective headings is a matter for each local authority and is done in accordance with the Grant

Implementation Scheme adopted by the Council. It is expected that in the region of 250 – 300 applications will be funded this year under all headings.

Applications on hand as of today's date comprise:

Housing Applications.

The following table details applications on hand to date.

Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	135	
Housing Aid for Older People	250	
Mobility Aids Grant	50	
Total	435	

Item 21: Irish Water.

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

“That Clare County Council request Irish Water to install generators in our Reservoirs in order to prevent disruption to our water supply as a result of E.S.B. power outages during severe weather events.”

Anne Haugh, Director of Services replied as follows:

“The lack of generators at several water and wastewater treatment plants was highlighted by the storm of 12th February last. Provision of generators, or of equipment necessary for connection to hired back-up generators, has been raised with Irish Water in discussions about the 2014 Minor Capital Works programme.

Clare's largest water treatment plant in terms of daily production – Drumcliffe, Ennis – already has a generator, provided within the new plant which came into operation in March 2009.

For the plant with the second highest daily production – Castle Lake, Kilmurry – the Council's submissions for the 2014 Minor Capital Works programme included a proposal to install a generator to operate all pumps and the treatment process, as well as smaller generators at reservoirs

in the Castle Lake network to operate chlorine boosting stations. No approval has yet been received from Irish Water for this proposal.

Information is being gathered with a view to making a proposal to Irish Water by Friday 9th May for generators, or for equipment to enable quick connection to hired-in generators, at a number of other major water treatment plants.”

Cllr. P. Hayes wished to express his support to this notice of motion.

Item 22: Housing estates.

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

“That this council would request the Minister for the Environment to release funds to enable Clare County Council take over finished housing estates as a matter of urgency.”

It was noted that the Minister has now addressed this issue and the Mayor wished to compliment the Director in charge of the estates.

Item 23: Charges imposed on families.

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

“That Clare County Council request the government to carefully examine the impact on families and individuals of massively increased charges imposed in recent years and introduce meaningful waiver systems.”

Item 24: T.D./Senator and County Councillors.

Ar moladh Cllr. T. Mulqueen
Cuidithe ag Cllr. B. Meaney

“Call on the Minister for Environment to amend the relevant legislation in relation to length of service for T.D./Senators and County Councillors to ensure that total service in each category cannot exceed 3 full terms or 15 years duration.”

After some discussion with regard to this motion a vote was taken on a show of hands which deemed the motion lost.

Item 25: Rural Development.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Hayes
Cuidithe ag Cllr. M. Kelly agus glacadh leis

“I propose that this council calls on the Taoiseach and the government to put in place a special department for rural development, with particular emphases on unemployment, and protection of services in the West of Ireland.”

Item 26: Ennis General Hospital.

Ar moladh Cllr. P. Daly
Cuidithe ag Cllr. M. Kelly agus P. McMahon agus glacadh leis

“We call on the Department of Health and the H.S.E. to seriously consider the re-opening of the A&E at Ennis General Hospital on a 24 hour basis, due to the fact that University of Limerick Hospital A&E is totally overworked, with up to six to eight hours of a delay for patients from Limerick City and County, North Tipperary and Clare.”

Item 27: Comhfhreagras.

Cllr. P. Hayes wished to have it noted that he was not happy with the response issued from the N.R.A. with regard to works which had taken place on the N18 in dealing with ongoing issues on this road. The Mayor supported these comments and it was agreed that the matter be followed up.

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank the County Manager, Directors of Service and staff for their assistance over the past 5 years. He noted that the 4 Councillors retiring Cllr. P. McCarthy, Cllr. T. Brennan, Cllr. M. Kelly and Cllr. S. Scanlon had 105 combined years of service given to Clare County Council between them and wished them and all the elected members the very best and complimented them all on a job well done.

Tom Coughlan, County Manager expressed his thanks to all the elected members and noted that the present council had been a very positive one. 5 difficult years had been experienced in terms of stretched resources but that the members had made the most of every opportunity brought their way. He particularly pointed out that in 2007 the Annual Financial Statement was showing a debit balance of approximately €1.7 million which today had been reduced to €1 million which demonstrated how this Council during austerity had managed to improve the Council's resources. He wished those going forward for re-election the very best and looked forward to working with many in the future. Finally, he thanked the members who were retiring and wished them the very best.

Cllr. P. McCarthy thanked all elected members and officials and reflected on her role within Clare County Council was not always an easy one but always very rewarding. She urged future members to never abstain from a vote and hopes that the electorate will vote wisely in the upcoming elections.

Cllr. S. Scanlon advised that Council that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time in the Council and wished all his colleagues well for the future.

Cllr. M. Kelly complimented the officials of the Council who were always courteous in their dealings with him and reported how in his time as an elected member that he never made an enemy.

Cllr. P.J. Kelly wished well to the 4 members who were voluntarily retiring and wished all candidates going forward for election on the 23rd May the best. He noted that he had served with 97 members since his career began in Clare County Council 40 years ago.

The following correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Clare County Council 2009-2014 Main Achievements of the Council during this period.
- Correspondence dated 7th May, 2014 from Kevin O'Rourke, Senior Project Manager, National Roads Authority in relation to Health & Safety audit on the section of the M18 Motorway near Crusheen.
- Seminar entitled "Tourism Technology & Competitive Strategies" being held in the Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth on 16th – 18th May, 2014.
- Training Seminar entitled "Strategic Environmental Assessment (S.E.A.) and Decision Making" being held in Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal on 16th – 18th May, 2014.
- Rural Revitalization Conference being held at the University College Dublin on 21st May, 2014.
- Training Seminar for Councillors entitled "The Local Government Arts Service" being held in The Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal on 30th – 31st May, 2014.
- Training Seminar entitled "Induction Course to New Councils for Councillors" being held in the Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal on 13th – 15th June, 2014.

Correspondence.

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda:

1. Correspondence dated 22nd April, 2014 from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in connection with increased allocation for Roadworks Programme.
2. Correspondence dated 29th April, 2014 from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in connection with increased allocation for Roadworks Programme.
3. Correspondence dated 30th April, 2014 from the Office of the Taoiseach in relation to oath of allegiance to the Republic.
4. Correspondence dated 30th April, 2014 from U.L. Hospitals in relation to overcrowding at A&E at University Hospital Limerick.
5. Correspondence dated 28th April, 2014 from the Office of the Minister for Social and Family Affairs regarding the State pension (transition).
6. Correspondence dated 29th April, 2014 from the National Roads Authority in relation to advertising on national routes.

7. Correspondence dated 25th April, 2014 from Irish Water in relation to resolution from Clare County Council concerning the removal of all lead piping, connections and fittings in County Clare.
8. Correspondence dated 17th April, 2014 from the Office of the Minister for Justice and Equality in relation to driving licences.
9. Correspondence dated 23rd April, 2014 from the Department of Health concerning University Hospital, Limerick.
10. Correspondence dated 16th April, 2014 from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources concerning the rollout of Broadband services in the West Kilnamona/Inagh area.
11. Correspondence dated 25th April, 2014 from the Office of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation regarding commercial rates.
12. Correspondence dated 15th April, 2014 from Iarnród Éireann concerning the provision of lifts at Ennis Station.
13. Correspondence dated 16th April, 2014 from Bus Éireann concerning the provision of lifts at Ennis Station.
14. Correspondence from P.R.O., Tulla Pipe Band in relation to their recent trip to New York.
15. Correspondence dated 17th April, 2014 from the Office of the Minister for Education and Skills in relation to a bonus led savings scheme for primary school students.
16. Correspondence dated 22nd April, 2014 from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in connection with funding for Local Improvement Scheme.
17. Correspondence dated 17th April, 2014 from the G.A.A. in relation to access to viewing G.A.A. games.

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.

Training Seminar entitled “Common Agriculture Policy, An overview of C.A.P. Reform” being held in Bewleys Hotel, Newlands Cross, Naas Road, Dublin 22 on 24th – 26th January, 2014.

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €14.66 including conference fee of €5.

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

Training Seminar entitled “An overview of Jobsbridge and Back to Work Scheme” being held in Bewleys Hotel, Newlands Cross, Naas Road, Dublin 22 on 7th – 9th February, 2014.

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €25.57 including conference fee of €5.

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

Training Seminar entitled “Local Government Law Update: 2014” being held in the Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth on 21st – 23rd February, 2014.

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €37.21 including conference fee of €100.

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

Training Seminar entitled “Meeting Management Principles and Best Practice” being held in Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork on 21st – 23rd March, 2014.

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €75.59 including conference fee of €100.

It was agreed that Cllr. S. Scanlan attend this Conference.

Training Seminar entitled “Retirement Entitlements and Taxation Benefits for Councillors” being held in the Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth on 2nd – 4th May, 2014.

The Meetings Administrator informed the Members that the estimated average cost per Councillor attending this Conference was €37.21 including conference fee of €100.

It was agreed that Cllr. S. Scanlan attend this Conference.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

Signed: _____
Méara

Date: _____