

Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District Budget Meeting held on Tuesday October 7th, 2014, at 2.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Present:

Councillors: J. Breen, T. Mc Namara, J. Flynn, P. Daly, A. Norton, M. Howard, P. Murphy, C. Colleran Molloy.

Officials: Gerard Dollard, Director of Services, Eamon O’Dea, Town Engineer, Catherine O’Hara, Meetings Administrator, Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer and Noeleen Fitzgerald, Financial Accountant.

Consider the Draft Budgetary Plan for the Ennis Municipal District 2015 in accordance with Statutory Instrument S.I. No. 226 of 2014 - Local Government (financial & audit procedures) Regulations 2014 and Circular Fin 05/2014 Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures) Regulations 2014 and associated budget related matters.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. J. Flynn welcomed everyone to this, the first ever, budget meeting of the Ennis Municipal District.

Ger Dollard explained as this was the first ever budget meeting under the new structure which was an untried and untested process which was new to all present.

He added that in the past Ennis Town Council had its own budget, but now under the new regime, there would be one overall budget under Clare County Council. He advised that nothing would be agreed or decided in relation to the budget until the full budget of Clare County Council was adopted. He confirmed that whatever decision(s) would be made today would be “taken into account” by the CEO of Clare County Council.

G. Dollard advised that the Municipal District budgets had been discussed at the Corporate Policy Group which had a representative from each of the Municipal Districts. As most services are being dealt with at a County level, the vast bulk of the budget will be a County budget. The matter before the meeting was to amend or adopt the draft budget of €54,000 for “Economic Development & Promotion” for the Ennis Municipal District area. The CEO will then consider the recommendation before it is brought to the full Council.

The Roads Programme for the Ennis Municipal District area was also allocated an additional €50,000 which is also subject to full Council approval.

A general discussion took place comparing the budget of Ennis Town Council and that of the new Ennis Municipal District.

Ger Dollard explained that the Town Council’s budget was for a full range of services for the town i.e. Housing, Roads, Planning, etc, however, these services are now provided by Clare County

Council. G. Dollard advised the members that the €54,000 covers monies normally committed as contributions previously provided to various bodies by Ennis Town Council.

Noeleen Fitzgerald informed the meeting that this is a new process and that the budget in the past was non-discretionary but that the €54,000 is discretionary and is to be decided on by the members under "Economic Development Promotion". All other areas are dealt with in the County Council budget.

Ger Dollard informed the members of the choices with the Draft budget before them:-

- Adopt as presented
- Recommend it to be spent elsewhere
- Seek extra, which may be rejected
- Decide not to adopt the budget

G. Dollard explained that the County Council will perform all the tasks as they were performed by the Town Council so for example Tourism is now incorporated into Clare County Council, Housing is now Clare County Council etc. He added that to start splitting up all the budgets into 4 Municipal Districts it would be difficult to manage. The overall pot of money that was available is similar to what is now in place.

Cllr. James Breen, even though, not happy with the draft budget, proposed to accept it and decide on its allocation at a later date. On the proposal of Cllr. James Breen seconded by Cllr Ann Norton it was agreed,

"That pursuant to Section 102(4A) of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by Section 58(e) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 the Draft Budgetary Plan 2015 dated the 1st October, 2014 as presented by the Chief Executive and as amended to the figure of €54,000 for the Ennis Municipal District is hereby adopted".

Cllr. Johnny Flynn wished the record to state that he dissented from the proposal of the acceptance of the draft budget.

Eamon O'Dea recommended that the additional €50,000 for the roads area be spent on the following projects:-

- Footpath on the bridge in Quin
 - Footpath from the GAA pitch to the school in Kilmaley.
 - Other footpath works in the Ennis area
- Projects to be done this year.

Cllr. J. Flynn proposed and Cllr. T. McNamara seconded the proposal that the work in the Ennis Roads area be completed as outlined by Eamon O'Dea, Town Engineer.

Eamon explained that in the past Ennis Town Council had a block grant in the amount of €339,000 but was not sure what is happening in the future. There is a lot of work to be done in Ennis Town.

Cllr. Johnny Flynn proposed and Cllr. Pat Daly seconded the proposal to apply to Central Government to retain the block grant in the amount of €339,000.

The meeting then concluded.

