

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COBH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CORK ON MONDAY 22ND OCTOBER 2018 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT BUDGETARY PLAN FOR THE COBH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT.

Present: Councillors G. Keohane, C. Rasmussen, P. O’Sullivan & D. Ó’Cadhla.

Officials Present: Mr. S. O’Callaghan, Senior Executive Officer
Mr. P. Lynch, Municipal District Officer
Ms. A. Walsh, Cork County Council

An apology for their inability to attend was received from Cllrs. A. Barry, K. McCarthy and S. Sheppard.

1. DRAFT BUDGET PLAN:

P. Lynch referred to the Draft Budget Plan which had been circulated to the Members and stated that the Plan sets out the level of funding which is expected to be assigned to the Municipal District in respect of the services which come within the remit of the Municipal District. The Draft Plan includes a sum which for the General Municipal Allocation unchanged since last year, which is discretionary funding, which may, at the direction of the Members, be used to supplement funds provided for any of the services in the Draft Plan. P. Lynch stated that most of the increases in the figures between 2018 and 2019 were accounted for by an increase in payroll costs. The Village Development Fund for 2019 would be directed towards Glounthaune.

The meeting of the Municipal District is part of the statutory Budget process, with final decisions in relation to the Budget to be made at the statutory Annual Budget meeting of Cork County Council. The Chief Executive is required to consider the views of the Municipal District members when preparing the final Draft Budget which would be presented to full Council at the statutory budget meeting.

Cllr. Rasmussen sought clarification on how the figures were compiled as it would appear that the budget for the public toilets only allowed for maintenance and did not cover necessary improvements, there had been a lot of complaints this year about the condition of the toilets. P. Lynch stated that most of the problems associated with the public toilets this season stemmed from vandalism as opposed to issues with the infrastructure.

Cllr. P. O’Sullivan stated that sections of the Municipal District were excluded from benefitting from the Town & Village Development Fund, for instance Little Island did not qualify as it was not regarded as a village, but a ‘main settlement area’ and other areas on the outskirts of the city were also similarly disadvantaged. S. O’Callaghan stated that Little Island could avail of funding under the General Municipal Allocation; however he stated that he understood Cllr. O’Sullivan’s point and in order to change the definition of Little Island to a village, Cllr. O’Sullivan should bring the issue to the CPG. The Town & Village Development Fund was a County initiative established as a result of the Members decision in relation to the Local Property Tax and also to fill the gap which occurred when the Town

Councils were abolished. P. Lynch stated that under the guidelines laid down for the scheme, three key villages had been identified within the Municipal District and all three would have been due to be reviewed next year and that the definition of a village should be re-examined then.

Cllr. O'Sullivan sought a breakdown of the street cleaning figure into the individual areas, however P. Lynch stated he did not have this level of detail, however the bulk of the street cleaning related to Cobh, as it had been decided to continue the daily street cleaning service after the abolition of the Town Council. Cllr. Rasmussen stated the budget seemed very tight and did not allow for any improvement in the service, he stated that he felt there was room for improvement in how the street cleaning regime was operated, particularly in the Harbour Row area.

Cllr. G. Keohane sought clarification on whether an increase had been allowed for additional tree felling, he stated that more and more calls were being made in relation to overgrown trees on Council land. Cllr. Rasmussen stated that tree felling should be included as a separate item, as overgrown trees were becoming a major problem. S. O'Callaghan stated that the increase in the Parks and Open spaces budget included the maintenance of Harpers Island and allowed for some tree felling.

Cllr. Ó'Cadhlá queried why the budget headings were so limited and why headings such as Housing was not included in the Budget Plan presented. P. Lynch replied that this budget plan related to Municipal District services only. Cllr. Ó'Cadhlá then queried if it were possible to divert funds to Housing needs in Cobh. P. Lynch replied that the Members could allocate part of the General Municipal Allocation to any function of the Council, not just those services provided by the Municipal District however any allocation would go into the general Council Budget and could not be ring fenced for the Cobh area.

Cllr. Ó'Cadhlá also raised the issue of the Battery Strand, about which the members were waiting on a report and queried if the amount in the budget for the safety of structures and places was for this type of work. S. O'Callaghan replied that works of the type required to make the Battery Strand safe would require Capital funding and would not be paid for out of the Revenue budget which was the one under discussion. Cllr. Rasmussen stated that he had raised this issue at the Southern Committee and P. Lynch confirmed that he had been in contact with the engineer responsible for Coastal Control.

Cllr. Ó'Cadhlá proposed the rejection of the Draft Budgetary Plan as presented, as the proposal did not receive a seconder, Cllr. P. O'Sullivan proposed to adopt the Draft Budgetary Plan, the proposal to adopt was seconded by Cllr. G. Keohane.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach

Municipal District Officer.