

Minutes of the Budget Meeting of the Municipal District of Piltown

Date: Wednesday 4th November, 2020 at 9.30a.m.

Venue: Library meeting room, Ferrybank, Co. Kilkenny and via MS Teams remote access

Chair: Cllr Eamonn Aylward

Present at venue: Cllr Ger Frisby, Cllr Pat Dunphy.

Present via MS Teams: Cllr Fidelis Doherty, Cllr Tomás Breathnach.

Apologies: None

In attendance at venue: Mr. Sean Mc Keown, Director of Services; Mr. Michael Arthurs, Meetings Administrator; Mr. Stan Cullen, Area Engineer;

In attendance via MS Teams: Mr. Martin Prendiville, Head of Finance; Mr. Dermot Keyes, Munster Express; Mr. Sam Matthews, Kilkenny People; Ms. Carmel Brett, Staff Officer.

1) Budget 2021 – General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for Municipal District of Piltown

Cllr Eamonn Aylward welcomed all to the meeting and invited Mr. M. Prendiville, Head of Finance, to commence his presentation.

Mr. Prendiville said the Council budgetary process for 2021 is well underway with the full Council having already met and another meeting scheduled for Thursday 5th November; he said the process is extremely challenging this year as the Covid-19 crisis has had a serious impact on Council finances.

He said while Government will compensate for the loss of nine months rates in 2020, it is not yet known about any possible compensation for the loss of other income streams, and the financial impact will continue well into 2021.

He stated that while no commitment or indication has been received from Government that compensation will be given in 2021 as it was in 2020, the only option at the moment is to prepare the 2021 budget based on this assumption; however, a number of lines of expenditure will have to be paused until such a commitment is received.

If improvements transpire from Q1 2021 there would still be loss of income in the region of €4.5m; this income would normally be used for Discretionary spend.

The Capital programme – which includes the Greenway project in the Piltown Municipal District and requires match funding from Councils own funds – is ongoing, with the Council expecting to borrow €2/€3m in 2021.

Regarding the General Municipal Allocation (GMA), each Municipal District initially received €50,000 in 2020 which was subsequently increased to €62.5m.

The proposed GMA for each Municipal District is €50,000 for 2021 subject to approval of the overall budget by the full Council and subject to the assumption that Government will provide compensation for lost income in 2021 as it did in 2020.

The estimated €500k discretionary roads budget is dependent on the National grants level which won't be known until 2021.

Cllr Fidelis Doherty asked if funds allocated but not spent in 2020 can be carried forward to 2021. Mr. Prendiville said it was hoped that unused funds would be allowed to carry forward to 2021 and it was also hoped that losses currently totalling €1.7m, but likely to exceed €2m, would be compensated, with some items of expenditure being parked.

Cllr Tomás Breathnach asked for timeline of decision on compensatory measures on other income streams apart from rates in both 2020 and 2021; Mr. Prendiville replied that it is hoped to know in the next number of weeks about this for 2020.

Regarding compensation for this area for 2021, he said this has been discussed with Government ministers and indication of support and compensation sought but it could be well into 2021 before it is known what the financial situation will look like for next year.

Mr. Prendiville also said the budget can only be drafted and adopted on the assumption that funds will materialise but discretionary spend will have to be paused until perhaps April/May 2021, and there could be a drop of €4/€5m in income.

He also confirmed to Cllr Dunphy that this meeting dealt with just the discretionary part of the Budget.

Cllr Aylward thanked Mr. Prendiville for his presentation.

Cllr Dunphy proposed, Cllr Frisby seconded and all agreed adoption of the €500k discretionary roads budget.

Cllr Doherty proposed, Cllr Dunphy seconded and all agreed adoption of the €50k General Municipal Allocation.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Cathaoirleach