Minutes of Shannon Municipal District Meeting to consider the Draft Budgetary Plan held on Tuesday 10ᵗʰ November, 2020 at 1.30pm in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Present: Councillors Pat McMahon (Cathaoirleach), PJ Ryan, Gerard Flynn, John Crowe, Pat O'Gorman, Michael Begley.

Remote Access Cllr. Donna McGettigan

Pat Dowling Chief Executive, Liam Conneally Director of Service, Noeleen Fitzgearld Head of Finance, Jason Murphy Senior Executive Officer, Trina Rynne Financial Accountant and Patricia O'Neill Staff Officer.

1. **Consideration of the Draft Budget – General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for Shannon Municipal District.**

Cathaoirleach Pat McMahon opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

Mr. Pat Dowling, Chief Executive outlined the statutory requirement in relation to the budget process and in particular the General Municipal Allocation (GMA) which is defined as discretionary funding available to the municipal districts members for allocation in the draft budgetary plan.

In determining the GMA for the Municipal Districts the overall income available to the Council and the budget strategy discussions to date with the Corporate Policy Group. The Chief Executive highlighted the challenges faced by the Council in 2020 as a result of the loss of significant income due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the implications this will have for the 2021 budget. He emphasised the need to retain services as much as possible and the promise of funding from Central Government which will facilitate this. Confirmation of Central Government funding will become more evident in the coming days.

He stated the GMA formed a large part of the Local Property Tax Income deliberations of the Council bringing the total 2021 Budget to €1,273,000. The allocation to be split evenly by the number of Elected Members in each MD. Therefore, maintaining the status quo allocation for the Shannon MD of €318,250 for 2021.

Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald, Head of Finance added that Covid-19 had brought about an extraordinary financial impact in the areas of commercial rates, income from goods and services and additional expenditure incurred in responding to the pandemic.

Central Government support included:

- Restart Grant –€15m paid to the Business Sector.
- Rates Waiver – A rates waiver of over €12.3m. This waiver is to be applied in lieu of credit, to over 4,270 commercially rated properties. The waiver to be applied to commercial rate accounts is from 27 March 2020 to 27 December 2020 (9 months).

The Elected Members thanked and complemented the Chief Executive, Head of Finance and all the Finance team in retaining the GMA allocation at the same level as last year. The Members also raised the following:

- More streamlined delivery of projects under the GMA

- Performance indications for each District
- Adequately resourced workforce in the Shannon MD
- Extension of the Shannon MD boundary in 2020

Jason Murphy, Senior Executive Officer stated that the Shannon MD had a significant budget to deliver in the current year, which was hampered due to 3 months lost due to flooding and the Covid-19 pandemic. An extra crew was added to the Shannon MD which included an additional Senior General Services Supervisor. Among the projects taken on during the year included 2 Section 38's – Larkins Cross and safety improvements at Westbury, which are currently ongoing. Also, additional funding streams became available under Climate Change – remedial works at Westbury pump house and Active Travel Measures – provision of new footpath in Meelick.

In relation to the GMA allocation for 2020 – 50% of the projects are now complete and 60% of the Community Grants have been drawn down to date. It is intended that the remaining GMA works will be completed in the early months of 2021.

The GMA for the Shannon Municipal District for 2021 of €318,250 was proposed by Cllr. Gerard Flynn and seconded by Cllr. PJ Ryan and was agreed by all.

Signed:

       Cllr. Pat McMahon,

       Cathaoirleach.

Signed:

       Meetings Administrator

Dated   **November, 2020**