

**RECORD/MINUTES OF THE INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT BUDGET 2022 “GOTOMEETING”
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27TH OCTOBER 2021 AT 2.00pm**

Councillors Present:

Councillors Paul Canning, Nicholas Crossan, Albert Doherty, Terry Crossan, Rena Donaghey, Martin Farren, Martin McDermott, and Jack Murray.

Officials Present:

Richard Gibson, Head of Finance, Aideen Doherty, Area Manager Housing & Corporate, Seamus Hopkins, Area Manager , Roads and Transportation, Killian Smith .Executive Planner and Una Cresswell, A/Senior Staff Officer

The Leas Cathaoirleach of Inishowen Municipal District, Cllr Nicholas Crossan, welcomed everybody to the Budget 2022 Gotomeeting and handed over to Richard Gibson, Head of Finance to brief the members. It was acknowledged that comprehensive discussions had taken place in the recent Budget Workshop on the 4th October 2021 and that many matters were considered and discussed on the day.

Richard Gibson outlined in a short presentation, the purpose of the meeting to the members which was to consider the Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Inishowen for 2022. Accordingly Richard Gibson reiterated to the members the purpose of the meeting and outlined the general Municipal allocation background in summary as follows;

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 and associated regulations require the allocation of a General Municipal Allocation (GMA) to each Municipal District as part of the annual revenue budget process.

- In respect of 2021, a preliminary allocation of €180,000 was made for the Inishowen Municipal District, with this subsequently being adopted at the 2021 plenary budget in November 2020.
- The rationale behind this approach was that it was not practicable to allocate a global and final figure as part of the General Municipal Allocation, prior to the final and full plenary budget being adopted, at which point in time it could only be known with certainty as to what capacity existed within the Council’s resources to allocate such funding.
- Discussions with the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage have outlined the challenges associated with the timing required under the current regulations with regard to the allocation of the GMA. The Department has acknowledged the challenges associated with this, and is continuing to review the current approach. This approach will not be amended in time for the 2022 revenue budget considerations. Any amendments made to the budgetary process will only come into effect for future years’ budgets beyond 2022.
- On that basis it is now proposed to allocate an amount equivalent to €20,000 per member, at this juncture, to the General Municipal Allocation. The final and conclusive decision will be made as part of the plenary budget meeting in November 2021, at which point in time the members can conclude and determine the final amount to be made available to the General Municipal Allocations. This could, if the members wished, affirm the allocation

proportionate to the number of members in respect of each of the individual Municipal Districts or suggest an alternative allocation methodology.

Richard Gibson advised the members that the budget process was very challenging at this time with rising expenses whilst trying to maintain the same level of services for 2022. He advised there were many increased costs such as energy costs, payroll, IT software, construction materials and services. The requirement to co fund projects was also challenging, he added. The two sources of income for discretionary funding is from Income from Local Property Tax and Commercial Rates. He added at present, the council is at the same level of Local Property task as it was in 2014 and it is likely to remain the same for the next five years. In addition, Income from commercial rates is unlikely to improve.

Some discussion took place on the following matters and Richard Gibson answered questions from members and clarified matters:

- Governmental Grants requiring Local Authority co funding
- Income from Local Property Tax and Commercial Rates Projections
- Waivers re Commercial Rates
- Increase in level of arrears of commercial rates
- Provision for additional Staff
- Potential for Exceptional measures going forward for 3-5 years
- Central Government Funding
- Issues around potential income streams and resources re Defective Concrete blocks in Local Authority Houses
- Potential for savings
- Wind energy
- Local Property Tax – revised bands

There was a consensus from all the members to agree on the proposal of the Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Inishowen for 2022.

Recommendation

It was therefore recommended that in line with the requirements of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and associated regulations that the Inishowen Municipal District adopts a provisional general municipal allocation in the amount of €180,000 at this time.

On the proposal of Cllr Martin Farren, seconded by Cllr Terry Crossan, it was agreed that the Inishowen Municipal District adopts a provisional general municipal allocation in the amount of €180,000.

The members collectively thanked Richard Gibson for his efforts in preparing the Budget in very challenging times for the council.

Certified: _____
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____

Area Manager

Date: _____