

**Minutes of Council Meeting held in the Mtek Building, Knockaconny,  
Monaghan on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2007 10.00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr P McNally, Mayor

**Present:** Cllrs Bannigan, Carthy, Conlon, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, Keenan, Kieran, Maxwell, McAnespie, McElvaney, O'Brien, P. McKenna, B. McKenna, and Treanor.

Mr. D. Nelson, County Manager, Mr. M. Fitzpatrick, Mr. P. Clifford, Mr. A. King, Mr. D. Fallon, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator, Ms Ann Durnin, A/Administrative Officer and Ms. A. Mackle, A/Staff Officer.

**Apologies** Cllrs Carville, Humphreys and Martin.

*On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr McElvaney, it was agreed to extend a vote wishing Cllr Humphreys a speedy recovery from her current illness.*

**1. Minutes:**

**(a) Minutes of adjourned Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2007**

Arising out of the minutes of this meeting Cllr McElvaney said he had understood that all correspondence sent from Monaghan County Council to him would be sent by registered post and this was not happening.

Carmel Thornton, Meeting Administrator stated that the proposal had related to notice for meetings only and asked the Members for direction on this issue.

Cllr B McKenna said he had originally proposed that meeting notices only be sent by registered post.

The Mayor, Pdraig McNally ruled that all meeting notices are sent to Cllr McElvaney by registered post but that all other correspondence goes by ordinary post.

**Local Sports Partnership**

Cllr McElvaney requested that the minutes of the meeting in relation to the Local Sports Partnership be amended. He said he was making his objections known and he believed that the VEC should be involved as equal partners as per the original resolution dated 6<sup>th</sup> March 2006 which stated "That this Committee agrees to proceed with and participate in the Local Sports Partnership (as set out in 2003 application to ISC) with VEC and Co. Co. to co-sign cheques/agree payments; as part of this resolution it is recommended that an independent chairperson (agreed by Coco. and VEC) be appointed for a minimum of twelve-month period, thereafter the LSP to decide on its own chairing arrangements."

In response, the County Manager stated that the Monaghan Sports Partnership was established in accordance with terms laid down by the Irish Sports Council and the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism. If the Sports Partnership was to draw down grant aid for Sports it had to be established accordingly. Cllr McElvaney's motion was irrelevant at the present time.

### **Billy Fox Memorial Park**

Cllr Keenan said he had put his name forward to attend the visit to Lough Key Park to view how this forest park had been developed but his name was not listed in the minutes.

The Meeting Administrator said she would include his name on the list.

### **Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2007:**

Cllr McElvaney referred to page 10 of these minutes and to the reply to Cllr Martin's question in relation to the proposed new Council offices. He stated that he had voted against the decision to locate the new offices on the O'Neill's farm site and he had not been recorded and requested that he be recorded as such.

The County Manager stated that the minutes of meetings are not a verbatim account of a meeting – they are a record of decisions taken at a meeting and give a flavour of the debate, if necessary. In relation to Cllr McElvaney's query re the proposed new offices, he stated that he, in conjunction with the offices sub-committee, had been given a remit by the Council to explore the building of new offices on the O'Neill's farm site. He had met with the National Building Agency (NBA) last week – they were carrying out a feasibility study of the site – this was basically a scoping exercise which would deal with such issues as topography, location of offices on the site, parking, pedestrian/vehicular access.

***(a) “On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Keenan it was agreed that the minutes of the adjourned Council meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2007 as amended, be confirmed ”***

***(b) “On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna, seconded by Cllr Maxwell, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 be confirmed.***

***(c) On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the minutes of Development Plan meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2007 be confirmed.***

***(d) On the proposal of Cllr Keenan, seconded by Cllr O'Brien it was agreed that the minutes of the Development Plan meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007 be confirmed.***

*(e) On the proposal of Cllr P McKenna, seconded by Cllr B McKenna it was agreed that the minutes of the Development Plan meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007 be confirmed.*

The Mayor, Padraig McNally said he wished to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the Members, Executive, Staff, Press and Public during the Draft Development Plan process. He said it was the most onerous and difficult task he was involved in during his 22 years on the Council. He paid particular tribute to the planning officials who dealt with the process in a very professional manner and accepted the outcome of the democratic process. He believed in the main that it will be a very positive plan which will allow people to building in their own town or village.

The County Manager joined in the sentiments expressed by the Mayor. He also paid tribute to Mr. P.Clifford, Director, the Planners and Admin. Staff for their work on the development plan and acknowledged the co-operation of the Members. The draft plan was prepared in-house and tremendous credit is due to all concerned.

## **2. Correspondence**

- Letter from Geraldine Kane, Manager of the Primary Care Out of Hours Service, Health Board Executive regarding Doctor-on-call Service
- Letter from Stephen Benson, Consumer Affairs, Health Board Executive regarding Teen Line, Ireland.
- Letter from Cathy Bruton, Private Secretary to Mr Dick Roche, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government regarding non-national roads in Monaghan.
- Letter from Annamarie McNally, Programme Administrator, National Roads Authority acknowledging a request for a meeting with the NRA.
- Letter from Cathy Bruton, Private Secretary to Mr Dick Roche, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to non-national roads funding.
- Letter from Donal Hall, Assistant Principal, Office of the Revenue Commissioners, regarding Diesel Laundering
- Letter from Cathy Bruton, Private Secretary to Mr Dick Roche, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government acknowledging receipt of a letter in connection with dog control legislation.
- Letter from Seamus McDermott, Fund Development Manager, The County Monaghan Community Network seeking an opportunity to give a presentation to the full council.
- Letter from Patrick Schellens, Town Clerk, Geel extending an invite to the Geel Eurofestival 2007.
- Letter from M. McIvor, Town Clerk of NAAS Town Council, regarding a Notice of Motion about World Peace Day.
- Letter from Helen Walsh, A/Town Clerk of Fermoy Town Council, regarding a motion from that Council expressing it's abhorrence of this

Governments Policy of purchasing carbon credits and insists it stops immediately.

- Letter from Geoff Day, National Officer for Suicide Prevention regarding a Teenlines application for funding.
- Letter from Monaghan Association of Beds and Herts extending an invite to two representatives of Monaghan County Council to attend their 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Dance on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2007.
- Circular from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, RLS 9/2007 regarding the 2007 Grant Allocation for the Local Improvement Scheme.
- Letter from Eileen Kerr, Regional Co-ordinator for the Rehab Foundation regarding the 2007 Co. Monaghan Rehab People of the Year Awards

### **Doctor on Call Service**

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was agreed to write to the Doctors Representative Board in consultation with the Health Board Executive to provide a Doctor-on-call service between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. in the mornings and between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. in evenings*

### **National Roads Authority/Roads Matters**

On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed to send an agenda to the NRA itemising the issues the Members of Monaghan County Council wished to discuss with the NRA. This was on foot of a request from the NRA to forward an agenda to them to allow them consider the Councils request for a meeting. The Members agreed to include the following in the agenda:

Monaghan/Emyvale bypass

The proposed East West Link

N54/N2 Inner Relief route

Damage caused to regional and local roads due to the construction of the bypasses

N2 Broomfield Church – McCaheys – improvement of safety for right turning motorists

Upgrading of the Belfast – Galway Route

Rail network – provision of a line along future road routes

The Mayor said work on the dangerous junctions along the Carrickmacross Bypass was currently been rectified and he wished to acknowledge this work of the NRA and the Contractor.

### **Local Improvements Scheme 2007 Allocation:**

The Members generally welcomed the allocation of €1.8m in respect of the local improvements scheme. However some members expressed the opinion that the allocation will just maintain the level of work done under this scheme

in 2006 given that there has been a significant increase in the cost of tar and health & safety requirements.

Mr. David Fallon, Director of Services said he welcomed the increase but it would involve logistical problems for the Engineering staff, there were currently 90 schemes costed so far with 50 more awaiting costing. He anticipated that between 120/140 lanes could be improved this year. Engineering staff now had to adhere to strict Health & Safety regulations, which were delaying the completion of work. He confirmed that all applications on hands are being treated as live at the moment. In accordance with the requirements of the Scheme the Council would write to all people who submitted an application prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004 asking them to confirm that they are still interested in proceeding with their application.

It was agreed that a meeting of the L.I.S. sub committee would be held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 2.30 p.m. in the Conference Room, The Glen.

#### **Geel 2007 Eurofestival**

*On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed to send a delegation from Monaghan County Council to attend the Geel Eurofestival to be held in Geel, Belgium in August 2007*

#### **Rehab Foundation**

*On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed to refer the request from the Rehab Foundation for sponsorship of €5000 for the People of the Year Awards Ceremony to the Corporate Policy Group.*

#### **Monaghan Association Beds and Herts**

*On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna, seconded by Cllr P Treanor it was agreed that the Council be represented by the Mayor and an Official of Monaghan County Council at the Monaghan Association Beds and Herts 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Dance in Luton.*

#### **The County Monaghan Fund**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr P. McKenna it was agreed to invite a representative from the County Monaghan Fund to give a presentation to the Council at the May meeting.*

### **3. Section 183 Notice – Disposal of land at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed to approve the disposal of 135m<sup>2</sup> at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross to Patrick Byrne and Sabrina Kiernan 31, Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross in accordance with the terms of Notice dated 21<sup>st</sup> March 2007 under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001*

**4. To consider proposed variations to the County Development Plan:**

- (i) *On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed to approved the report of Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Planning dated 26 March 2007 in relation to the proposed variation to the County Development Plan 1999, (reference 06/2112) to deal with re-zoning at Drum Village.*
- (ii) *On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed to approve the report of Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Planning dated 26 March 2007 in relation to the proposed variation to the County Development Plan 1999, (reference 06/1368) to deal with re-zoning at Scotshouse Road, Newbliss.*
- (iii) *On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed to approve the report of Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Planning dated 26 March 2007 in relation to the proposed variation to the County Development Plan 1999, (reference 06/2203) to deal with re-zoning at Moraghy, Castleblayney.*

**5. Local Authority Prevention Demonstration Programme (LAPD)**

Mr. David Fallon outlined the background to the Local Authority Prevention Demonstration Programme (LAPD) which is designed to provide local authorities with funds and technical assistance to meet the challenge of promoting the waste prevention concept in their functional area. Monaghan County Council was chosen to participate in this programme and have received an allocation of €12,127. There are currently two staff members working on this project full time and they are trying to ensure less waste goes to the landfill. This project is 75% funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and 25% from the Council's own resources. The staff are very pro active in working with schools, businesses, community groups, farmers, etc advising them how to recycle effectively. He paid tribute to Mr Gerry Kelly, Senior Engineer for his work on this project and wished him well in his new position with Louth County Council.

Mr. Fallon then responded to queries raised by the Members

*On the proposal of Cllr P Treanor, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed to adopt the Local Authority Prevention Demonstration Programme (LAPD)*

**6. FAI Recruitment of Development Officer**

The Mayor, Padraig McNally referred to the presentation by the FAI at the March Council meeting and to their request to the Council to provide part-funding of €26,000 towards the recruitment of a development officer for the county. He said he was in favour of approving the request from FAI and that in respect of 2007 it would cost approximately €13,000 (half year).

*Cllr B McKenna proposed, Cllr Coyle seconded that the application from the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) for funding of €26,000 towards the recruitment of a Development Officer, be referred to the Local Sports Partnership for consideration.*

A number of members expressed agreement with Cllr B McKenna's proposal to send the FAI's application to the Local Sports Partnership. They felt that the Sports Partnership was the best group to decide on this application as there is a danger of setting a precedent here and it would only be a matter of time before applications would be submitted from other sporting groups looking for similar funding.

Cllr McElvaney said he supported the Mayors proposal as it would benefit the youth of the county. He expressed the view that there was no point referring this application to the Sports Partnership as there was limited funding available to that body.

Mr. Adge King, Director of Services confirmed that there was limited funding available to the Sports Partnership. The funding they provide is for all sporting bodies and not one particular one.

“ Cllr McElvaney proposed, Mayor McNally seconded that funding be allocated to the FAI towards the recruitment of a development officer ”

A vote by show of hands on Cllr B. McKenna's proposed resulted in 12 for 4 against.

The Mayor declared the motion carried.

*“Mayor Pdraig McNally proposed, Cllr Maxwell seconded that this Council gives a commitment to the Sports Partnership that monies will be made available for the FAI proposal should the Sports Partnership feel that it's a worthy project and deserving of support”.*

A roll call vote on Mayor McNally's proposal resulted in 4 for, 12 against.

**For-** Cllr Gallagher, Maxwell, McElvaney, McNally,  
**Against** – Cllr Bannigan, Carthy, Coyle, Crowe, Keelan, Keenan, Kierans, McAnespie, B McKenna, P McKenna, O'Brien and Treanor.  
**Absent** – Cllr Humphreys and Cllr Martin

The Mayor declared the motion defeated.

### **Urgent Business**

The Mayor said he had received a notice to deal with Urgent Business in the names of Cllrs McElvaney and Bannigan, as follows:

“That this Council calls on the Minister for Health, Mary Harney, TD, An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, TD and the Health Board Executive to immediately reach an agreed settlement with the nurses so as to ensure that patients care is not put at risk while at the same time recognising the important and valuable role our nurses play in the delivery of the Health Service”

The Council unanimously agreed to deal with the notice.

Following a brief debate the motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously.

It was agreed that the resolution would be forwarded to the Irish Nurses Organization and the Psychiatric Nurses Association.

**8. To consider recommendations from Corporate Policy Group:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed to approve the recommendations from the Corporate Policy Group meetings held on 12th March and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007.*

**9. To adopt Road Traffic (Speed Limits) (County Monaghan) Bylaws 2007**

*On the proposal of Cllr P Treanor, seconded by Cllr B Kieran it was agreed to adopt the Road Traffic (speed Limits) bylaws April 2007.*

Mr. D. Fallon responded to issues raised by the Members in relation to this item.

**10. North East Regional Hospital Location Study**

The Mayor, Padraig McNally said this issue had been raised at the Health Services Executive meeting and they were told there would be an extension until the 3<sup>rd</sup> April for contributions from the Local Authorities. He said the Members had agreed at the previous meeting to support, in principle, the proposal from Ardee Town Council that the proposed Regional Hospital would be located in Ardee.

Cllr B McKenna said they should try and look at all possible locations along the N2 from Monaghan to Ardee, rather than focus on one location.

Cllr Gallagher stated that the Members of Monaghan Town Council discussed this issue at a recent meeting and the Members felt that in light of the fact of the new Assembly agreement in the North, health issues should be looked at from a north/south perspective and in this light Monaghan would be an ideal location.

Cllr McElvaney said that Ardee was the best location for a regional hospital that Monaghan could hope for. He felt that the decision had already been taken and that the development of a new motorway to Ashbourne could only be to facilitate a new regional hospital there. He called for all services to remain in place at Monaghan hospital until the new regional hospital was up and running.



The Mayor said the Members needed to consider the impact on the whole north east region and whilst accepting that most people would prefer a regional hospital in Monaghan, Ardee would be the next best suitable location for the people from this county having regard to the new bypasses which are in place.

**14. To fix dates for meetings:**

**The following meeting dates were agreed:**

- (i) Corporate Policy Group - Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 9 a.m. in the Mtek Building.
- (ii) Local Improvement Scheme - Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 2.30 p.m. in the Conference Room, The Glen.
- (iii) The Adjourned Council meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 10.00 a.m. in the Mtek building.

**21. Questions**

**Cllr Seamus Coyle asked**

- (a) **Q.** What are the current housing waiting list for Ballybay in the following categories
  - (i) Family Housing
  - (ii) Single Person Housing
  - (iii) O.P.D. Housing

**Reply: There are 34 households with a first preference for re-housing in Ballybay.**

(j) Family Housing	13
(ii) Single Person Housing	16
(iii) O.P.D. Housing	<u>5</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

- Q.** What plans have Monaghan County Council to deal with the above waiting lists?

**Reply: It is expected that 16 social housing units of accommodation will commence construction in 2007 to be acquired under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2001.**

<b>Main Street, Ballybay</b>	<b>10 units</b>	<b>3 * 2 bed apartment</b>
		<b>3 * 3 bed duplex house</b>
		<b>2 * 1 bed apartment</b>
		<b>2 * 2 bed duplex house</b>
<b>Cornamucklaglass, Ballybay (Phase 1)</b>	<b>6 units</b>	<b>4 * 2 bed houses</b>
		<b>2 * 3 bed houses</b>

- (b) **Q.** Will Monaghan County Council consider the provision of further public lighting at Derryvally Church, Clones Road, Ballybay

Reply: The current public lighting was designed by the ESB and covered the existing two gate entrances and was considered sufficient by the designer.

- (c) **Q.** When will Monaghan County Council be erecting public lighting at
- (i) Mullyash Community Centre
  - (ii) Cremartin junction and Castleblayney/Ballybay Road

Reply: The ducting and associated civil works is planned within the next 2/3 months, Once these works are completed the ESB will be requested to erect the lights and to make the connection.

**Cllr Gary Carville asked**

- (d) **Q.** When will the much needed safety improvement works be carried out at the Scotch Corner junction?

**Reply: The works proposed will be completed before the end of May 2007**

- (e) **Q.** When will the public lighting be provided at Mullyash Day Care centre and will the Council also provide lighting at Garmony's Grove Church?

**Reply: In relation to Mullash Day centre The ducting and associated civil works is planned within the next 2/3 months, once these works are completed the ESB will be requested to erect the lights and to make the connection.**

**There is no current public lighting proposals for Garmony's Grove. The County Council can seek a cost and design from the ESB.**

**Cllr Jackie Crowe asked**

- (f) **Q.** In the interest of safety for residents of the local authority housing estate and mass goers when will Monaghan County Council install the promised footpath from the main road to the chapel at Oram?

**Reply: It is proposed to commence these works in the next 4/6 weeks.**

- (g) **Q.** Will Monaghan County Council install ramps at the entrance of the Bree Housing Estate in the interest of safety for children and adults from speeding cars?

**Reply: The county council will examine the situation in order to assess suitability and location of the proposed ramps.**

(h) **Q.** Will Monaghan Co. Council consider turning the green area adjacent to the Industrial park at upper Bree into much needed car parking spaces for the residents of upper Bree?

**Reply: The area will be examined and will be evaluated to see if it is feasible for a parking area in relation to roads safety.**

(i) **Q.** When will Monaghan Co. Council take in charge the roads, footpaths and lighting at the Willows estate in Castleblayney.

**Reply: In accordance with section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, Monaghan County Council will initiate the procedures under section 11 of the Roads Act, 1993 to formally take in charge the open spaces, car parks, sewers, watermain, drains and public lighting at the Willows estate, Castleblayney, with immediate effect.**

## **24. Conferences**

Cllr B. McKenna proposed, Cllr Treanor seconded that attendance at conferences should be based on proportionality of party numbers.

Following a debate on the motion it was agreed that with effect from the May Council meeting 2007 the following criteria would apply to future attendance by the members at Conferences.

1. Sinn Fein – maximum of 3 Members per conference,  
LAMA/GCCC Conference – maximum 4 Members per conference
2. Fine Gael – maximum of 3 Members attendance per conference  
LAMA/GCCC Conference – maximum 4 Members attendance per conference
3. Fianna Fail – maximum of 2 Members attendance per conference  
LAMA/GCCC Conference – maximum of 3 Members attendance per conference
4. Independent – to attend one in every three conferences
5. Mayor – to attend any conference of his/her choice
6. It was also agreed that the Council would not be represented at future conferences organised by Kadenza Consultancies

It was agreed that the Members indicated would represent the Council at the following conferences:

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Approx. cost Per member	Members Selected
LAMA	Annual Spring Conference “Meeting the Challenge – Providing the Solutions”	Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney, Co Kerry	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2007	€970	Robbie Gallagher John O’Brien Seamus Coyle Benny Kieran Padraig McNally Pat Treanor John Keenan Pat McKenna Owen Bannigan Hugh McElvaney
Irish Rural Dwellers Association	Planning Conference 2007	Brehon Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry	18 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2007	€1,000	Vincent P. Martin Seamus Coyle John O’Brien Robbie Gallagher Benny Kieran Padraig McNally Brian McKenna John Keenan David Maxwell Pat McKenna Owen Bannigan Hugh McElvaney
Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly	8 <sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Assembly Conference	Killashee House Hotel, Naas, Co Kildare	20 <sup>th</sup> April 2007	€360	Padraig McNally
Kadenza Consultancies Ltd	The Local Government Housing Service	Silver Tassie Hotel, Milford Road, Letterkenny, Co Donegal	27 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2007	€660	Benny Kieran Padraig McNally John Keenan David Maxwell Owen Bannigan Hugh McElvaney Pat McKenna

## 19. Presentation by Failte Ireland North West

The Mayor, Padraig McNally thanked Ray McSharry, Chairman of Failte Ireland North West and Mr Paul McLoone, General Manger of Failte Ireland North West for attending the council meeting.

Mr Ray McSharry said he wished to complement Monaghan County Council on their excellent plan for Tourism in county Monaghan. He said they intended to incorporate this plan into their Development Plan and it allows them to identify potential tourism products. He hoped these plans would allow them to co-ordinate Monaghan County Councils tourism plan with Failte Irelands, Leaders etc to provide a comprehensive

tourism package. The following areas needed to be addressed to increase the tourism potential of the region

- (i) Accessibility, Roads, Bus Routes, Air travel are all areas that are been addressed but need to be improved
- (ii) Cross Border – Tourism in the area needs to be developed on a cross border basis.
- (iii) Partnership –Partnerships need to be developed among the various interest groups, the Local Authorities, Failte Ireland, Leader etc to develop flagship projects.
- (iv) Funding – Failte Ireland intend to match and double any funding Monaghan County Council allocates in its budget for tourism.

Mr Paul McLoone said that prior to the publication of the National Development Plan, an audit was carried out over the whole country of Tourism Products and Monaghan came 24<sup>th</sup> out of 26. Under the current plan it is hoped to promote tourism with the assistance of the Members. The tourism potential of the region needs to be developed on a cross border basis and the local authorities together with Failte Ireland must plan how best to market the region as a product. It is their intention to add €180,000 to the Councils contribution of €60,000 to enhance the local tourism product. The new tourism board allows for more access to funds and their role is now a supportive role. This money is mainly to spend on Product Development, which was weak in County Monaghan and on marketing.

The County Manager thanked Mr McSharry and Mr McLoone for their presentations. He said there was a new emphasis on marketing the uniqueness of County Monaghan and Cavan. He welcomed the news that if Monaghan County Council provided €60,000 in its budget for tourism, Failte Ireland will double this and for this year alone there is nearly €250,000 to fund new projects. He understood that funding of 75% of product cost would be available. We can now put together a programme of expenditure. He wished to complement Dynpna Condra on the excellent work she has done in producing the tourism plan for County Monaghan.

The Members put forward the following queries and comments

- Would Failte Ireland consider upgrading the Airport in Enniskillen to allow this region to become more accessible to air tourism?
- The marketing of County Monaghan has been flawed in the past and this issue needs to be addressed by a national tourism body on a cross border basis
- Re-development of the Ulster Canal would offer a unique tourism product for this region
- There is a need to re-establish the local tourism committees to address the needs of local tourism.
- Ballybay Wetlands area, the Patrick Kavanagh centre the Bragan Mountain need to have a large amount of money put into them to market them on an international market.
- It has been established that County Monaghan is number 24 on the tourism product scale and while the funding is welcomed, perhaps a larger injection of cash is needed into this county to upgrade it to the level of its surrounding counties.

- Weekend based tourism and city/town breaks are the new tourism product and this needs to be exploited, our water based activities need to be marketed, walk ways and the development of parks are all crucial in interesting any potential tourists to the region.
- The current Bus Route by Bus Eireann needs to be reviewed, many of the express buses no longer stop in County Monaghan and this is hampering the transportation of tourists.
- Angling tourism has declined in the region due to the reduction in fish stocks and poorly stocked rivers and lakes, this needs to be readdressed.

Ray McSharry thanked the Members for their comments and said they are trying to address the tourism issues in the region by doubling any contribution the local authority makes in its annual budget for tourism development. They have talked with Fermanagh District Council about developing the regional airport but have had little response so far. They are also sourcing EU funding and are establishing tourism links on a cross border basis. The new Failte Ireland body has been set up with representation from local authorities and County Managers. They chair this body on a rota basis and currently Monaghan's County Manager is chair.

## **20. Presentation from Coillte**

The Mayor, Pdraig McNally welcomed Mr PJ Fitzpatrick, Mr George Byrne and Mr Barry Cohen, Coillte to the Council Meeting.

Mr P J Fitzpatrick, District Manager of the North East outlined Coillte role in this region and made the following points

Coillte operates as the largest landowner in Monaghan in an economic, social and environmental manner.

**Economic** – They carry out the business of forestry on a commercial basis

All operations form planting/replacing to clear felling

**Social** – Working with communities

**Environment** – Identifying area of estate with a conservation element

Within County Monaghan there are 3458ha of Coillte land, 159ha is unplanted, 3096ha is forested and 408ha is used for biodiversity sites. There are large amounts of diversity among the planted species and he outlined the amount of planting which occurred over the years.

**Recreation** – The following parks have recreation facilities, Derrycorry – Millennium Site, Rossmore Forest Park, Senator Billy Fox Memorial Park, Shercock and Black Island whiles Castleshane forest park has a walking trail.

**Wild Deer** – Coillte did not introduce Wild Deer but they are always prepared to cooperate in controlling them. Early in 2000 Duchas, Cavan and Monaghan County Council and Coillte had a meeting in Cootehill to discuss the situation. In June 2002 Coillte met with Duchas and again in March 2003 another meeting was held between Duchas, Cavan and Monaghan County Council and Coillte. The following work was carried out as a result of the meeting

**Signs** - The County Council erected additional Deer signs

**Fencing** - Coillte repaired and erected fencing at high risk spots, they carried out deer culls and developed deer lawns within the forest

**Census** - Duchas carried out a census of the deer population and agreed to cull numbers with Coillte

Mr Fitzpatrick thanked the County Council staff for their cooperation and assistance over the years.

The Members thanked Mr Fitzpatrick for his presentation and asked was there a possibility of a fence been erected along the Rockcorry/Cootehill Road to prevent deer from going on to the road way and causing potential traffic accidents.

Mr Fitzpatrick replied that they are not the only land user along that road, there are other state sites also along the road for example the National Wildlife Service who must also be approached regarding this issue. Coillte could not afford to erect a fence the whole way along this road. Erecting a fence could cause a number of potential problems including problems with deer trying to get back into the site if they got loose on the road. He said they had held meetings with the various interested groups previously and they should be approached over the current problem, Coillte would try to assist them.

***On the proposal of Cllr Kieran seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed to write to Duchas, the National Wildlife Service, Cavan County Council and Coillte to arrange another meeting to discuss the ongoing problem with loose deer along the Rockcorry/Cootehill Road.***

The meeting then concluded.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meara**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Meetings Administrator**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_