

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Board Room, Clones Credit Union, Clones, Co. Monaghan on Monday 7th December, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Chair: Cllr H. Humphreys, Mayor.

Present: Cllrs. Bannigan, Carthy, Carville, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, Maxwell, McElvaney, B. McKenna, S. McKenna, McNally, Murray, O'Brien, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor and S. Treanor.

Mr. D. Nelson, County Manager, Mr. P. Clifford, Mr. A. King, Mr. D. Fallon, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

At the outset the President of Clones Credit Union, Maura Greenan, extended a warm welcome to the Council. She said that Clones Credit Union was delighted to host the Council meeting and she hoped that the Council would have a successful meeting and would enjoy its time in this venue.

The Mayor thanked the President, Board and Manager of Clones Credit Union for hosting the Council meeting. In addressing those present she stated that during the early 19th and 20th Century Clones was a major railway junction where routes from Armagh, Enniskillen, Cavan and Dundalk converged. In 1959 Clones Credit Union was one of the first Credit Unions to be set up in Ireland.

For a small border town it is on the world map for a number of reasons, the most notable being the World Championship success of Boxer, Barry McGuigan and Kevin McBride. Author Patrick McCabe also hails from Clones as does playwright Eugene McCabe. The family of the famous Lipton's Tea also originated from Clones.

Moving on to present times we have a beautiful new library that houses the library headquarters for the county, a new fire station, a new courthouse and a state of the art Technology Park. There are excellent schools and the development of the new sport complex will bring huge benefits to the town.

These are all positives that we must build upon going forward, we have the facilities but what we need is inward investment to create the most important thing which is jobs. We are an important strategic link in the road from Belfast to Galway and we have a lot to offer in an East West link from Sligo to Dundalk.

The community spirit and can do attitude of the Clones people carried them through difficult times as a border town during the troubles. And now more than every before, Clones has a very strong, active and thriving community and voluntary sector. The work of volunteers in Clones has been outstanding and it often goes un-recognized but without their effort Clones would not be what it is today and there is no better example of this than the Credit Union where we are today.

Clones Credit Union is one of the great success stories of this town. It is a well run and very successful Credit Union that this year is celebrating 50 years dedicated service to the people of this area.

And in the run up to Christmas I want to take this opportunity to warn people against those who call to your doorsteps with catalogues offering loans for a variety of different things. Beware, they are moneylenders who charge interest rates of 150% plus and when you sign up they will continue to offer you more loans at exorbitant interest rates. The problem is, when you get involved with them, it is very hard to get away from them. The Credit Union works closely with the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) and is here to help.

Finally the people of the Clones area can rest assured that we in the County Council will be working hard on your behalf to meet the challenges of 2010.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr R. Gallagher it was agreed that the minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 2nd November, 2009 be confirmed.

2. Correspondence

The following correspondence was circulated to the Members:

- Letter from the Minister for Education in relation to resolution from the Council regarding Monaghan General Hospital.
- Letter from the Minister for Education in relation to third level fees.
- Letter from the Department of Defence in relation to resolution from the Council regarding Monaghan General Hospital.
- Letter of acknowledgement from Office of An Taoiseach in relation to Councils resolution regarding National Carer's Strategy.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Social and Family Affairs in relation to the Councils resolution regarding National Carer's Strategy.
- Letter from Cllr John O'Brien enclosing letter from Minister Brendan Smith in relation to the Department of Agriculture Office in Ballybay.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Transport in relation to the N2 Clontibret to the Border Road Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Finance in relation to the VAT rate.
- Letter from the Department of Social and Family Affairs in relation to the payment of the Christmas Bonus to Social Welfare recipients.
- Letter from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the micro chipping of dogs.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment in relation to the Job Initiative Scheme
- Letter from the National Roads Authority in relation to the transfer of functions relating to regional and local roads from the Minister/Department of Transport to the NRA.
- Letter from David Moore, Manager Monaghan Leisure Complex thanking the Council for its vote of congratulations to him on winning Leisure Centre Manager of the Year 2009.

- Letter from Peadar McMahon, Chairman Monaghan Community Alliance in relation to the visit by An Taoiseach to Monaghan recently.
- Resolution from South Tipperary County Council calling for the abolition of FAS.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Finance in relation to carbon tax.
- Letter from Minister Barry Andrews TD in relation to Council's request to him to meet a deputation during his recent visit to Inniskeen.
- Letter from Mr. Eamon Gilmore, T.D., Leader of the Labour Party in relation to the proposed amalgamation of VEC's
- Letter of acknowledgement from the HSE in relation the H1N1 vaccination programme.
- Letter to Cllr David Maxwell in relation to indemnity for GP's participating in the H1N1 vaccination programme.
- Letter from the Monaghan SPCA thanking the Council for its contribution to the Society in 2009.
- Resolution from Clones Town Council calling on the Minister for Finance to reduce the VAT rate in order to help overcome trading difficulties being experienced in the border region.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed to adopt the resolution from Clones Town Council calling on the Minister for Finance to reduce the VAT rate in order to help overcome trading difficulties being experienced in the border region.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Waterford Town Council requesting the withdrawal of proceedings against Sean Garland by the American Government.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Bannigan it was agreed that the Council commend the Taoiseach and the Minister for Education and Science on making such an important announcement in relation to the proposed education campus to be located at the former Military Barracks in Monaghan Town.

On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that the Council write to the Taoiseach's office requesting that office that the Mayor and the appropriate Town Mayor would be advised of all future visits of An Taoiseach to County Monaghan.

Monaghan Hospital:

The members considered the email from Mr. Peadar McMahon of the Monaghan Community Alliance. A debate took place on the resolution previously adopted by the Council in relation to protesting at events being attended by Government Ministers when they had refused to meet with a deputation from the Council on the day of the visit.

A number of Members expressed the view that such protests were not effective and that the Council should re-visit the matter.

The Mayor read Standing Orders 19.1 and 19.2 in relation to the rescinding of resolutions passed by the Council in the preceding six months.

Cllr Gallagher stated that he would put down such a motion for the next meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that the Corporate Policy Group should examine what other arrangements might be put in place in relation to the Monaghan Hospital campaign.

3. To approve appointments to Co. Monaghan Vocational Education Committee

The Members considered the minutes of the Consultation Meeting held on 23rd November, 2009 which had been circulated with the agenda.

Position No. 1 (Male)

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that Mr. Paul Flynn, Derrynaloobinagh, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan be appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

Position No. 2 (Male)

Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr S. McKenna seconded that Mr. Tom Freeman, Scalkill, Magheracloone, be appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

Cllr McElvaney proposed, Cllr Bannigan seconded that Mr. Pat McKenna, Derryleabeg, Emyvale be appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

A vote by show of hands resulted as follows:

Mr. Tom Freeman 8 for 11 against 1 abstention

Mr. Pat McKenna 12 for 5 against 3 abstentions

As Pat McKenna had received a majority of votes the Mayor declared him appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

The two male appointees to County Monaghan VEC were confirmed as Paul Flynn and Pat McKenna.

Female nominees:

Cllr Carville proposed, Cllr Bannigan seconded that Ms. Cathy Shevlin, 20, Park Road, Castleblayney be appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

Cllr Treanor proposed, Cllr S. McKenna seconded that Ms. Gillian Aspell, Cara Street, Clones, be appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

Cllr McNally proposed, Cllr Gallagher seconded that Ms. Rosaleen O'Hanlon, Creevy Oliver, Carrickmacross be appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr Crowe seconded that Ms. Mary Lynch, C/o Youth Work Ireland, Unit 3 Castleblayney Enterprise Centre, Castleblayney be appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

A recorded vote on the four proposals resulted as follows – each Member having two votes:

For **Cathy Shevlin** – Cllrs Bannigan, Carville, Humphreys, Maxwell, McElvaney and Murray. **Total 6**

For **Gillian Aspell** – Cllrs Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Crowe, Keelan, B. McKenna, S. McKenna and P. Treanor **Total 8**

For **Rosaleen O'Hanlon** – Cllrs Bannigan, Carville, Coyle, Gallagher, Humphreys, McElvaney, McNally, Murray, O'Brien, O'Hanlon. **Total 10**

For **Mary Lynch** – Cllrs Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Crowe, Keelan, B. McKenna, S. McKenna and P. Treanor. **Total 8**

Abstentions: Cllrs Coyle, Gallagher, Maxwell, McNally, O'Brien and O'Hanlon abstained on one vote each and Cllr S. Treanor abstained on two votes.

Total 8

As Rosaleen O'Hanlon had received a majority of votes the Mayor declared her appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

As Cathy Shevlin received the least number of votes it was agreed that she be eliminated and that a further vote be taken between Mary Lynch and Gillian Aspell.

A further recorded vote resulted as follows:

For **Mary Lynch** – Cllrs Bannigan, Carville, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Crowe, Humphreys, Keelan, Maxwell, McElvaney, B. McKenna, S. McKenna, Murray, O'Brien and S. Treanor. **Total 15**

For **Gillian Aspell** – Cllrs Coyle and P. Treanor **Total 2**

Abstentions – Cllrs Gallagher, McNally and O'Hanlon. **Total 3**

As Mary Lynch had received a majority of votes the Mayor declared her appointed to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee.

The two female appointees to County Monaghan Vocational Education Committee were confirmed as Rosaleen O'Hanlon and Mary Lynch.

4. Disposal of land at Lisanisk, Carrickmacross

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Murray, it was agreed that the Council would discuss this matter 'in Committee'.

The County Manager stated that in accordance with the decision of the Council at the November meeting he had written to Mr. McConnon's Solicitor requesting confirmation

- (i) that Mr. McConnon did not require an access from the piece of ground onto the N2 road.
- (ii) that each party would bear their own costs.
- (iii) that he (Mr. McConnon) had taken legal advice on the matter.

Mr. McConnon's Solicitor wrote back advising

- (i) that Mr. McConnon was offering €2,500 for the piece of ground
- (ii) that the Council would bear the cost of the High Court proceedings
- (iii) that Mr. McConnon was not looking for access onto the N2.

The Council's Solicitor indicated that the costs in the case could be in the region of €20,000 and the Manager stated that he could not commit the Council to such expenditure. The Council had acted properly in all aspects of the CPO process.

Cllr McNally proposed, Cllr Keelan seconded that the Council offer the portion of land back to Mr. McConnon at €2,500 the same price it was offered to a third party in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 notice served in 2005.

The County Manager stated that he would require that the offer of €2,500 would be in full and final settlement and would be subject to High Court proceedings against the Council being withdrawn.

Cllr McNally's motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously.

At this point the Council agreed to return to public session.

5. Strategic Policy Committees

Following the adoption of the Scheme for the Strategic Policy Committees at the October Council meeting, the Council sought nominations from the Community Forum and the four National Pillars, Farming, Environment, Business, Trade Union. The make up of each SPC was agreed, as follows:

Housing SPC (10 Members)

Cllr. Matt Carthy, Chair
Cllr P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr Heather Humphreys
Cllr Aidan Murray
Cllr Seamus Treanor
One Town Council (*to be confirmed*)
Kate Mullaney (Environment Sector)
Tom Freeman (Community/Voluntary Sector)
Paul McGinn (Community/Voluntary Sector)
Siobhan McKenna (Community/Voluntary Sector)

Planning and Development SPC (11 Members)

Cllr David Maxwell, Chair
Cllr Owen Bannigan
Cllr Seamus Coyle
Cllr Sean Conlon
Cllr Pat Treanor
One Town Council (*to be confirmed*)
Christopher McGreal (Business)
One Business (*to be confirmed*)
Colm McBride (Local Development/Construction)
Heinz Lorenz (Environment Sector)
Eamon McNally (Community/Voluntary Sector)

Environment & Infrastructure SPC (13 Members)

Cllr Brian McKenna (Chair)
Cllr Noel Keelan
Cllr Pdraig McNally
Cllr Hugh McElvaney
Cllr John O'Brien
Two Town Council (*to be confirmed*)
Kathleen Ward (Farming)
Brian McDonald (NFGWS)
Sonny McDermott (Community/Voluntary Sector)
Owen Finnegan (Environment Sector)
One Trade Union (*to be confirmed*)
One Business (*to be confirmed*)

Social Cultural Community & Voluntary (12 Members)

Cllr Robbie Gallagher (Chair)
Cllr Paudge Connolly
Cllr Gary Carville
Cllr Sheila McKenna
Cllr Jackie Crowe
One Town Council (*to be confirmed*)
Packie Kelly (Community/Voluntary Sector)
Ann Mullen (Community/Voluntary Sector)

Loretta Patlabiene (Community/Voluntary Sector)
Lorna Morgan (Cultural)
Pat Joe Connolly (Cultural)
Gavin Shipley (Environment Sector)

6. To approve nomination of Traveller Representatives to the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the Council approve the nomination of the following persons to the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

Helen Thompson (Community Development Worker for Monaghan Traveller Support Group)
Francis Mc Donald (Monaghan Traveller Support Group member)
Linda O'Leary (Monaghan Traveller Support Group member)
Rosaleen Crumlish, Residential Caravan Park, Gortakeegan
Alex Crumlish, Residential Caravan Park, Gortakeegan
Barney Crumlish, Residential Caravan Park, Gortakeegan
Barbara Crumlish, Residential Caravan Park, Gortakeegan

Local Authority Officials

Rosemary Mc Manus, Senior Executive Officer and Mary Walker, Social Worker, Housing Section, Monaghan County Council.

7. To receive minutes of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee meeting held on 29th April 2009

The Council noted the minutes of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee meeting held on 29th April 2009.

8. To fix date for Civic Reception for World Handball Champions

It was agreed that the Council would host a Civic Reception on Tuesday 12th January, 2009 at 6.30 p.m. to honour the following

Shane Murphy, World Boxing Champion
Padraig McKenna, World Handball Champion
Darren Doherty, World Handball Champion
Donaghmoynne Ladies GFC, All Ireland Club Football Champions

9. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector

There was no discussion under this item.

10. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences:

The Members noted the reports from Cllrs Bannigan, Carville, Coyle, Crowe, McElvaney, McNally and Murray in respect of their attendance at the following conferences:

- LAMA Winter Seminar, Limerick
- 7th National Tourism Conference, Carlow
- AMAI Annual Conference, Killarney, Co. Kerry.
- Local Government Seminar for Councillors, Limerick
- Role of Community & Voluntary Fora, Cavan Crystal Hotel, Cavan.

11. Business submitted by County Manager

Re-location of ESB sub-stations:

The Manager advised the Members that the Council had been contacted by the ESB who are proposing to re-locate sub-stations outside Ballybay town from one side of the road to the other and they are facing development contributions in excess of €100,000. The ESB are opposed to these charges and have stated that the Council is anti-development.

River Basin Management Plan:

The Manager advised the Members that the draft River Basin Management Plan will be available in early January and it is necessary that the Members consider it in detail. It is the function of the elected members to adopt the plan. He suggested that a special meeting be held for this purpose. It was agreed that a special meeting would be held on Tuesday 12th January, 2009 from 2.00 – 6.00 p.m.

Flooding in the county:

The Manager referred to the detailed report on flooding which had been circulated at the meeting.

Cllrs Conlon and Gallagher referred to flooding at Seveagh and requested that the Council liaise with the Office of Public Works to find a solution to the problem at this location. Cllr Gallagher also requested that the Council prepare an action plan to alleviate flooding in Monaghan town so as to ensure that businesses are able to stay open.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that the Council write to the Office of Public Works inviting an official from that office to a future Council meeting to discuss flooding in County Monaghan.

Mr. D. Fallon, Director responded to issues raised by the members.

The members complimented local authority for the efficient way in which they had responded to flooding incidents across the county.

12. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meeting held on 2 November 2009

There were no matters raised out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2nd November 2009.

13. Questions:

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

1. (a) Will the Council put in place public lighting at the Bridge on the Donaghmoyne road, as currently the public lighting there, is totally inadequate; should this work not have been carried out as part of the construction of the Carrickmacross Bypass (Kavanagh Way)?

Reply: *The Council have raised this matter with the Consultants acting as the Employers Representative for the closing out of the design and build contract for the scheme.*

- (b) Will the Council put in place signage for Lisanisk on the Donaghmoyne Road?

Reply: *Under the regional road signage scheme towns and villages are sign posted on the regional road. Otherwise the local road number is signposted.*

2. In relation to the Non Principal Private Residence charge of €200 per property that has been introduced recently, how much funding has been raised in County Monaghan to date; will the people of the county get the benefit of this funding?

Reply: *As of 30th November 2009 the amount received in respect of properties in County Monaghan is €311,000. This amount will be forwarded to Monaghan County Council to partly offset the reduction in the Local Government Fund.*

3. Has any progress been made in tandem with Louth County Council in order to give Killanny village status; has our Council officials met with their counterparts in Louth in order to progress this issue?

Reply: *Following a direction by the elected members of Monaghan County Council at the April council meeting wrote to Louth County Council on the 20th April 2009 asking them to consider designating Killanny a defined settlement during the making of their development plan. The Senior Planner from Monaghan spoke to the Senior Planner from Louth at that time, and advised him of the views of the elected members.*

The Louth County Development Plan 2009 – 2015 was adopted by the elected members of Louth County Council on the 16th of November 2009. Killanny was not designated a settlement in the plan.

Cllr N. Keelan asked: (contd.)

4. Given that rents in the private sector have reduced significantly in recent times, has Monaghan County Council any plans to reduce rents for people living in Council accommodation?

Reply: *The rents of local authority tenants are linked to household income and no rent increase will apply if an income increase does not occur. If at any time there is a reduction in the total household income of a council tenant, the rent is reviewed in accordance with the scheme.*

5. Given the very poor condition of many of the approach roads into Carrickmacross town as a result of the upgrading of the Sewerage Collection Network, have the Council a plan in place to have these roads resurfaced and put back to an acceptable standard; what plans have the Council to resurface the Main Street of the town; when is the contract due to be completed, including the upgrading of the Treatment Plant, as people are becoming impatient with the ongoing delays in getting around the town?

Reply: *Monaghan Co. Co. will undertake permanent reinstatement following completion of all pipe-laying and associated works on a road by road (sectional basis). Permanent reinstatement is complete on Farney Street, Chapel Lane, Parnell Street, O'Neill Street and Upper Ballybay Road.*

The pipelines contract provides for the permanent re-instatement of trenches only. Permanent trench reinstatement is contingent on the completion of all pipe-laying works by the appointed contractor P & S Civil Works Ltd. There are presently no plans to undertake full width 'kerb to kerb' reinstatement on Main Street. However, permanent trench reinstatement will be undertaken on Main Street in 2010.

The pipelines contract will be complete by the end of 2010.

Monaghan Co. Co. has made a technical submission to the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) in relation to Carrickmacross Wastewater Treatment Plant. The submission proposes an interim solution to the plant deficiencies by advancing elements of the main contract. Monaghan Co. Co. currently await DEHLG approval to proceed with the proposed advanced works.

Cllr J. O'Brien asked:

6. Will Monaghan County Council look at the possibility of putting a speed limit in place at Cremartin? There are a number of dwellings located in the area, also a football field, community centre and 2 public houses. There are a number of children using the football fields and the community centre.

Reply: *Monaghan County Council previously examined a proposal for speed limits in this area in the past and recommended that as the area was considered*

rural the current speed limit of 80kmph should remain. As the matter has been raised again recently the Council have consulted with the Garda Superintendent in Carrickmacross about the issue. The council will await a response from the Superintendent before making any further recommendations to the Speed Limit Committee.

Cllr J. O'Brien asked (contd):

7. Can Monaghan County Council look into putting some safety measures in place on the Ballybay to Doohamlet Road on a very dangerous stretch of road where a serious accident has taken place?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council will examine the accident statistics for this area and determine if any specific safety measures are needed along this stretch of road.*

8. Can Monaghan County Council repair the railing on the Monaghan Road out of Ballybay across from the graveyard which has been damaged?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council will repair this barrier.*

Cllr P. McNally asked:

9. Further to my question which appeared as No. 1 on the October Agenda, what critical information was not included with the application regarding Billy Brennan's Loft, Inniskeen, as the applicant made the same application with the same material in 2008 and was successful.

Reply: *The applicant failed to include a quotation for the cost of the proposed works for which grant aid was sought.*

10. (a) When does the Council expect the Civic Amenities Centre in Carrickmacross to be ready for use?
(b) How many recyclables will it cater for?

Reply: *Construction of the Civic Amenity Site is expected to be completed by the beginning of the summer of 2010. On handover, the facility will need to be fitted out and an Operator appointed. It is expected that the facility will handle a broad range of recyclables – the precise details of which will, however, need to be discussed with prospective operators.*

11. Has this Council made any progress with regards to having the Carrickmacross/Drumconrath Road (LT 04800) upgraded to a regional road?

Reply: *At the Road Area Meeting in February last the members requested the Council to carry out traffic counts on this road. These counts will be discussed at the Next Road Area Committee meeting. The reclassification of the Road will require the approval of the Department of Transport*

Cllr P. McNally asked:

12. Has this Council finalised plans for the Essexford/Ballymackney section of the Dundalk/Carrickmacross Road (R178) as it was explained to us some time ago that this could be Phase II of the improvement works almost complete at Rosslough, Louth?

Reply: *This section of the R-178 is included in the brief for consultants appointed to review the Dundalk Cavan Route.*

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

13. (a) Will Monaghan County Council consider putting a Button Roundabout in place at Ballyalbany crossroads particularly in view of the fact that there appears to be adequate space to do so?

Response: *This junction was assessed under the Low Cost Safety Improvement Scheme in recent years and the current 4 way stop system was installed. Installation of Mini/Button roundabouts are normally applicable to urban areas.*

(b) Where crossroads have through roads of equal standing and stop signs at each entry point to the crossroads would the Council consider button roundabout systems?

Reply: *See response to item 13 (a) above.*

14. (a) In view of the fact that Radon Gas is linked to 200 lung cancer deaths each year and the fact that some areas of the country have higher levels of Radon Gas than others and that Local Authorities have general responsibility for testing their own housing stock, what plans are there to carry out testing for Radon Levels on it's own stock?

Reply: *In May 2009 the DEHLG, introduced a Programme for the Retrofitting of Insulation and Other Energy Efficiency Measures in vacant local authority stock. The programme includes for the installation of radon protection measures e.g. external sump, radon testing and remediation works. The Council will examine options for testing occupied stock subject to the necessary funding being provided in 2010.*

(b) What level of testing for Radon Gas has been carried out to date on Monaghan County Council's own housing stock?

Reply: *The Council has not carried out any testing to date.*

15. What timescale or plans are there in place to repair a 15 metre section of footpath, opposite Murray's shop in Ballinode village, and to further ensure that this section of footpath will be wheelchair accessible?

Reply: *It is intended to complete these works in the next month.*

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

16. Are there any plans to extend public lighting for a further 300metres on the Mullaghmore West Road at Ballinode village?

Reply: *There are currently no plans to extend public lighting in this location.*

17. What steps does Monaghan County Council intend taking to ensure that flooding will be kept to a minimum particularly in areas subject to frequent flooding e.g. Monaghan town and other areas?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council deploy their emergency services and general personnel to clear debris washed into drains from flood waters, provide sand bags to protect properties and pump water from properties where feasible.*

The Council also carry out planned maintenance and improvement works on drainage systems having regard to the resources available.

The Council have applied to OPW for funding for remedial works and flood assessments studies for some of the areas affected by flooding including Monaghan town.

Property owners should visit the OPW site www.flooding.ie on advice on how they can protect properties from flooding and in the case where water courses are within a property the responsibilities on owners to ensure that water flow is not impeded.

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

18. As a result of the recent flooding throughout the county, please indicate the number of call-outs to the Fire and Rescue Services and Civil Defence from persons seeking assistance with pumping out of floodwaters from their residence. What degree of support has been sought from the Departmental Task Force on Flooding to implement remedial measures in Monaghan town and areas of the county worst affected?

Reply:

Between the 18th and 23rd November the Fire service received 11 callouts:

<i>18th November</i>	<i>3 calls</i>
<i>19th November</i>	<i>3 calls</i>
<i>20th November</i>	<i>3 calls</i>
<i>21st November</i>	<i>1 call</i>
<i>23rd November</i>	<i>1 call</i>

The breakdown in areas is as follows:

<i>Ballybay area</i>	<i>1 call</i>
<i>Castleblayney area</i>	<i>1 call</i>
<i>Carrickmacross area</i>	<i>2 calls</i>

Clones area *3 calls*
Monaghan area *4 calls*

5 calls were to rescue people from vehicles.

2 calls were to help evacuate persons from their dwelling. The Civil Defence assisted at one of these to rescue persons by boat.

4 calls were to alleviate general flooding.

Monaghan County Council have not been notified of any available funding for remedial measures through the Departmental Task Force on Flooding.

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

19. Would the Council inspect the trees along the streets in Glaslough with a view to pruning them as local people believe that some of them have grown to the extent that they are now blocking public lighting in the village?

Reply: *The Council have carried out some pruning of trees in Glaslough. Further works will be investigated in consultation with the Tidy Towns Committee.*

20. Could the Council inspect the footpath between the new houses in Tyholland, up to the church and on to the older houses at Killyneil with regard to excess growth of weeds and grass along same?

Reply: *The Council will carry out weed control measures at this location.*

21. Would the Council liaise with the relevant bodies to ensure that there would be better signposting on the N12 for the MTek complex?

Reply: *Signage has been ordered for this location.*

22. In relation to the recent flooding:
(a) Would the Council liaise with Monaghan Town Council in relation to the development of an action or emergency plan to deal with incidents such as the flooding that occurred recently at the traffic lights and in front of the Shopping Centre with a view to devising speedy solutions to, for example, pump away large volumes of water so that businesses can remain open and business in the town for traders and local consumers would be as little affected as possible?

Reply: *The Council will continue to liaise with Monaghan Town Council and the Emergency Services to see if short term measures such as pumping can be put in place.*

- (b) Would the Council seek to put in place and publicise a contact number for each of the electoral areas for people to contact in the event of emergencies such as the recent flooding?

Reply: *Contact numbers for the Area and Town Council Offices are available in the Local Government Section of the Telephone Directory. Also included are contact numbers for the Council's General Services Supervisors (Overseers) and the Town Foremen who can be contacted for emergencies out of hours.*

Cllr G. Carville asked:

23. In view of recent flooding, what is the update in relation to the review of the management of the Louth Co Council operated waterworks at Toome and its implications for the roads and lands in that area and what does Monaghan County Council propose to do in the short term to address the needs of the local residents and road users who were stranded by the recent flooding? Has considerations been given to deepening the channel between Lough Muckno and Lough Ross?

Reply: *The Council has carried out some initial surveying and monitoring of the flood levels of the lake and it appears that there are two significant factors, the level of the roads adjacent to the lake in relation to the maximum flood level and the capacity of the downstream channels from Lough Muckno to Lough Ross and from Lough Ross to the Fane River to deal with the flood waters in the catchment area.*

An application for funding of a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment and Management study was made to the OPW under the Minor Flood Mitigation Works and Studies scheme, but was unsuccessful in 2009. The OPW however indicated that unsuccessful application might be reviewed later in 2009 for funding in 2010 subject to the availability of resources.

24. What is the update in relation to the completion of accommodation works and other associated issues along the Castleblayney By-Pass? What is the current position re: GAMA?

Reply: *Accommodation works are substantially complete. GTCL have assured Monaghan County Council that they will have all outstanding works completed early in 2010.*

Cllr S. McKenna asked:

25. Could the Council take steps in the later months of the year, on an annual basis, to clean outlets, gullies and gratings on main and secondary roads which become blocked with leaves and debris, so as the surface water can run off quickly, as this is resulting in potholes forming due to flooding and is a driving hazard to motorists, etc.

Reply: *The Council carry out these works on an annual basis. However if there is a specific problem in certain locations these should be brought to the attention of the Area Office.*

Cllr S. McKenna asked:

26. Could the mobile road sweeper visit the local villages more often, as local people have had, on occasion, to sweep these areas themselves on a voluntary basis?

Reply: *The Council operate a programme where the mobile sweeper visits the towns. This programme is operated within the resources available. However if there is a specific issue contact should be made with the Area Office.*

Cllr P. Treanor asked:

27. What plans can Monaghan County Council put in place to complete the restoration work being carried out to Carrabarra Bridge, Smithborough, by the local Heritage group?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council has no plans at present to complete the restoration work being carried out by the local heritage group. The area office will make contact with the heritage officer to determine what further works are required to the Bridge and determine the cost of same prior to seeking funding.*

28. What roads in the Clones Road Area were closed because of flooding due to the recent exceptionally heavy rain?

Reply: *See attached list.*

29. What roads in the Clones Road Area are affected by flooding on a regular/annual basis?

Reply: *The extent of flooding is dependant on the severity of the rainfall received each year. A list of the roads affected by the recent storms is attached as identified above.*

Cllr S. Coyle asked:

30. What plans has Monaghan County Council for the installation of public lighting on the road known locally as the Guardhill Road, Newbliss, as there is great pedestrian and motor vehicle use of this roadway, with Newbliss Childcare Services Limited, Killeevan National School and Killeevan Sarsfield GAA grounds located on this roadway in addition to the private residences?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council has no plans at present to install public lighting on the Guard Hill Road from Newbliss Village to Killeevan Sarsfield GAA grounds. There are currently 14 public lighting schemes in the Clones area awaiting funding, the area office will obtain a costing for this additional scheme and add it to the list.*

31. Will Monaghan County Council immediately make contact with the ESB to arrange connection of the installed public lighting on the Threemilehouse Road, Newbliss and have all associated works completed?

Reply: *The County Council has been in contact with the ESB on a weekly basis in relation to these lights and it is hoped that they will be operational before Christmas as all civil works are complete.*

Cllr S. Coyle asked:

32. What plans has Monaghan County Council to address the very serious traffic dangers at Cornasoo Cross on the Threemilehouse to Newbliss Road (R189) as this junction is very dangerous for all traffic accessing the junction?

Reply: *The County Council have plans to realign the Cornasoo junction as part of the upgrading works for the R189 Threemilehouse to Newbliss road project. The council have been unsuccessfully to date in securing the land necessary for the junction realignment and were unable to progress the overall scheme in 2009 due to a lack of funding. An application for funding in 2010 to progress the scheme has been made to the NRA.*

16. Votes of Congratulations/Sympathy:

The Council agreed to extend a vote of congratulations to the following:

- Ciara McAnespie, Emyvale Ladies GFC and Edel Byrne, Magheracloone Ladies GFC on receiving O'Neills/TG4 Ladies Gaelic Football All-Star Awards recently.
- Truagh Ladies football team on winning the Intermediate Football League final.
- Donaghmoyne Ladies GFC on winning the All Ireland Senior Football Club title.
- Emyvale GFC on winning the 2009 Ulster Junior Football Championship

The Council agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the following:

- Eilish Clarke, Monaghan Town Council on the death of her sister, Noeleen Clarke, Moys, Castleshane, R.I.P.
- Siobhan McCarron, Corporate Affairs, Monaghan County Council on the death of her father Jimmy Cullen, Cathedral Road, Cavan, R.I.P.
- Noel Maxwell, former member of Monaghan County Council on the death of his brother in law Walter Williams.

Urgent Business:

The Mayor advised the Council that she had received three notices of urgent business as follows:

- (i) Motion re medical cards (Cllr Paudge Connolly)
- (ii) Motion re care of the elderly (Fine Gael Members)
- (iii) Motion re funding cuts to drug education/prevention initiatives (Sinn Fein Members)

It was agreed to take all three notices of urgent business.

(i) Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr Treanor seconded

“ That in view of the fact that people living in this Health Service Area are less likely to receive a Discretionary Medical Card than people living in other Health Service Areas (in this area 1 person in 79 holds a Discretionary Medical Card whilst in all other areas throughout the country 1 person in 42 holds a similar card), this Council calls on the Minister for Health and Children and the HSE to ensure that the same criteria and level of “discretion” is applied to people nationally thereby resulting in similar levels of Discretionary Medical Cards being held nationally. ”

In proposing the motion Cllr Connolly stated that the figures in relation to the issue of discretionary medical cards in this region are startling and stems from a long term issue where the former NEHB was the most under-funded health board region in the country.

The Mayor put Cllr Connolly’s motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

(ii) Notice in the names of the Fine Gael Members

“ That the Council discuss the HSE/Government policy for the care of the elderly in County Monaghan and in particular the impact that Government/HSE policy is having on St. Mary’s Hospital in Castleblayney.

In moving the motion, Cllr Bannigan stated that the HSE proposed to remove up to 60 beds from St. Mary’s Hospital and reduce the size of the Alzheimer’s unit currently in operation there.

Cllr Bannigan proposed, Cllr Carville seconded

“ That we write to the Minister for Health, Mary Harney T.D., requesting information on the projected number of beds in St. Mary’s Hospital, Castleblayney for 2010. Are there any plans to reduced the number of beds in the hospital and if so, by how many?

That we invite an official from the Health Service Executive to a Council meeting to address the care of the elderly in County Monaghan and the matter of projected bed spaces in St. Mary’s Hospital in 2010.

Cllr Bannigan’s motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously.

Cllr B. McKenna stated that the HSE Regional Forum members would raise the matter at the next meeting of that body if they are furnished with the details.

(iii) Notice in the names of the Sinn Fein Members:

“ That Monaghan County Council deplores the actions of the government which has seen funding for Drug Education and Prevention initiatives and programmes slashed in the past two years. The further indicated reduction in funding for 2010 has already resulted

