

**Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Magheracloone Community Centre, Monaghan on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2008 at 2.00p.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr M. Carthy, Mayor

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

Mr. D. Nelson, Co. Manager, Mr. P Clifford, Mr. M. Fitzpatrick, Mr. D. Fallon and Mr. A. King, Directors of Service, Mr J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms R. McManus, Senior Executive Officer, Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator, Ms. B O'Flaherty, Executive Chemist and Ms. L Brannigan, A/Staff Officer.

**Apologies:** Cllr P McNally

**1. Minutes:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Keenan, seconded by Cllr Treanor it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2008 be confirmed.*

**2. Correspondence:**

**The following correspondence was circulated to the Members:**

- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in relation to the Farm Waste Management Scheme (FWMS)
- Letter from Marian Harkin, MEP, in relation to the FWMS.
- Letter from Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in relation to Eirgrid
- Email correspondence from James Carroll on behalf of Margaret Conlon, T.D., in relation to the FWMS
- Letter from Senator Diarmuid Wilson in relation to the FWMS
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in relation to the Budget for 2009
- Letter from Seymour Crawford, T.D., in relation to Drumgole Group Water Scheme
- Email correspondence from Patrick Boyle from Minister Eamon Ó Cuiv's office in relation to Drumgole GWS
- Letter from The Community Foundation for Ireland acknowledging receipt of €5,000 donation to the County Monaghan Fund
- Letter from Fermanagh District Council in relation to the East-West Link Road from Dundalk to Sligo, together with a copy of the Executive Summary 'Analysis of Need for Up-Grading of N16/A4 Primary Route'.
- Letter from Killarney Town Council in relation to the introduction of the Leader Programme to help boost rural communities suffering from recent job losses
- Correspondence from Eirgrid – December 08 Update on Eirgrid power line proposals for North East

- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal and Developing Areas in relation to the administration of the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme
- Letter from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in relation to Broadband
- Letter from Marian Harkin, MEP, enclosing a Press Release in relation to the Farm Waste Management Scheme
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in relation to the FWMS
- Letter from Caoimhghín O Caoláin, T.D., enclosing copy of letter issued from Mr O Caoláin to Willie O’Dea in relation to the meeting regarding the closure of Monaghan Military Barracks
- Letter of thanks, together with Certificate of Appreciation, from The County Monaghan Fund in relation to donation from Monaghan County Council
- Letter from Ballybay Wetlands Centre inviting the Members to join with them in welcoming the Chilean Ambassador, Ms Cecilia McKenna on December 4<sup>th</sup>
- Letter from Macroom Town Council in relation to a Notice of Motion regarding education cut-backs in the Budget

**Item of Urgent Business:**

Notice in the names of the Fine Gael Members –

*“ That the Mayor, Cllr Matt Carthy, explains to the Council why the protocol adopted by the Council in relation to visits by Government Ministers was breached on November 17 2008 and why the Mayor set out to deceive the members who attended the protest ”*

It was agreed to deal with the notice of urgent business.

In moving the motion Cllr McElvaney asked the Mayor to explain why he and the other members had not been notified that a date had been advised to the Council for a meeting with Minister Sargent and as a result a number of members had engaged in what they felt was an illegal protest at Minister Sargent’s visit to Carrickmacross. He stated that the Mayor had embarrassed the Council in the eyes of the Minister and the Hospital Alliance. Cllr Carville seconded the motion and concurred with the sentiments expressed by Cllr McElvaney.

Cllr Carthy explained that following a request to Minister Sargent’s office for a meeting - the initial response was that no meeting would be forthcoming. At this point, late on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November, he felt that the protocol had been met and the protest could go ahead. However, he asked that a further request be issued to the Minister’s office which resulted in an email response advising that the earliest a response could be given to this request was Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November (the date of the Ministers visit.) He had contacted the parties over the weekend, but could not contact the Fine Gael Whip, and advised that he was going ahead with a protest on Monday evening and that he would be inviting the Hospital Alliance to join them. He received notice of a proposed date for a meeting with the Minister at 3.00 p.m. on Monday - he felt that the notice was too short and decided that the protest should go ahead as he himself and other members had re-scheduled

arrangements to be there. He apologised to the Members of the Council who felt they attended the protest under false pretences - that was not what he had intended.

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that in future the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council would liaise with each other in regard to arrangements for visits of Government Ministers to the county.*

Cllr Carthy stated that for the remainder of his term that he was passing responsibility for such arrangements to the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Pat McKenna.

Cllr Gallagher stated that this has highlighted issues regarding the charade that operates in the Council in relation to protests on visiting Ministers.

*Cllr Gallagher proposed that the policy of protesting against visiting Ministers, who declined to meet the Council in relation to Monaghan General Hospital, be discontinued. Cllr Coyle seconded the proposal.*

**A vote by show of hands on Cllr Gallagher's proposal resulted in 4 for, 13 against, 2 abstentions. The Mayor declared the motion defeated.**

#### **Farm Waste Management Scheme:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that this Council write again to the Minister for Agriculture requesting that the deadline for the Farm Waste Management Scheme be extended to at least the end of June 2009.*

#### **East West Link Route:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Council support Recommendation 7 contained in the Executive Summary forwarded by Fermanagh District Council titled "Analysis of Need for Up-grading of N16/A4 Primary Route" and that the officials meet with Fermanagh District Council to discuss the East West Link Route.*

#### **Broadband Scheme:**

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna and seconded by Cllr Treanor, it was agreed that the Council seek confirmation from the Department of Communications as to what areas of the country will be covered under the National Broadband Scheme.*

#### **Resolutions from Macroom Town Council:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr Humphreys it was agreed to adopt the resolution from Macroom Town Council regarding education cut-backs in the Budget.*

**3. Section 183 Notices – Disposal of land:**

- (i) *On the proposal of Cllr O'Brien, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that the Council approve the disposal of Plot B, 0.091 acres, Plot C 0.134 acres together with a right of way in favour of Deirdre McKenna and Plot D, 0.153 acres in the townland of Drumcrew, Castleblayney, to Deirdre McKenna in accordance with notice dated 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 under the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001.*
- (ii) *On the proposal of Cllr Keenan, seconded by Cllr Kieran it was agreed that the Council approve the disposal of .413 acres, in the townland of Lisnashannagh, Carrickmacross, to Laurence & Breda Duffy, Lisnashannagh, in accordance with notice dated 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 under the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001.*

**4. To approve Overdraft Accommodation:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Carville, seconded by Cllr Maxwell, it was agreed that the Council approve Overdraft Accommodation in the sum of €10m for the period ending 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2009.*

**5. Part VIII Local Government (Planning & Development) Regulations 2001:**

- (i) To locate one demountable dwellinghouse, with associated site works, septic tank and percolation area at Clonkeen Lucas, Clones, Co. Monaghan (Ref 08/8005)

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney seconded by Cllr Treanor, it was agreed to approve the proposed development as per the report from the Director of Services, Mr. D. Fallon.*

- (ii) To erect bring bank facility which incorporates receptacles for the collection of recyclable materials and associated signage at Lisdarragh, Newbliss, Co. Monaghan (Ref 08/8006)

*On the proposal of Cllr Treanor seconded by Cllr Humphreys it was agreed to approve the proposed development as per the report from the Director of Services, dated 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008.*

**(iii) Replacement of Annaghroe Cross Border Bridge (Ref 08/8002)**

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna seconded by Cllr McAnespie, it was agreed to approve the proposed development as per the report from the Director of Services, dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008.*

(iv) **Replacement of Knockaginny Cross Border Bridge (Ref 08/8003)**

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna seconded by Cllr McAnespie, it was agreed to approve the proposed development as per the report from the Director of Services, dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008.*

**6. To approve recommendations from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2008**

**Per Cent for Arts Scheme – Commissioning of Artists:**

Cllr McElvaney referred to the recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group in relation to the commissioning of two pieces of art for the Castleblayney and Monaghan bypasses. He proposed that money would not be spent on these projects having regard to the current economic climate. Following a debate on the matter the following resolution was passed –

*“On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O’Brien that the Council write to the National Roads Authority requesting that the monies allocated for these projects would be re-allocated to general road maintenance in these areas ”*

The County Manager advised the members that this money would not be available for any other purpose, if not availed of for this project.

A vote by show of hands on Cllr Gallagher’s motion resulted in 10 for 7 against. The Mayor declared the motion carried.

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr P. McKenna it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 be adopted, subject to the amendment outlined above.*

**7. River Basin Management Plan**

The Mayor welcomed Dr. Tony McNally and Mr Alan Barr, NS Share, to the meeting, who then gave a presentation to the members on the Draft River Basin Management Plan which is due to be published on December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008 as a consultation document.

In their presentation they outlined the following:

- The Water Framework Directive is the driver for the preparation of the Draft River Basin Management Plan
- Monaghan is linked into two River Basin Districts (RBD) – the Neagh Bann and the North Western RBD’s.
- The status and the objectives of the draft plan together with the programme of measures contained therein.
- The areas of the county where water quality will have to be improved.

- The Water Framework Directive will give rise to new mandatory controls as well as the implementation of the eleven existing EU Directives which apply to the safeguarding of water quality.
- The new Plan will deal with the whole ecology of rivers and lakes and will have an impact on development in certain rural areas.

Mr Barr stated that it is imperative that the River Basin Management Plan objectives are linked with those of the Monaghan County Development Plan. Problematic areas will need to be prioritised. Dr. McNally stated that we must look at the normal catchment areas and not the administrative areas. The Department has tried to link up all catchment areas covering all administrative areas.

Following the presentation Dr. McNally and Mr. Barr called on the Members of the Council and the public to engage in the consultation process. They then responded to queries from the Members.

Mr. Michael Fitzpatrick, Director of Services, welcomed the comments made by the members. He stated that we must not lose sight of the main aim which is the achievement of good quality water within County Monaghan within the prescribed timeframe.

The Mayor then thanked Dr. McNally and Mr Barr on their very informative presentation.

## **8. Report from meeting with HSE officials on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2008**

*On the proposal of Mayor Carthy and seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the Council seek a meeting with Ms. Mary Harney, T.D., Minister for Health and Children regarding the current situation at Monaghan General Hospital.*

*Cllr Maxwell proposed, Cllr Conlon seconded that the Monaghan Community Alliance be invited to attend a meeting of the full Council.*

**For:** Cllrs, Carthy, Carville, Conlon, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Humphreys, Keelan, Keenan, Kieran, Martin, Maxwell, McElvaney, B. McKenna, O'Brien and Treanor.

**Against:** Nil.

The Mayor declared Cllr Maxwell's motion carried. It was agreed that a meeting would be held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009 to meet the Monaghan Community Alliance.

*Cllr Kieran proposed, Cllr Martin seconded that the leaders of both Fine Gael and Sinn Fein and their health spokespersons be invited to the January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting to outline their policy in relation to health services.*

*Cllr McElvaney proposed an amendment – that the leader of Fianna Fail would also be invited to the meeting. Cllr P. McKenna seconded the amendment.*

The amendment was put to the meeting and a vote by show of hands resulted in 12 for, nil against, 4 abstentions.

The substantive motion was then put to the meeting and a vote by show of hand resulted in 12 for, 1 against, 3 abstentions.

## **9. Blackwater Regional Partnership Draft Strategy**

The Mayor welcomed Ms Catherine Fox, Blackwater Regional Partnership (BRP), who gave a presentation to the members on the Draft Strategy which had been circulated with the agenda. Ms. Fox stated that the draft strategy has been prepared to guide the Partnership's work for the period 2009-2013. The strategy outlines what it will focus on and through a multi agency approach how it will set about achieving its aims. Ms. Fox stated that the BRP are asking all stakeholders to examine the proposed strategic objectives and the projects and programmes which the Partnership is developing and to forward any comments or submissions they wish to make.

The Mayor thanked Ms Fox for her presentation and complimented the excellent work undertaken by Blackwater Regional Partnership. The Mayor encouraged the members to examine the document and stated that all proposals are to be submitted by December 16<sup>th</sup>.

## **10. Proposed 440kv Eirgrid interconnector**

*On the proposal of Cllr Carville, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that the Council write again to Minister Eamon Ryan, T.D., requesting that he meet with a deputation from the Council to discuss the Eirgrid proposal.*

## **11. To receive minutes of the following meetings:**

- (i) On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr Humphreys, it was agreed to adopt the minutes of An Coiste Gaeilge held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008*
- (ii) On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr Humphreys, it was agreed to adopt the minutes of An Coiste Gaeilge held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008*
- (iii) On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna, it was agreed to adopt the minutes of An Coiste Logainmneacha held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2008*
- (iv) On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna, it was agreed to adopt the minutes of An Coiste Logainmneacha held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008*
- (v) On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Kieran, it was agreed to adopt the minutes of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008*

**12. To agree nomination of Cllr Niall Quigley, Clones Town Council on the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Treanor it was agreed that Cllr Niall Quigley represent Clones Town Council on the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.*

**13. To fix dates for the following meetings/functions:**

Dates were agreed for meetings, as follows:

- (i) Date for January Council Meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009.
- (ii) Date for Speed Limit Committee meeting - 2.00 p.m. December 15<sup>th</sup> 2008.
- (iii) Date for Eirgrid Sub-Committee meeting – 3.00 p.m December 15<sup>th</sup> 2008

**14. Reports from Conferences:**

The Members noted the reports from Cllrs Carthy, Carville, Coyle, Crowe, Keelan, Martin, Maxwell, McElvaney, McKenna, McNally and Treanor in respect of their attendance at the following conferences:

Irish Language Conference for Councillors, Connemara, Co. Galway  
Across the Narrow Sea – Plantation in Ulster, Fours Seasons Hotel, Monaghan  
Local Government Financing, Killarney, Co. Kerry  
Citizens First International Conference, Ennis, Co. Clare  
MacGill Summer School, Glenties, Co. Donegal  
Green Paper on Local Government Reform, Sligo  
Byrne-Perry Summer School, Gorey, Co. Wexford  
County Carlow Chamber National Conference on Local Government Financing, Tullow, Co. Carlow  
Getting a Grip 2008 – Addiction proofing our communities, Malton Hotel, Killarney  
Parnell Summer School, Rathdrum  
Freedom of Information, Limerick  
Carleton Summer School, Clogher, Co Tyrone  
Climate Change, Croke Park, Dublin  
Irish Regions, Inchadoney, Clonakilty, Cork  
CPO Seminar, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
Infrastructure Connecting Nature, People & Places, Malahide, Dublin  
Douglas Hyde Conference, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon

**15. Matters arising out of the Minutes:**

The Directors of Service responded to queries from the Members arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2008.

17. Questions:

**Cllr Carthy asked:**

- (a) When does the Council plan to connect the houses at Drummond Heights, Carrickmacross to the public sewerage / waste water system considering residents have been told on a number of occasions that Monaghan County Council had agreed to this move some years ago?

**Reply:** *The houses at Drummond Heights are already connected to the Council Sewerage network. However in order to reach the existing network by gravity the sewers at the backs of these houses were constructed by the developer above ground on piles. Now as part of the P&S contract for Carrickmacross Pipelines a manhole will be provided at a lower level in the Convent Lands to the front of these houses. This will allow the sewers serving these houses to be placed underground providing the residents carry out the necessary works on private property themselves (by means of a group scheme). The P&S works in this area are currently scheduled for mid 2009.*

**Cllr Carthy asked:**

- (b) Can the Council outline the amount of people in County Monaghan who sought emergency homeless accommodation during the year 2007, and from January-November 2008; the number of applicants who received emergency accommodation; and the number of applicants who did not receive emergency accommodation but were referred to other agencies?

**Reply:** *Monaghan Local Authorities were contacted by 24 households seeking advice or emergency accommodation during 2007. These households consisted of 26 adults and 20 children. Emergency accommodation in Bed and Breakfast on a short term basis was provided to 12 households and the remaining 12 households were offered advice on how to access alternative accommodation to avoid becoming homeless.*

*In 2008 to date, Monaghan Local Authorities were contacted by 15 households seeking advice or emergency accommodation. These households consisted of 16 adults and 1 child. Emergency accommodation in Bed and Breakfast on a short term basis was provided to 12 households and the remaining 3 households were offered advice on how to access alternative accommodation to avoid becoming homeless.*

- (c) What is the current delay in the Council providing a group home in Carrickmacross for a group of women with physical/ sensory disabilities? When is it expected that this important project will be completed?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council is presently negotiating to purchase land to meet its housing needs in the future in Carrickmacross. It is anticipated that a site will then be made available to accommodate a group home.*

- (d) How many staff (whether temporary, contract etc.) have been laid off by Monaghan Local Authorities since the cuts demanded by the Fianna Fáil/ Green Party government were announced? What are the plans for further lay-offs in 2008/ 09?

**Reply:** *Fifteen temporary staff have not been retained by Monaghan County Council since August 2008. An additional 4 contracted staff are due to leave before 31/12/2008. 12 staff are employed on temporary contracts which are due to expire in 2009.*

**Cllr Carville asked:**

- (e) Has any indication been received by Monaghan County Council from the Dept of the Environment concerning the future delivery of the new Fire Station in Castleblayney and in particular, towards the design of and building of the station and funding for same? What is the up to date position regarding this much needed project?

**Reply:** *Castleblayney Fire Station has received “Approval in Principle” and is on the DoEHLG Fire Service Capital Programme. A site in Castleblayney has been identified. However, difficulty in determining title on these lands has delayed the procurement process and it is planned to acquire the lands by CPO. A preliminary site investigation has taken places and Van Dijk Architects have been requested to prepare preliminary plans in order to advance the process to planning stage.*

**Cllr Carville asked:**

- (f) Will Monaghan County Council assist the local communities of Annayalla, Cremartin, Doohamlet, Creighanroe, Oram and parts of Clontibret concerning the roll out of Broadband accessibility for homes and businesses in those areas. This is because these areas are being denied access to the wireless system due to local topographical issues and therefore need booster mechanisms situated closer by to bring signals into the areas concerned.

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council was actively involved in supporting Local Communities to acquire Broad Band access under the Department of Communication’s County & Group Broadband Scheme. This scheme operated between 2005 – 2007. However, there has been no further roll out of this programme. Should further funding opportunities arise the Local Authority would again be willing to support Communities.*

- (g) Has the Council received any indication from NRA yet concerning the repeated calls by Monaghan County Council for safety and re-alignment measures to be carried out on the dangerous part of the N2 at Broomfield?

**Reply:** *An application has been made to the NRA for funding to provide right turning lanes at Minister’s Cross and Broomfield Junction on the N2. It is hoped that this funding will be provided in 2009.*

- (h) In relation to the completion of the Castleblayney By-Pass, has any indication come from the NRA yet in relation to the provision of slip ways at the Ballybay Junction, Annayalla Junction and Cremartin Junction and also the provision of public lighting at these points? Have there been any meetings of the steering committee recently in relation to the completion of the works

and the monitoring of accommodation works and what is the current position with regard to the completion of the works by the contractor generally?

**Reply:** *An application for funding has been made to the N.R.A. for the provision of exit slip lanes and public lights at junctions on the Castleblayney Bypass. However, the Council has not received any indication from the NRA that funding will be provided. At a meeting held with the contractor on the 19<sup>th</sup> November we again stressed the urgency in getting outstanding works completed and the contractor gave an undertaking that all works will be completed by April 2009.*

**Cllr Carville asked:**

- (i) Is the Council aware of the concerns of the business community in Castleblayney concerning the lack of signage for the town on the new Castleblayney By-Pass and that the level and quality of signage does not compare favourably with other similar towns? What measures does the Council and NRA intend to take to address the question and when can the businesspeople and wider community of Castleblayney expect to see action to improve signage for the town in order to help the retail and services sectors avail of passing traffic?

**Reply:** *Direction signs for Castleblayney Town have been provided at both the southbound approach to the Ballybay Road Interchange and at the northbound approach to the Tullyvin Roundabout. Also there are numerous advance direction signs for Castleblayney along the new Bypass. In addition two tourism information signs are to be erected for Castleblayney, one at the Ballybay Road Interchange and the other at the Tullyvin Roundabout.*

**Cllr Treanor asked:**

- (j) Will Monaghan County Council seek to liaise with the Roads Section of Fermanagh District Council and Cavan County Council to ensure co-ordination of road repairs/improvement schemes, to avoid recent occurrences on the N54, where the road was closed for two different periods of time, causing great inconvenience to people in the Clones area.?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council does liaise with adjoining counties regarding the co-ordinating road works so as to minimise road closures. However, the nature of road works carried out under contract is such that it will not always be possible to avoid the same road being closed at different times of the year.*

- (k) What preparations have Monaghan County Council made for the introduction of the Building Energy Rating (BER) Regulations for houses in January 2009?

**Reply:** *Under current legislation a seller must provide a BER to prospective buyers or tenants when a home is constructed, sold or rented under the following circumstances:*

- *New homes where planning permission was applied for on or after 1st January 2007;*
- *All homes for sale or rent on or after 1st January 2009.*

*There are exemptions for certain categories of buildings, e.g. protected structures and certain temporary building (Ref. S.I. No. 666 of 2006). There are fines of up to €5,000 for non-compliance with the regulations. BER assessments are carried out by registered BER assessors who have trained under the National Framework of Qualifications and have registered with SEI.*

**Cllr Treanor asked:**

- (l) Following on from answer received about a year ago in relation to the hardness of water supplied to the Scotstown and Smithborough area, what recommendation have the consultants made "to either soften the water or to link a softer water source to reduce the overall hardness." ?

**Reply:** *This matter has been re-assessed. On the advice of the consultants it is not considered appropriate to install water softening treatment due to the costs involved. It must be emphasised that the water in the Scotstown and Smithborough area has a hardness in the same range as Monaghan Town Supply. Harder drinking water has a health benefit due to its calcium content, however, it is advisable to use water softening tablets or solution for washing machines and dishwashers.*

**Cllr Gallagher asked:**

- (m) Would the Council install public lighting at the Church of Ireland at Errigal Truagh in the interest of safety?

**Reply:** *The Council will inspect the site and prepare a report for consideration at the next Road Area Committee Meeting*

**Cllr Bannigan asked.**

- (n) When will the electric cables be undergrounded in Ballybay Town?

**Reply:** *The ESB have now installed the new switching kiosk at the fairgreen. It is anticipated that the ESB will be on site to start pulling cables in early December. The completion of the remainder of the works will take place early in the New Year to avoid disruption to consumers approaching the Christmas period.*

- (o) When will the Pedestrian crossing and roundabout in Ballybay Town be connected to the ESB?

**Reply:** *As soon as the undergrounding of cables is complete, the ESB will be in a position to complete the connections for the pedestrian crossings along Main Street and at the Roundabout.*

- (p) What is the up to date position with the traffic management plan be implemented in Ballybay?

- When will the plan come into operation?
- When will a traffic warden be operational in Ballybay Town?

**Reply:** *The consultants preparing the scheme are considering the observations and comments received at the public meeting before finalising their report. The final report will be sent to the Garda Inspector*

*for comment before it is implemented. Monies have been provided in the Draft Budget for the employment of a warden on a part time basis. Arrangements will be put in place in the New Year to put this into operation.*

**Cllr Bannigan asked.**

- (q) What is the up to date position with the provision of additional public lighting at Carrickatee Church?

**Reply:** *The ESB are to visit the site next week to prepare a design and cost estimate for additional lighting at this location. The proposals can then be included in the Area Programme for prioritising at the next Road Area Committee meeting.*

**Cllr Brian McKenna asked:**

- (r) What progress has been made to date in relation to remedying the flooding that occurred recently at Kilnadrain, Monaghan, specifically:

- Have the landowners been spoken to as regards what works need to be carried out?
- What role have the OPW to play in alleviating the situation?
- Will the County Council be involved in carrying out the necessary works?
- Given that we are in the middle of Winter with the likelihood of significant downpours, what timescale are we looking at to have the problem resolved in view of the fact that an important mushroom business was flooded at least twice over the past couple of years as well as dwellings in the immediate area?

**Reply:** *The Council has spoken to the OPW and the landowners. The landowners are responsible for the maintenance of these drains.*

**Cllr McNally asked:**

- (s) Has this Council any plans in place or are they working on same for to upgrade the section of the Dundalk/Carrickmacross road known locally as Ballymackney to Essexford in light of the fact that the section or road known as the Red Bog in County Louth is ready to commence?

**Reply:** *Consultants have been appointed to examine the R-178 route from Dundalk through Carrickmacross and into County Cavan (including the section as outlined above). The Consultants brief includes consideration of necessary improvements required on this route.*

- (t) Has this Council received any further correspondence from the Department regarding our Civic Amenity Centre in Carrickmacross?

**Reply:** *In September 2008, Monaghan County Council lodged an application with the DOEHLG for funding under the Waste Recycling Capital Grants Scheme – National Development Plan 2007-2013. The application to the department was based on an estimated overall project cost of €2.12 Million. To date there has been no correspondence from the*

*DOEHLG regarding our application. Officials from the environment section of MCC contacted the Department again on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November to enquire about the application but were informed that no decision on the application had yet been made.*

**Cllr McNally asked:**

- (u) Has this Council received any further correspondence from the Department regarding the upgrade of the sewerage plant at Ardee Road, Carrickmacross?  
**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council shortlisted contractors for this scheme and are currently awaiting DoEHLG approval to proceed to tender. The Public Service Bench Marking Report was forwarded to the Department in September 2008 and there have been no further developments.*
- (v) Will this Council examine the possibility of putting a right turning lane on the main Carrickmacross/Kingscourt R178 at the junction adjacent to Drumgossat and Clonseady as it is a very dangerous junction at present?  
**Reply:** *The Area Engineers Office will examine this request and prepare a report for the next Area Roads Meeting.*

**Cllr Keenan asked:**

- (w) How many planning applications granted by this Council were refused by An Bord Pleanala in the year 2007-2008?
- (x) How many planning applications refused by this Council were granted by An Bord Pleanala in the year 2007-2008?

**Reply to (w) & (x):** *Monaghan County Council issued 2812 planning decisions in 2007. Of these, only 55 were appealed to An Bord Pleanala. This 2% referral rate is the lowest of any county in the state. The Bord confirmed or varied approximately 70% (38) of the decisions which were appealed to it. It reversed approximately 30% (17) of the Councils decisions which were appealed to it. Statistics in respect of the specific number of decisions to refuse or grant permission by the planning authority, which were reversed by the Bord are currently unavailable.*

- (y) What is the up to date position on the industrial units on the Convent Lands in Carrickmacross?  
**Reply:** *Planning permission has been granted on all of the sites and it is now up to the owners to proceed with the developments.*

**Cllr Conlon asked:**

- (z) What date has been set for the inaugural meeting of the Joint Policing Committee?  
**Reply:** *No date has been set as we are awaiting nominations to the Board from the other stakeholders in the process.*

**Cllr Crowe asked:**

- (z1) (a) The N53 Ballinacarry Bridge project has an allocation of €100,000 this year to enable preliminary studies to be undertaken. "Have these studies commenced and when will they conclude"?
- (b) The NRA on behalf of the Dept of Transport are preparing a Project Appraisal Deliverables in relation to Ballinacarry Bridge. These deliverables will inform the decision making process as to the possible inclusion of the Ballinacarry project for co-financing under the Interreg IVA Programme. "What steps have Monaghan Co. Council taken to ensure that this truly cross border project is included in the programme"?

**Reply to (a) & (b): *In accordance with the NRA's Project Appraisal Guidelines a Business Case is being prepared for the Ballinacarry Bridge Project. On its completion the application for funding under Interreg IVa can be made.***

- (z2) (a) What is the update on the call for slipways and public lighting at the exits from the Castleblayney bypass and will Monaghan Co. Council erect signs at these exits showing that they also lead to Castleblayney?

**Reply: *An application for funding has been made to the N.R.A. for the provision of exit slip lanes and public lights at junctions on the Castleblayney Bypass. However, the Council has not received any indication from the NRA that funding will be provided.***

- (b) Will Monaghan County Council ensure that the roundabouts on the Castleblayney by pass are swept on a regular basis to remove gravel which is been spilled from lorries. This gravel and silt is dangerous on wet roads?

**Reply: *Yes this would be part of the normal road maintenance carried out by Monaghan County Council to ensure that public roads are safe for driving on.***

- (z3) Would Monaghan County Council investigate the possibility of an off road bus pick up point at the crossroads at Creaghanroe on the R181 in the interests of safety for students and parents awaiting school buses?

**Reply: *The Council will monitor the junction and will raise the matter for discussion at the next Roads Area Meeting***

**Cllr Coyle asked:**

- (z4) (a) What is the up to date position on the appointment of consultants to review the 2001 report 'Strategic Study of the Development of an East-West Link Road' on the Dundalk to Sligo link road which is to recommend the most feasible route for the East-West corridor?

**Reply: *Consultants have not yet been appointed. It is anticipated that Cavan County Council will appoint the Consultants in the near future.***

**Cllr Coyle asked:**

- (b) Has Monaghan County Council commenced work on a submission to the appointed consultants for the preferred route of Castleblayney, Ballybay to Clones?
- (c) Has Monaghan County Council entered into discussions with Fermanagh District Council and other interested Local Authorities to advance the development of this strategic route through Castleblayney, Ballybay and Clones?

**Reply to (b) and (c):** *Monaghan County Council has written to Fermanagh District Council in the first instance to ascertain the current status of the proposal for a by-pass of Enniskillen. Fermanagh District Council has responded and a copy of the correspondence is included with the December Agenda. The Council has prepared a draft submission document for discussion at the Roads SPC meeting*

- (z5) When will Monaghan County Council erect public lighting on the Latton to Five Crosses Road (LP03012) at St. Mary's Church, Latton as this road is currently very dangerous for those attending St. Mary's Church on dark evenings?

**Reply:** *The County Council has a costing and design for these lights and will include them on the programme of works for discussion at the next Road Area Committee Meeting.*

- (z6) Will Monaghan County Council examine the possibility of road safety measures, crash barriers, being put in place on a section of the R183-13 at Toneyscallon, Doohamlet on the Ballybay – Castleblayney Road due to the high number of accidents on this stretch of road recently?

**Reply:** *The County Council will replace the chevrons that were damaged and will examine other possible safety proposals subject to funding being available.*

**Cllr Keelan asked:**

- (z7) Will Monaghan County Council contact Bus Eireann requesting that they look at the possibility of providing a Bus Shelter for the residents of Inniskeen village?

**Reply:** *The Council will issue a letter to the company.*

- (z8) In relation to Lisdoonan village, when can the residents expect the extra public lighting to be put in place adjacent to the community centre, as this lighting was requested some 4 years ago?

**Reply:** *It is hoped to have the civil works completed by the end of the year and the lights erected early in the New Year.*

- (z9) In relation to the railway bridge at McGee's shop in Inniskeen village, will Monaghan County Council consider putting extra safety measures in place such as rumble strips or other road markings adjacent to the bridge as the bridge is still being hit and damaged by large vehicles?

**Reply:** *Advanced warning signs are in place warning high vehicles of this bridge.*

**Cllr Keelan asked:**

(z10) What plans have Monaghan County Council to extend the footpath out to St. Joseph's Cemetery and on to link up with the footpath on the Killanny Road in Carrickmacross?

**Reply: *A preliminary design has been done for this. However, there is no funding available to provide the footpath at present.***

(z11) What plans have Monaghan County Council to upgrade the Blackstaff Road at Inniskeen and, in particular, will the Council upgrade some of the most dangerous junctions on this roadway such as Magoney and Blackstaff Cross?

**Reply: *At the recent Area Roads Meeting it was agreed to include this road on the 2009 Local Roads programme. The improvement of the junctions can be looked at in cooperation with the respective land owners to improve road safety.***

**19. Votes of Congratulations:**

**The Council agreed to extend votes of congratulations to the following:**

- *Emyvale Ladies GFC on their victory in the All-Ireland Intermediate Final*
- *Truagh Gaels GFC on winning the McAvinney Cup and being promoted to senior ranks for 2009.*
- *Carrickmacross Emmets GFC on winning the 2008 Senior Football league*
- *Aghabog GFC on winning the 2008 Monaghan Junior Football league*
- *Drumhowan GFC on winning the Ulster Junior Championship Final*
- *Niamh Kindlon, Edel Byrne, Amanda Casey and Sharon Courtney who received All Star Awards recently.*
- *Combi Lift Ltd., on receiving the International Exporter of the Year Award for 2008*

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr P. McKenna it was agreed that the Council would host a Civic Reception for the Members of the Emyvale Ladies GFC on their All Ireland victory.*

The Mayor wished all the members, staff and the people of County Monaghan a safe and happy Christmas and encouraged them to shop local during the festive season.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_

Meara

\_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Administrator

Date

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