

**Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Mtek Building,  
Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr S. Coyle, Mayor.

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

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager, Mr. P. Clifford, Mr. D. Treanor, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms. N. Woods, SEO Housing, Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

**Apology:** Cllr S. McKenna.

At the outset the Mayor proposed a vote of sympathy with the family of the late Josephine Duffy, RIP, former County Registrar for County Monaghan and election Returning Officer. He paid tribute to her outstanding and competent service in both positions. A number of members joined in the expression of sympathy, as did the A/County Manager on behalf of the staff. A minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect to the late Ms. Duffy.

**Urgent business:**

The Mayor advised the meeting the he had received a Notice of Urgent Business in the names of the Sinn Fein Members and relating to IDA funding for County Monaghan.

It was unanimously agreed that the motion of urgent business would be taken at the end of the meeting.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes:**

**(i) *Minutes of Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012***

Cllr Carthy requested that Q.14 (page 13/14) of the minutes be amended to include information relating to Town Councils in the county, as requested by him at the January meeting. This was agreed.

Cllr P. Treanor requested that Item 8 - Matters arising (page 8) be amended to include the following paragraph –

*“ In relation to a query from Cllr P. Treanor in relation to the clearance of blockages from the Finn River the A/County Manager stated that the Council will liaise with the Office of Public Works and The N.I. River Agency in this regard. This was agreed.”*

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2012, as amended above be confirmed.*

## **2. Correspondence**

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda –

- Email from Deputy Sean Conlan enclosing reply from the Minister of State for Housing in relation to the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in relation to Pay as You Go electricity meters.
- Letter from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the Seniors Alert Scheme and the monitoring costs of personal alarm systems.
- Letter from the Minister for Finance in relation to the licensing of door-to-door money lenders.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for the Environment in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the household charge.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for the Environment in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the NPPR charge.
- Letter from the Minister for Transport declining the Council's request for a meeting in relation to the N2/A5 road scheme.
- Email from Deputy Humphreys regarding request for meeting with NRA re N2 Clontibret to the Border road scheme.
- Letter from Deputy Ó Caoláin regarding request for meeting with NRA re N2 Clontibret to the Border road scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for the Environment in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the N2 Clontibret to the border route corridor and the County Development Plan.
- Letter from the Minister for Finance in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the increase in the standard rate of VAT.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources regarding the North South Interconnector.
- Letter from Deputy Ó Caoláin regarding the North South Interconnector.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Agriculture regarding the Council's resolution in relation to the 2013 EU CAP proposals.
- Email from Deputy Heather Humphreys regarding Council's request for meeting with the Minister for Health.
- Letters of acknowledgement from the Minister for Social Protection and the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation regarding the treatment of employees at the Lagan Brick plant in Kingscourt.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Arts Council in relation to the Council's resolution regarding support for Arts activities.
- Letter from the Monaghan CDB IT Business Leaders Forum in relation to the development of communication technology in the county.
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council regarding the cuts in the home insulation grants scheme.

- Letter from Clonmel Borough Council in relation to the Council's resolution regarding distressed mortgage holders.
- Letter from An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD thanking the Council for its letter of sympathy on the death of his late mother.
- Letter from the Minister for the Environment regarding the payment of motor tax by monthly instalments.
- Letter from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning in relation to the criteria for advancing housing loans.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning in relation to the County Development Plan.
- Letter from Deputy Heather Humphreys enclosing reply from Minister Phil Hogan in relation to the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- Letter from Deputy Conlan regarding request for meeting with NRA re N2 Clontibret to the Border road scheme.
- Letter from Fort Augustus Irish Descendants inviting representatives of the Council to attend the Annual Settlers Day celebrations in Prince Edward Island in May 2012.
- Resolution from Clones Town Council regarding the continuation of the Community Employment Scheme.

**Proposals arising out of correspondence:**

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that the Council write again to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government seeking funding/part funding for the ongoing monitoring costs of the personal alarm systems and that a copy of the letter be forwarded to the Department of Health.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council requests the Community Forum to promote the Community Alert Scheme through the recently established Older Persons Network as well as taking out an advertisement in the local media detailing the community organisations who are partner agencies in rolling out this valuable scheme.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council invites representatives of the Irish Federation Pike Angling Clubs and Rossmore Angling Club to make a presentation regarding the upcoming International Pike Challenge coming to Monaghan in October as well as tourism opportunities that exist in strengthening and preserving this natural resource.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Council accept the invitation from the Fort Augustus Irish Descendants Prince Edward Island to attend the Annual Settlers Day Celebrations in May 2012. It was further agreed that the Council be represented by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor/official.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O'Brien it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Monaghan Town Council calling on the Government to reverse immediately the cuts in the Home Insulation Grants Scheme in the interests of homeowners and the retention of jobs in the construction industry.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Finance asking him to cap the amount of finance that money lenders can lend to individuals.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr S. Conlon it was agreed that the Council write again to the Minister for Health asking him to deliver on his promises to re-instate the services lost at Monaghan General Hospital.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was agreed that the Council write to Dr. James Reilly, Minister for Health reminding him of the commitments he gave at a rally in Monaghan on 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 where he promised the retention and restoration of services at Monaghan General Hospital should F.G. get into power and that he would 'walk-away' if this commitment were not delivered. In light of his comments, we ask Minister Reilly if he now considers it time that he resigns his position as Minister for Health.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Clones Town Council calling on the Minister for Social Protection .. "To clarify her position on the continuation of the Community Employment Scheme. As a result of the budget in December the Community Employment (CE) budget was cut by two thirds. As a result of these cuts vulnerable communities throughout the country will be deprived of invaluable community services and facilities should the Government proceed with the savage attack on Community Employment funding. CE Schemes have created employment and provided people with skills and these cuts will have an adverse negative effect on employment. They will effectively decimate a scheme that provides employment, social participation, community participation and in many cases employment. This will have huge implications for thousands of voluntary groups providing essential community based services throughout the country."*

*On the proposal of Cllr Murray, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that the Council invite Clare Cunningham, CDB IT Business Leaders Forum to make a presentation to the Council at a future meeting.*

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the Council write to the three Fine Gael Oireachtas members asking them to again intervene with Minister Reilly in a bid to secure a meeting with him to discuss Monaghan General Hospital.*

*That the Council write to the Minister for Transport requesting that the Minister advise Monaghan County Council of any funding and implementation plans agreed at the North South Ministerial Council Transport meeting and endorsement by the NMSC Plenary meeting in 2012 in relation to the N2 Clontibret to Derry A5 road scheme.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was agreed that the Council write to the Oireachtas Members for the county inviting them to the next meeting of the Council to discuss the N2 Clontibret to the N.I. Border Road Scheme.*

*On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that the Council write again to the Minister for the Environment in relation to the NPPR charge.*

**NRA meeting:**

The Mayor advised the Council that the National Roads Authority had agreed to meet a deputation from the Council on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the N2 Clontibret to the N.I. Border Road Scheme. It was agreed that the following members would represent the Council on the deputation – Mayor and Cllrs Gallagher, McNally, Maxwell, Carville, B. McKenna, Conlon and that the deputation would be accompanied by the relevant officials.

At this point in the meeting, Cllr A. Murray, Deputy Mayor assumed the Chair, as the Mayor, with the agreement of the Council, withdrew from the meeting to attend another engagement.

**3. To consider Manager's Report on submissions received in relation to proposed Variation No. 19 to Monaghan County Development Plan 2007-2013 – Core Strategy**

Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner stated that the principal objective of the Core Strategy is to articulate a medium to long term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of County Monaghan, and in doing so, demonstrate that the development plans and their objectives are consistent with the national and regional development objectives set out in the NSS and RPG's. Mr Gourley also advised that the text of this document would be incorporated into Chapter 3 of the current Development Plan. He then detailed the consultation process undertaken by the Council. He referred to the submissions/observations received during the public consultation period. Eleven submissions had been received including submissions from the Minister for the Environment, The Border Regional Authority, The National Roads Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency. He outlined the contents of the submissions received and the Manager's response to each. The proposed variation to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007-2013 would be in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development. The Manager's Report recommended that the proposed variation be adopted with two amendments to include the total number of projected combined housing units from development in the minor settlements and rural area, and a stronger overarching statement giving primacy to the Core Strategy over all other policy, content and objectives within the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007-2013 in terms of population, housing and housing land requirements.

During the course of a debate on this item, the following proposal was moved -

*Cllr Carville proposed, Cllr Bannigan seconded that Castleblayney Town be moved to Tier 2 status in the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007-2013 – Core Strategy, in keeping with the supporting role it plays to Monaghan Town as a hub and Dundalk as a gateway in the National Spatial Strategy and the financial and health/social services available in the town as recognised in the Border Regional Planning Guidelines.*

The Mayor put Cllr Carville's motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

A discussion took place regarding the merits of the proposed Rural Area of Strong Urban Influence (RAUSUI) surrounding Clones. Cllr McElvaney raised concerns regarding it, but Cllrs Bannigan and Treanor referred to the need to address population decline within Clones Town as part of a number of initiatives. Cllr Bannigan added that the RAUSUI was necessary to justify the amount of proposed zoned residential land with a town that had a falling population. Mr. Gourley concurred with this and stated that efforts had to be made, in conjunction with other initiatives, to halt the decline of the population, and consequential loss of services and businesses within the town.

A proposal by Cllr McElvaney to remove the proposed RAUSUI around Clones was not seconded.

*On the proposal of Cllr Carville, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council adopt the Core Strategy, in accordance with the amendments proposed in the Manager's Report and the amending motion proposed by Cllr Carville.*

A vote by show of hands resulted in 16 for 1 against (Cllr McElvaney). The Mayor declared the proposal carried.

*Cllr P. Treanor proposed, Cllr McPhillips seconded that the Planning Section inform, in writing, those with planning permission which is not enacted, of the new conditions that will apply to those in the 3 kilometre area of strong urban influence when they seek to have planning permissions renewed.*

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Planning stated that due to the resources available the Planning Office would not be in a position to contact each affected individuals. It would endeavour to notify the public through its web-site and by use of maps/information in the public offices/libraries in the area.

The Mayor put Cllr P. Treanor's proposal to the meeting. A vote by show of hands resulted in 11 for and 3 against. The Mayor declared the motion carried.

#### **4. To consider Section 183 Notice, as follows:**

##### **(i) Disposal of house at Church St., Onomy, Castleblayney**

Following a discussion on the terms of this disposal, during which members raised particular issues, it was agreed that the matter be deferred pending the Council obtaining legal advice.

Cllr B. McKenna requested that the Members be circulated with a list of properties in Council ownership that are currently vacant.

**5. Election of one representative as a Director to the Board of East Border Region Ltd.**

It was agreed that Cllr G. Carville be nominated as a Director to the Board of East Border Region Ltd., to cover Cllr Crowe's term of office as Chair of the Committee.

**6. Water Services - Briefing on the establishment of Water Ireland.**

This item was deferred to the adjourned meeting to be held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2012.

**7. To adopt minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2012.**

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2012 be adopted.*

**8. To fix dates for Road Area Meetings**

The following dates were agreed for road area meetings:

Carrickmacross	22 February at 2.00 p.m.
Castleblayney	22 February at 10.00 a.m.
Clones	20 February at 2.00 p.m.
Monaghan	27 February at 9.30 a.m.

**9. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences**

There were no reports for circulation under this item.

**10. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector**

Cllr Bannigan stated that the Report of the International Expert Commission Report on the North South Interconnector will come before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Energy in mid February.

*On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that the Council invite officials from EirGrid Plc to the March meeting to discuss the findings of the International Expert Commission Report on the North South Interconnector.*

Consideration of items 11 and 12 was deferred to an adjourned meeting to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> February.

**13. Hope Castle/Lough Muckno Estate – Attendance of Council’s Solicitor, Mr. Enda O’Carroll.**

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Enda O’Carroll, Council’s legal advisor to the meeting. Mr. David Fallon, A/County Manager referred to his report dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February which had been circulated to each member and outlined the main points of the report. He stated that, as outlined previously, a request had been received from Castleblayney Faughs GFC, who are anxious to acquire portion of the estate. This request cannot be dealt with until the situation with the Golf Club is dealt with. Mr. Fallon stated that he had invited Mr. O’Carroll, Solicitor to attend the meeting to update the Council in relation to the on-going legal case relating to Hope Castle.

The Council unanimously agreed to go ‘into committee’ to deal with Mr. O’Carroll’s briefing/advice. Mr. O’Carroll then briefed the Council on the up to date situation regarding the court case in relation to the lease of Hope Castle and the recently received malicious injuries claim for the fire damage to the castle.

Mr. O’Carroll then responded to queries from the Members.

The Deputy Mayor thanked Mr. O’Carroll for the briefing. The meeting then came back into public session.

**14. To receive Presentation from Valuation Office official:**

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Colman Forkin, Team Leader, Valuation Office and invited him to address the Council.

Mr. Forkin thanked the Council for the invitation to attend the meeting. Mr. Forkin stated that the core function of the Valuation Office was to provide a rateable valuation service to local authorities. They also provide a service to Government Departments and local authorities in the valuation of properties. In the course of his presentation he outlined the following:

- The structure and functions of the Valuation Office.
- The rateable valuation system and the programmes of Revision and Revaluation.
- How valuations are decided and the methods of valuation.
- Ratepayer consultation and the appeals process

Following his presentation Mr. Forkin responded to queries from the members. The Mayor thanked Mr. Forkin for his presentation which had been very informative.

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council ask the Department of Finance –*

*1. Since the commencement of the valuation survey in 2003, what amount of funding has been paid out to private consultants engaged, through the outsource model, to carry out valuation surveys?*

2. *What number of Valuation Office Staff have signed up to the incentivised early retirement scheme?*
3. *In what counties have self-assessed valuation surveys been undertaken and what counties are being considered for same?*

## **15. Questions:**

### **Cllr R. Gallagher asked:**

1. How many tenants have applied to purchase houses under the Tenant Purchase Scheme in 2011 and how many have completed the purchase?

**Reply:** *There were 12 applications received under the 2011 Tenant Purchase Scheme for long-standing tenants and two sales were completed. There were 14 applications received in 2011 under the Tenant Purchase Scheme 1995 and one sale was completed.*

2. How many Council houses have had their insulation upgraded to date? How many more remain to be done and the timescale for same?

**Reply:** *Under the energy efficiency improvement program from 2009 to present, Monaghan County Council has upgraded the BER (Building Energy Rating) of 136 County Council dwellings commencing with the older stock to generally achieve a C1 energy rating. Works include a wide range of improvements e.g. attic and cavity wall insulation; condensing oil boilers; factory insulated cylinders; water heating and zone controls upgrade; dry lining; double glazed windows etc. There are 554 County Council dwellings remaining which have to be inspected and surveyed to assess their suitability for a BER upgrade. Based upon projected funding levels and the findings of each of the surveys, it would be proposed to upgrade these dwellings over the next 7 years.*

3. Have the Council received any confirmation of funding to complete the next phase of works on the N2 between Monaghan Town and Emyvale?

**Reply:** *The Council has recently received notification from the National Roads Authority of the national road funding for Monaghan for 2012. An amount of €5.55 million has been allocated to construct the next phase of the N2 improvement works between Coolkill East and Corracrin. A further €0.3 million has been allocated to continue planning and design work on the next section of the N2 between Corracrin and Emyvale.*

4. Could the Council initiate a plan to connect the dwellings and commercial / civic properties along the Urbleshanny Road to the main sewerage treatment system in Scotstown Village?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council has included the proposed extension in a recent Block Grant Application to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government under the 'Rural Water Programme Funding Requirements 2012'. Initial surveys have been completed and the proposed extension is expected to cost €160,000.*

**Cllr B. McKenna asked:**

5. Will this Council examine the feasibility of providing a bus shelter adjacent to the Emyvale Community Centre to provide cover from the elements for those using the public bus service and young students attending schools in the North Monaghan area? Furthermore, that the Community & Enterprise section of the Council might be contacted to examine possible sources of funding for this very important piece of infrastructure.

**Reply:** *The bike shelters which were erected during 2011 were funded by the Dept of Transport through their Jobs Initiative Smarter Travel scheme. That funding had to be spent and drawn down before the end of 2011. However, we have received notification of a meeting shortly in the Dept to discuss a follow-on programme in 2012, which may provide funding for bus shelters. Members are encouraged to contact Carol Lambe or Area Offices with their project ideas as early as possible in 2012 to ensure they can be considered, if funding is allocated.*

6. In relation to the housing development at Riverside, Ballinode:  
(a) What is the current situation in the planning context?

**Reply:** *Planning permission was granted for this development under planning references 00/1369, 02/404 and 02/845. The development has been completed in accordance with the approved plans and associated conditions.*

- (b) Has there been any approach by the developer for Monaghan County Council to take this estate in charge?

**Reply:** *Responsibility for the management of the roads, services and open spaces was transferred from the developer to the 'Kanegeary Management Company Limited'. The planning authority has not received an application to have this development taken in charge.*

- (c) Do Monaghan County Council hold an insurance bond in respect of this estate?

**Reply:** *The submitted cash bond, held as an insurance to ensure the satisfactory completion of all roads, footpaths, open space and services, was refunded in April 2009 following compliance inspections by Council staff. A sum of €1,000 that was retained by the Council to cover the repair costs of a water meter*

- (d) Can the residents request Monaghan County Council to take this estate in charge in view of the fact that the public lighting is not functional in the estate?

**Reply:** *An application to have the development taken in charge by the planning authority, in accordance with the provisions of Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), can be made where the majority of the owners of the houses involved make the request.*

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

7. Following the fires on the Sliabh Beagh/Bragan Mountain in 2010 has there been any audit completed in relation to the disturbance / loss of natural heritage sites and how many of these important sites are still intact?-

*Reply: Sliabh Beagh / Bragan is the largest area of upland blanket bog in County Monaghan. The site is of high conservation value. It is protected at a European level as a Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA) due to its important population of breeding Hen Harriers and is nationally protected as a Natural Heritage Area to protect its blanket bog habitat. Monaghan County Council Heritage Office conducted extensive habitat surveys of Sliabh Beagh in 2007. Although some of the site is affected by hand cutting and mechanical peat extraction much of the cutover areas are regenerating with peat forming communities. The wide range of habitats found on the upland area include upland grassland, heath, reed swamp, freshwater marsh, scrub, wet broadleaved woodland, oligotrophic lakes, blanket bog, pockets of fen. The rare Marsh Fritillary butterfly, the only invertebrate and butterfly protected by EU law has been recently found breeding on Sliabh Beagh.*

*Habitats such as those found on Sliabh Beagh are at risk from activities such as mechanical peat extraction and uncontrolled burning. The Truagh Development Association in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Department of the Environment and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds have recently collaborated, agreed and published a conservation management plan for this cross-border wildlife site. The plan contains recommendations for burning and notes that there is a history of deliberately started fires on Sliabh Beagh. These are of two types – deliberate acts of vandalism and as a management tool used by local farmers to control heather. Both of these acts can have long term and significant impacts on sensitive habitats like blanket bog and wet heath and on ground nesting birds like the Hen Harrier. It also affects the way in which the blanket bog stores water and carbon, decreasing the ecosystem services that the bog provides for free. Many of the ecosystem services that wetlands such as Sliabh Beagh provide, for example, opportunities for recreation and the conservation of biodiversity, are under threat from development and degradation. As such there is a need to demonstrate their economic value to ensure that this is accounted for within the decision making process. A study undertaken by Monaghan County Council Heritage Office on the ecosystem services and value of benefits derived from Sliabh Beagh found that the site is worth €135,500 per yr for ecosystem services like clean water, and an additional €54,276,768 for the stored carbon.*

*Monaghan County Council has not undertaken any survey of the habitats on Sliabh Beagh in 2011, nor mapped the areas affected by the recent burning. The Conservation Management Plan recommends that an area-wide heather burning plan be developed and that an assessment of the appropriateness of heather burning on Sliabh Beagh is required before any heather burn plan is enacted. It is hoped that Monaghan County Council can collaborate with the other partners of the Conservation Management Plan to work together for a solution.*

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

8. To ask Monaghan County Council for an update in relation to the "Percent for Arts Scheme".

(a) What projects and to what financial value have been funded from 2010 to date?

**Reply:**

- *A second payment was made towards the St Maeldoid's Pig ,re: Castleblayney Bypass (site needs to be chosen on this) , Final payment will be made in 2011 when piece is delivered to Monaghan Co. Council, balance is roughly €11,000*
- *€64k was used as part of the Monaghan Town bypass scheme towards the Artist Blacksmith sculpture and project as part of the overall €150K spent on the event.*

(b) What plans are there for further projects under this Scheme?

**Reply:** *None so far, however it is envisaged to use certain Clones % for Art scheme towards The Stone Sculpture's symposium in Clones this May and the development of the Market House in Clones (old Library) into Artists studios.*

(c) What level of funding has yet to be drawn down from Departmental level?

**Reply:** *The County Council would need to do and audit on this , however all capital projects that were linked to % for arts allocation up to 2010 have been claimed to my knowledge, on the basis that capital projects have dwindled dramatically since 2009, I assume very little new schemes are in the pipeline.*

9. In relation to the Smarter Travel Initiative:

(a) Has this project been completed?

(b) How many bike racks / shelters have been completed and are there any plans to further develop this initiative?

**Reply:** (a) *Yes the work was completed by the end of November 2011.*

(b) *15 No. Covered 10-bike Shelters were provided at the following locations: Placed at bus stops/ stations: 5: Placed in town centres: 10*

*40 No. 6-bike Sheffield Stand-type racks were provided – locations as follows (27 towns/villages covered)*

*Community Centres: 28      Community Amenities: 6*

*Town/Village Centres: 6*

10. To ask Monaghan County Council for an update in relation to the Internship Scheme:

(a) How many applicants in total did Monaghan County Council receive for this scheme?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council invited applications from suitably qualified candidates for the ten Internships under the Job Bridge Scheme in the following areas:*

*a. Planning Graduate*

*b. Fire Safety Engineer Graduate*

- c. *Mechanical Engineer (Water Services) Graduate*
  - d. *Civil Engineering Graduate*
  - e. *Tourism and Marketing Graduate*
  - f. *Graduate to support IT Business Leaders Forum*
  - g. *Graduate to support Cross Border Work*
- The number of applicants for each post varied from none to eight.*

(b) How many are employed by Monaghan County Council under this scheme and for what duration?

**Reply:** *Four graduates have accepted a nine month internship.*

**Cllr J. O'Brien asked:**

11. Can Monaghan County Council investigate the possibility of:
- (a) getting the sewerage system up and going on the Castleblayney Road out of Ballybay and also apply for funding to extend the sewerage system out the Keady Road?

**Reply:** *Monaghan Co. Co. has included the extension of the foul sewer network on the Castleblayney Road, Ballybay for funding under the Rural Water Programme 2012. The local topography will require the construction of a pumping station at the eastern boundary of the development boundary and the provision of a 1km length of rising main to extend the collection network and serve future development in this area. The proposed extension is expected to cost in the region of €250,000.*

(b) extending the sewerage system out the Mile-Hill Road of Castleblayney?

**Reply:** *There are currently no plans to extend the sewerage collection network out the Mile Hill Road, Castleblayney.*

12. When does the Council envisage the Clones Road junction in Ballybay to be fully complete with footpath and road widened?

**Reply:** *The works expected to be fully completed in 8 weeks.*

13. What is the up to date position with regard to the Market Square and Hope Castle buildings in Castleblayney? Can the Council tar the road way down to the bridge to the Black Island from the entrance to the Hope Castle?

**Reply:** *The Castleblayney Courthouse Working Group met on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2012. The Group had agreed previously to explore the possibility of securing funding for the necessary preservation work. The A/County Manager made enquiries regarding SEUPB and/or IFI funding. Initial indications are that SEUPB are concentrating on projects other than infrastructural projects and the IFI call is closed at present. The Area Engineer received confirmation from Cavan/Monaghan Leader that projects must be of regional significance. He continues to liaise with the Heritage Officer regarding the criteria for heritage funding. The Interreg IVA Programme is currently open and this funding avenue is being pursued. Cavan/Monaghan Leader Measure 5 – Village and*

*Countryside Renewal and Development could provide limited funding but only for a non-commercial project. It was agreed that the planning process would be advanced to allow a planning application to be lodged.*

*Hope Castle is still the subject of legal proceedings in relation to the renewal of the lease and a malicious injuries claim. The cases were adjourned at the request of the leasee/claimant on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012.*

*The surfacing of this section of roadway is part of an overall project that is being funded under INTERREG IVA. The construction work is currently out to tender.*

**Cllr J. O'Brien asked:**

14. What housing estates in Co. Monaghan do not have to pay the €100 household charge and why?

**Reply:** *The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government have prepared a list of unfinished developments entitled to claim a waiver from payment of the household charge in 2012. The developments in County Monaghan contained on this list are;*

*'An Crannog', Carrickmacross.*

*'Ascaill Rois', Carrickmacross.*

*'Carrabarra Island', Smithboro.*

*'Chapel Court', Carrickroe.*

*'Cnoc Na Greine', Tydavnet.*

*'Drummond Radharc', Carrickmacross.*

*'Drummond Ross', Carrickmacross.*

*'Eanaigh', Clones.*

*'Forest Walk', Monaghan Town.*

*'Killycard Manor', Castleblayney.*

*'Knock Carrick', Annyalla.*

*'Latlurcan Close/Latlurcan Court/Latlurcan Close, Monaghan Town.*

*'Lois a Ghortin', Clones.*

*'Lough na Glack', Clones.*

*'Maple Grove', Smithboro.*

*'Mullach Glas', Monaghan Town.*

*'Oakland Grove', Scotshouse.*

*Plan Ref 04/1523 ('Hall Street', Ballybay).*

*Plan Ref 05/18 (MT 05/18 – 'Knockroe', Monaghan Town).*

*Plan Ref 05/606 (2 units linked to 'Killycard Manor', Castleblayney).*

*Plan Ref 07/1860 (relates to a one-off house in Emyvale).*

*'Rock River View', Rockcorry.*

*'The Ferns', Scotstown.*

*'The Meadows', Smithboro.*

*'Thorndale', Castleblayney.*

*'Tower Court', Ballybay.*

*'Wylies Hill', Ballybay.*

*It should be noted that this list does not correspond with the Councils list of unfinished developments. This matter has been brought to the attention of Department officials.*

*The legislation provides that an owner of residential property which is situated in an unfinished estate, within the meaning contained in the Local Government (Household Charges) Act 2011, on the liability date (1st January) is entitled to a waiver from payment of the Household Charge in respect of that property for that year. A national survey of unfinished housing developments was carried out in 2011 by officials from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, in conjunction with the Planning Departments of the various local authorities. As part of this survey, all unfinished developments were examined and categorised along the following lines:*

*Category 1: the development is still being actively completed by the developer;*

*Category 2: a receiver has been appointed;*

*Category 3: a receiver has not been appointed and the developer is still in place but effectively inactive; and*

*Category 4: the development has been effectively abandoned and is posing serious problems for residents.*

**Only categories 3 and 4 unfinished housing estates qualify for the waiver.**

*A person who, on 1 January 2012, is an owner of a residential property in an unfinished development contained in the prescribed list is entitled to claim a waiver from payment of the household charge in 2012. This prescribed list consists only of developments under Categories 3 and 4. Persons claiming entitlement to a waiver must complete the household charge registration form*

**Cllr P. McNally asked:**

15. *How does this Council compare pricewise with Counties Louth, Cavan and Meath when it comes to registered Sewerage Contractors discharging contents of rural septic tanks in our Sewerage Schemes?*

*Reply:- Monaghan County Council currently charges €66 per cubic metre to receive and treat septic tank sludges at our wastewater treatment facilities throughout the county. Louth County Council charges €5 per cubic metre whilst Meath County Council charges €15 per cubic metre for septic tank wastes. Following enactment of the Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012, all local authorities are reviewing their charging structures having regard to the need to put procedures in place to inspect waste permits and weigh, record and test incoming sludges.*

**Cllr A. Murray asked:**

16. *When will the Council be bringing forward plans for the Market Square in Carrickmacross and will there be public consultation on the issue?*

**Reply:** *Carrickmacross Town Council has written to the Council expressing an interest in acquiring the Market Square for renovation and development as a community/tourism/arts facility for the town. Whilst work needs to be carried out immediately to repair the roof, any proposals for the development or renovation would be the subject of public consultation.*

**Cllr M. Carthy asked:**

17. When is it expected that directional signage for Mannan Castle Golf Club in Donaghmoynne will be erected; please indicate locations and dimensions of all proposed signs?

**Reply:** *The Council's Engineer has prepared a proposal for these signs and the Council is currently in the process of seeking prices from the manufacturers. Once this process is complete the Council will communicate directly with Mannan Castle.*

18. At this point how many households have indicated that they will accept the Council's offer to connect to the Carrickmacross Waste Water Collection Network? For those households who do accept the Council's offer and pay the required sum when can they expect the connection to the sewerage network to be completed?

**Reply:** *15 applications to connect to the recently completed Carrickmacross Waste Water Collection Network were received in January 2012.*

*On application, Monaghan County Council responds to each individual detailing the applicable connection conditions and charges (if unpaid in advance). Each applicant is responsible to engage their own contractor to complete the connection / works associated with the connection. Monaghan County Council personnel only supervise the connection being made.*

19. To ask the Council to outline the information that is sought from tenants when carrying out annual rent review. Please explain the rationale for requesting any piece of information that has no relevance to the rent payable (for example, tenants ESB MRPN).

**Reply:** *For the purpose of carrying out an annual rent review, all tenants are requested to complete an Income Query Form outlining the names of all occupants of the house and providing details of their dates of birth, occupation and weekly income. In addition to this, tenants are requested to submit documentary evidence of their weekly income.*

*Tenants were also requested to submit the MPRN (Meter Point Reference Number) of their house. This number is unique to the dwelling and is required by the Council in order to identify each property when publishing Building Energy Rating Certificates. Monaghan County Council, as a landlord is obliged to provide BER certificates to prospective buyers or tenants when a home is constructed, sold or rented.*

*Tenants were also requested to submit PPS numbers for all occupants of their household in order to update the Council's housing computer system I-House.*

**Cllr C. McPhillips asked:**

20. In the Boyher estate in Rockcorry there are a number of street lights. However, there are two holes dug, presumably for the purpose of additional lighting but these remain unused and covered over by cones. Can Monaghan County Council please advise if or when these lights will be installed as they are currently a health and safety hazard?

**Reply:** *Clones Area office is currently reviewing the list of public lighting schemes in the Clones Area with a view to obtaining revised costings from public lighting suppliers. The lights in Rockcorry are on this list and once the revised costs have been received the current lighting programme will be updated to determine the cost and timeframe for each scheme.*

21. Can Monaghan County Council please advise how many Council staff are charged throughout the County with responsibility for emptying and maintaining “bottle” and “bring banks”? As a number of “bring banks” were overflowing in early January following the Christmas period. Is it possible for an additional member of staff to be assigned to this annually in January?

**Reply:** *Through a tendering process Monaghan County Council has engaged the services of a Waste Management Company to empty the 28 bring banks in the County. There is an agreed collection schedule and the contractors are also very accommodating when informed that banks are full, usually emptying the banks within 48 hours.*

*The monitoring of the bring banks is carried out by the Environmental Patrol Warden on a weekly basis, if banks are full he contacts the contractor directly. There are no plans at present to have additional staff assigned to this task.*

22. There is a very sharp bend on the Monaghan / Cootehill Road immediately before the Abbott factory. There have been a number of accidents at this bend with the most recent, to the best of my knowledge, being on New Year’s Eve. In light of the large number of heavy goods vehicles who use this road daily and the additional danger of the large stone wall which borders this bend, can Monaghan County Council put in place any immediate safety features and seek funding under the Low Cost Safety Scheme for a more long term solution?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council is introducing a 60 kph speed limit in the vicinity of Abbots Factory in the near future. This should reduce speeds on the approach to the corner in question from the Cootehill direction. In conjunction with the speed limit, it is proposed to highlight the corner from the Rockcorry direction by means of additional warning signs and road markings.*

**Cllr S. Conlon asked:**

23. Regarding the increase in frequency of illegally dumped used tyres as well as unfair competitive advantage of rogue traders who fail to register, what measures are the Council’s Environmental Section and local Environmental Protection Agency taking to ensure tyre importers and retailers are complying with waste management legislation on tyre disposal?

**Reply:** *Regulations in relation to Waste Tyres came into force in 2008. The Regulations impose obligations on persons who supply tyres to the Irish market, whether as manufacturers, wholesalers, suppliers, traders or retailers and on the collectors of waste tyres to either register with a Local Authority or participate in an Approved Voluntary Scheme. There are currently eleven tyre companies registered with an approved voluntary scheme. Monaghan County Council contact tyre operators to ensure that they are in compliance with the regulations and further onsite inspections are planned in the Environment Section's Enforcement Plan 2012.*

*In relation to tyres dumped along the road side Monaghan County Council remove these and send them to an authorised facility for recovery.*

**Cllr S. Conlon asked:**

24. The recent realignment of road markings put in place on the N2 at the top of Castleshane hill to facilitate right turn movements at Corrawillan LT 54202 has all but eliminated the hard shoulder with several accidents narrowly avoided. To enhance road safety will the Road Section ensure appropriate barriers are installed along this exposed soft shoulder?

**Reply:** *The road side verge at this location was damaged by an errant heavy goods vehicle. The Council will repair the verge and install roadside delineators in the verge and continue to monitor the location.*

**17. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations:**

It was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the following:

- The family of the late Josephine Duffy, Cavany, Scotshouse, RIP, former County Registrar and Returning Officer.
- Bernie Moen and Kathleen McCrudden (Council staff) on the death of their grandmother and mother in law, Brigid McCrudden, Knocknagrave, Tydavnet RIP.
- Kenneth Gray and The Smyth family (Northern Standard) on the death of Bernie Gray (nee Smyth), RIP, Beechgrove Lawns, Monaghan.
- Eugene Farmer and Eilish Markey (Council staff) on the death of their father and grandfather, Shane Farmer, RIP, Aghnaskew, Latton.
- The family of the late Peter Dempsey, RIP, Lisnalong.
- Victor and Miriam Conlon, Latton on the death of their son Jack RIP.

It was agreed that a vote of congratulations be extended to the following:

- The Girls basketball team from Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney on winning the All Ireland Schools Basketball Title.
- The students from Ballybay Community College and their teacher Mr. Martin Molloy on winning the EPA section of the Young Scientists competition.
- Siobhan McKenna, Truagh GFC on receiving the Co. Monaghan GAA Camogie Player of the Year Award.

- Mark Downey, Carrickmacross Emmets GFC on receiving the Co. Monaghan GAA Intermediate Footballer of the Year Award
- Owen Duffy, Latton GFC on receiving the Co. Monaghan GAA Young Footballer of the Year Award
- Kieran Duffy, Latton GFC on receiving the Co. Monaghan GAA Senior Footballer of the Year Award
- Niall Flanagan, Cremartin GFC on receiving the Co. Monaghan GAA Junior Footballer of the Year Award

It was also agreed that a vote of good wishes for a long and happy retirement be extended to Tom Carron, Journalist with the Anglo Celt Newspaper.

## 18. Conferences:

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that the Council be represented at the following conferences by the members listed.*

<b>Promoting Authority</b>	<b>Subject/Theme</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Members</b>
<b>Irish Central Border Area Network</b>	Spatial Planning Building Networks	The Royal Hotel, Cookstown.	<b>7<sup>th</sup> February 2012</b>	Cllr P. Treanor
<b>AMAI</b>	Local Government Renewal & Development	Kilmore Hotel, Cavan, Co Cavan.	<b>10<sup>th</sup> &amp; 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2012</b>	Cllr McElvaney Cllr Carville
<b>TGR Seminar</b>	Help busy Councillors become effective leaders	Westport Plaza Hotel, Westport, Co Mayo.	<b>February 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> 2012</b>	Cllr O’Hanlon Cllr McNally Cllr Murray Cllr Coyle
<b>Mid-West Regional Authority 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference</b>	Economic Development in Regions: The Way Forward	Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co Clare.	<b>16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012</b>	Cllr O’Brien Cllr Gallagher Cllr Crowe Cllr Bannigan Cllr Maxwell Cllr McElvaney
<b>Rattoo Heritage Society</b>	The 21 <sup>st</sup> Annual Kerry Environmental Conference & Training Seminars for Elected Members	Meadowlands Hotel, Oakpark, Tralee, Co Kerry,	<b>23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February 2012</b>	Cllr Connolly Cllr O’Hanlon Cllr Maxwell Cllr McElvaney Cllr Carville Cllr Coyle

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> Colmcille Winter School</b>	“Can the Tourism industry Lead Economic Recovery in Ireland”	The Colmcille, Heritage Centre, Gartan, Letterkenny, Co Donegal.	<b>24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2012</b>	Cllr P Treanor Cllr Murray Cllr Bannigan
<b>Waterford County Council Metal Health Conference</b>	Metal Health & Suicide Awareness	The Park Hotel, Dungarvan, Co Waterford.	<b>24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2012</b>	Cllr O’Brien Cllr Keelan

### **Urgent Business:**

#### **Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr B. McKenna seconded**

*That Monaghan County Council notes with concern the figures released last week which show that Monaghan is one of just four counties that has received no IDA funding in the past five years. The fact that only one visit was arranged with a potential investor to this county since 2007 is an indictment on the IDA and of successive governments.*

*That Monaghan County Council seeks a meeting with the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mr. Richard Bruton, T.D., as a matter of urgency, to discuss this issue in a bid to end the ongoing blatant disregard for Monaghan displayed by the IDA.*

In moving the motion, Cllr Carthy referred to the IDA’s record of new industry start-ups in County Monaghan. The figures released last week show that Monaghan has been neglected and ignored by the IDA. It was clear that Dundalk and County Louth was the Authority’s main priority for the region. Monaghan has a great record of ‘doing it for ourselves’ and this is evident by the number of local entrepreneurs and the regular meetings taking place within the county to create and sustain employment. He was confident that the County Council would give any assistance it could to enable new industry locate in the county. Cllr B. McKenna seconded the motion and concurred with the sentiments expressed by Cllr Carthy. He said the IDA always had an excuse as to why a new industry in the region had been located outside of County Monaghan – firstly it was the poor roads infrastructure, then it was no university or I.T. in the county. A number of other members also joined in the debate and called on the Minister and the IDA to address the situation immediately.

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

*During the course of the debate Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr S. Treanor seconded that Monaghan County Council invite the CEO of IDA Ireland and the CEO of the IDA North East to a meeting of the Council to outline what efforts were made to attract jobs to County Monaghan over the past five years and what plans the IDA have to attract jobs over the coming five years.*

Whilst there was unanimous support for Cllr Connolly's motion it was agreed that it not be acted on until such time as a response is received to the request for a meeting with Minister Bruton.

The meeting then concluded.