

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Tuesday 11th January, 2011 at 10.00 a.m.

Chair: Cllr J. Crowe, Mayor.

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

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

At the outset the Mayor, Cllr J. Crowe, wished all present a very happy new year 2011.

The Mayor then proposed votes of sympathy to the families of those who lost their lives in the recent road accident outside Carrickmacross namely Roisin Connolly and her unborn baby Catherine, Glen Curtis and Paul Carroll. Cllr McNally seconded the proposal which was agreed by all members.

Cllr McNally also proposed a vote of sympathy with the Curtis Family on the death of Martin Curtis, Drumconrath, Co. Meath. This was seconded by Cllr Crowe.

Cllr Carthy paid tribute to all the emergency services who attended the scene of the fatal road accident.

Cllr McElvaney called for the re-constitution of the Road Safety Committee which had been in existence prior to the 2009 local elections.

Cllr McNally proposed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to Michael and Marian Harte on the tragic death of their daughter Michaela McAreavey RIP and also to her husband John McAreavey and to the Bishop of Dromore – Bishop John McAreavey, an uncle of the late Michaela's husband. Cllr Carthy seconded the proposal which was agreed by all members.

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager associated himself with the all the votes of sympathy on behalf of the staff. He commended the emergency services who responded to the accident scene.

1. Minutes:

- (i) *On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 6th December, 2010 be confirmed.*
- (ii) *On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that the minutes of the Statutory Budget meeting held on Friday 17th December, 2010 be confirmed.*

2. Correspondence:

The following correspondence was circulated:

- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of An Taoiseach regarding the Council's resolution relating to the IMF bailout.
- Letter from Micheál Martin, Minister for Foreign Affairs thanking the Council for the resolution of sympathy on the death of his daughter Léana.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Justice Equality and Law Reform regarding the Council's resolution relating to the probation service/litter clean up.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources regarding the Council's resolution relating to the postal service in Ireland.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Food regarding the Council's resolution relating to the Ballybay Agricultural Office.
- Letter from Irish Public Bodies regarding a Public Liability Insurance Scheme for Elected Members.
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council regarding competition within the bulk LPG market in Ireland.
- Letter from the Union of Students in Ireland expressing its appreciation for the efficient way in which the Council processed higher education grant applications in this academic year.
- Report from the Environment Section regarding the provision of a small recycling facility in the Clones Area.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Education and Skills expressing concern at the increase in the student registration fee and the changes in the criteria to qualify for the non-adjacent rate of grant.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the resolution from Monaghan Town Council, as follows, be adopted –

That this Council implore the Competition Authority to implement measures that will enhance competition within the bulk LPG (Liquified Petroleum Gas) market. Restrictive licensing agreements have resulted in domination of this market by Calor Gas and Flogas. The Competition Authority has acknowledged since 2005 that improvements are necessary but have failed to date to protect the consumer”.

It was agreed that the resolution would also be forwarded to the Commission for Energy Regulation and the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr S. Treanor it was agreed that the Council email the three Government T.D.'s from this county reminding them of the commitment they gave to employees of An Post and of the implications that the

proposal to liberalise the Irish Postal Market will have on rural communities in Ireland and asking them not to support the Communications Regulation (Postal Services) Bill which will come before the Dail shortly and, if passed, will result in the privatisation of the postal service and, ultimately, the loss of rural postal services.

Ethics & Political Declarations:

Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator informed the Members that they had been issued with the annual declaration forms under the Ethics & Political Donations Regulations. She requested that Members complete the forms and return them before the prescribed dates i.e. 28th February 2011 (Ethics declarations) and 31st January 2011 (Political Donations declarations).

3. To consider proposal to take in charge the Lough Derry Road in Magheraclone

Cllr Carthy proposed that the Lough Derry road in Magheraclone is taken in charge by the Council. He stated that the road had been repaired under a local improvement scheme some years ago. He accepted that the road would be an additional road in the South Monaghan Roads Programme.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Murray it was agreed that the proposal to take the Lough Derry road in Magheraclone, be advertised for public consultation.

Cllr Murray asked that the Council would examine the possibility of taking in charge the road to Ballyhoe.

4. Housing – To receive report on the Social Housing Leasing Scheme and the Rental Accommodation Scheme

Mr. A. King, Director of Housing advised the members that as a result of a proposal at the December Council meeting he had arranged for presentations on the Rental Accommodation Scheme and the Social Housing Leasing Scheme.

Ms. Mary O'Connor, RAS Officer then outlined the details of the Rental Accommodation Scheme to the members.

Mr. K. McNally, Senior Executive Engineer then outlined the details of the Social Housing Leasing Scheme.

Following the presentations Ms. O'Connor and Mr. McNally responded to queries from the Members.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to the Minister for Housing and the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government calling on the government to

re-introduce a sustainable capital local authority led social housing purchase and building programme and to end the practice of leasing social houses on the basis that it makes no economic sense and will actually create huge social problems in the future.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the Council seek a meeting with the Department of the Environment to discuss the Social Housing Leasing Scheme.

5. To fix date for meeting of County Monaghan Joint Policing Committee

It was agreed that the next meeting of County Monaghan Joint Policing Committee would be held on Monday 28th February, 2011 at 10.00 a.m. in the Mtek Building.

6. To receive minutes of meeting with Minister John Gormley, T.D. held on Monday 13th December, 2010

The Members noted the minutes of the meeting with Mr. John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on 13th December, 2010.

7. To receive report on the impact of the Croke Park Agreement on the Council's services.

The Members considered the report from the A/County Manager dated 5th January 2010 which had been circulated. The report outlined the aims of the Public Service Agreement 2010-2014 and how these aims will be achieved by the Monaghan Local Authorities.

The Members welcomed the report and the statement by the County Manager that the changes outlined therein can be achieved without an adverse impact on the general public.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Crow it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requesting that local authorities are compensated for the administration costs associated with the operation of the higher education grants scheme, as recommended in the Report of the Local Government Efficiency Review Group.

8. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences

The Members noted the report from Cllr P. Connolly in relation to his attendance at the LAMA Autumn Seminar in Listowel Co. Kerry.

9. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector

Mr. P. Clifford referred to the draft Transmission Development Plan which has been published by Eirgrid and copy of which had been circulated to each member. He indicated that submissions are invited from members of the public up to the 14th January, 2011.

10. Business submitted by County Manager

Cavan-Carrickmacross-Dundalk Route Improvement Strategy:

The A/County Manager advised the members that a public information session to outline proposals for the upgrading of this route would be held in the Workhouse, Carrickmacross on Tuesday 1st February, 2011 from 3pm to 8pm. A briefing session specifically for elected members has been arranged for Tuesday 25th January, 2011 at 4pm in the same venue. All members are invited to attend this briefing.

N2 – Clontibret to the Border Road Scheme:

The A/County Manager informed the members that with regard to this scheme, variations which have emerged as a result of the public consultation process on the project will be presented by the Consultants to the Council at the February Council meeting. He further stated that it will be necessary to re-open the public consultation process to allow for the consideration of these variations by the public.

Report on Council activities during the recent severe weather spell:

The A/County Manager referred to the recent severe cold weather spell and to the activities undertaken by the Council during this period. He invited Mr. D. Treanor, A/Director of Roads & Environment to outline the programme of work undertaken by Council staff. Mr. Treanor gave a detailed report to the Council on these activities. He stated that he anticipated that salt stocks would be back to almost full capacity by that weekend. He stated that work will recommence shortly on the new salt barn and it is hoped that the main construction work should be completed by the end of January.

Mr. Fallon paid tribute to the staff who worked tirelessly over the cold spell to ensure roads were kept clear and water services were restored where possible.

A number of members referred to problems with underground mains freezing and proposed that the Council take note of these locations with a view to taking remedial action to prevent such problems in the future.

Cllr S. McKenna referred to the condition of the Scotstown – Knockatallon road during the severe weather. She had been advised that this road was not being salted as it was a local road. She proposed that at least one road to Knockatallon should be salted. Cllr Maxwell supported the proposal that Knockatallon be included in future salting operations by the Council. This was agreed.

11. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meetings held on 6th December and 17th December, 2010.

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 6th and 17th December, 2010 were responded to by the appropriate official.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that the Council write to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government pointing out the anomaly that exists at present where grants are provided for attic insulation and as a result of that insulation, the water system may become more exposed to freezing. The Council requests that consideration be given to the introduction of a grant for the insulation of the water system also.

12. Questions:

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

1 In view of the more recent extremes in snow and freezing weather conditions that we now experience what arrangements have Monaghan County Council in place to make salt available to:

- (a) People living in housing developments
- (b) Dwellers living in more remote areas not serviced by gritters
- (c) Members of the public in general.

And what if any costs to the public are associated with the above arrangements?

Reply: *The Council adopted it's winter maintenance plan in December 2010. During the recent severe weather grit supplies were made available at over 40 locations throughout the County. This was provided at no cost to the public. In addition the Council's Area Offices responded to local calls on other routes on a priority basis. The Council published details of local suppliers of winter maintenance materials on its website.*

2 In relation to the provision of salt and the new arrangements with the NRA are Monaghan County Council satisfied that these new arrangements are adequate?

Reply: *The supply of salt at the commencement of the winter period was adequate to treat the Council planned programme of national, regional and local roads. However the unprecedented extreme winter conditions experienced commencing in November and lasting until the 27th December resulted in a huge increase in daily salt usage nationally. All local authorities were advised to manage their salt usage to bring daily usage to more sustainable levels and to give priority to treatment of national network.*

3 What level of salt stockpiles, or how many days supply of salt for a full road gritting programme, had Monaghan County Council on hand prior to the commencement of the adverse weather conditions in December 2010?

Reply: *The severe weather commenced in November 2010 with three snowfall events occurring between the 24th and 29th of November. Over this period alone the Council used 950 ton of salt. The capacity of the salt store at Monaghan machinery Yard is 600 tonnes approx.*

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

- 4 What progress has been made by Monaghan County Council in relation to restoring/ improving signage for Monaghan General Hospital?

Reply: *Monaghan Town Council has consulted with the HSE and is awaiting confirmation from them regarding the text to be included on the signage.*

Cllr G. Carville asked:

5. Following the approval of the application by this Council through East Border Region Committee for funding under Peace III (Priority 2, Theme 1 (Creating Shared Public Spaces), what is the up to date situation concerning the delivery of this project in terms of the development of an adventure play area at Lough Muckno, Castleblayney; how much grant aid is involved and how soon is it expected that works can be commenced?

Reply: *The provision of a play park in Lough Muckno is part of a regional project submitted to Peace III by Groundwork Northern Ireland. What is proposed is a 'natural play' adventure park, using natural features and fitting in with the landscape. The project will be developed in consultation with local groups. As part of the project, these groups will have the opportunity to visit the other locations which are included in this regional project, and will meet with the groups involved in the other locations.*

A total of £220,000 has been earmarked for the Castleblayney project. The project promoters, Groundwork Northern Ireland, have reported that they are experiencing delays in receiving a Letter of Offer from the SEUPB, which has requested additional letters of support before issuing a contract. A start date for the Monaghan part of the project is not set, but is expected to be spring 2011.

This project is being handled for Monaghan County Council by Carol Lambe in the Office of Community & Enterprise. Interested parties should contact Carol directly, and she will keep them informed on progress.

6. When will the new round of funding be on stream for the Castleblayney / South Armagh (CASA) cross-border project and, specifically, what levels of funds will be involved on this occasion and when can we expect works to progress in relation to the Rural Tourism and Enterprise Development aspects of the project?

Reply: The CASA project has been approved for funding as outlined below:

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Capital Costs	£	£	£	£	£
Ballybay work units	-	£186,761	186,762	-	£373,523
Slieve Gullion paths	-	£106,079	106,080	-	£212,159
Slieve Gullion Family adventure	-	£87,369	87,369	-	£174,738
Lough Muckno costs	-	£259,759	259,760	-	£519,519
Total capital cost	-	£639,968	£639,971	-	£1,279,939
Revenue Costs					
Cross border marketing programme	-	£12,572	-	-	£12,572
Programme delivery costs	£3,000	£31,280	£25,658	£21,204	£81,142
Total revenue cost	£3,000	£43,852	£25,658	£21,204	£93,714
TOTAL COST	£3,000	£683,820	£665,629	£21,204	£1,373,653

Newry & Mourne District Council is the Lead Partner so all costs are in Sterling. The project will be funded at a level of 100% so no match funding is required.

The expectation is that a Letter of Offer will issue in January with an expected Start date for the project in early February. Full tender action is required for all capital elements of the project and this process will take some months to complete. This being the case, it is unlikely that works will commence before June/July 2011.

Cllr G. Carville asked:

7. Will the Council make funding available in 2011 for the painting of the Market House / Courthouse in Castleblayney, given that it is in County Council ownership and a growing eyesore in the town due to its condition at present and what is the up to date situation with regard to the possible development of this facility in partnership with the local community?

Reply: The 2011 Budget has an allocation of €10,000 included for the painting of the Market House / Courthouse. During the recent bad weather part of the soffit fell and an area has been cordoned for safety.

A local community group is formulating proposals to renovate the building and has met with Council officials. The executive is agreeable in principle to the sale of the premises for a nominal sum and to enter into a rental / leasing agreement for office space for both the County Council and Town Council.

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

8. When is it anticipated accommodation works on the N2 bypass at Glennyhorn will be completed?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council are satisfied that all accommodation works at this location have been completed.*

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

9. What are the revised arrangements following the budget with regard to the tenant purchase scheme in Monaghan?

Reply: *No details, as yet, have been issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government in relation to the revised arrangements announced in the Budget.*

10. What is the expected date for the announcement of the preferred route corridor for the N2 Clontibret to Northern Ireland Border Road Scheme and what indications are there for funding available for same?

Reply: *It is anticipated that it will be at mid-2011 before a preferred route corridor will emerge and go to public consultation. There is no indication on funding for this scheme at present.*

Cllr M. Carthy asked:

11. What plans does the Council have to provide additional public parking for residents and their visitors in Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross, in the vicinity of the new houses being built under the Remedial Works Scheme considering there already can be difficulties even before the new houses are occupied?

Reply: *The number of car parking spaces directly associated with the houses under construction at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross is to be increased from 6 to 28.*

12. What is the up-to-date position regarding the proposed Group Home for women with physical and sensory disabilities in Carrickmacross – when is it expected that work on this project will finally commence?

Reply: *Significant work has been done on this project to date. The design of the Group Home and discussions with the Department of the Environment Heritage & Local Government, Respond! and the Health Service Executive are well advanced. It is not possible to give a definite commencement date for construction at this time as further meetings are required involving the Health Service Executive. and the Approved Housing Body Respond! in early 2011 to finalise arrangements including a "Service Level Agreement" setting out how the Group Home will be managed and also the design has to be finalized and agreed with the Department before applying for Planning Permission. The*

Planning and Departmental approvals may take six months with an additional three months required for the tender process and appointment of Contractor. All going well it is hoped that the project will commence on site in the latter half of 2011.

Cllr M. Carthy asked:

13. With regard to Monaghan Local Authority's Housing waiting list:

- a. How many new applicants, per electoral area, applied for social housing with Monaghan Local Authorities during 2010?

Reply:

<i>Monaghan Electoral Area</i>	<i>181</i>
<i>Carrickmacross Electoral Area</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>Castleblayney Electoral Area</i>	<i>110</i>
<i>Clones Electoral Area</i>	<i><u>55</u></i>
<i>Total Number Applications in 2010</i>	<i>497</i>

- b. How many applicants, per electoral area, were housed in Council dwellings by Monaghan Local Authorities during 2010?

Reply:

<i>Monaghan Electoral Area</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Carrickmacross Electoral Area</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Castleblayney Electoral Area</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Clones Electoral Area</i>	<i><u>3</u></i>
<i>Total Number Housed in 2010</i>	<i>89</i>

- c. How many applicants are currently on the Housing lists of Monaghan Local Authorities, per electoral area?

Reply:

<i>Monaghan Electoral Area</i>	<i>392</i>
<i>Carrickmacross Electoral Area</i>	<i>327</i>
<i>Castleblayney Electoral Area</i>	<i>223</i>
<i>Clones Electoral Area</i>	<i><u>138</u></i>
<i>Total Number on Waiting List</i>	<i>1079</i>

14. How many planning applications were received by Monaghan County Council in 2009? Of these:

- a. How many in total were refused, withdrawn, granted (in numbers and percentage)?

Cllr M. Carthy asked:

- b. How many per electoral area were received and of these how many were refused, withdrawn or granted?
c. How many decisions were subsequently appealed to An Bord Pleanála and of these how many appeals were upheld?

Reply: There were 570 planning applications received to date in 2010. Of these, 28 were refused (5%), 13 withdrawn (2%) and 330 granted (58%). 199 applications have yet to be determined

There were six appeals to An Bord Pleanala in 2010. Of these, three appeals have been determined, two of which, relating to phone masts, have been overturned.

13. Notices of Motion:

Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr P. Treanor seconded

That Monaghan County Council meet with all authorised providers of broadband services to County Monaghan to ascertain their rollout programme for broadband to the many areas of the county, currently not having broadband access, and following this meeting, Monaghan County Council prepare a report for presentation to the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, highlighting the areas of Co. Monaghan with an inadequate service and requesting expeditious provision of broadband services, due to the huge difficulties being experienced for businesses, students, residences etc. in these areas.

In proposing the motion Cllr Coyle stated that whilst he acknowledged that 3 Ireland had rolled out a reasonable service to a number of areas they were not obliged to provide this service to all areas of the county. He requested that Monaghan County Council take a leadership role and bring together the service providers so that a full broadband service is available across the whole county.

In seconding the motion, Cllr P. Treanor called for a reliable high speed delivery of broadband across the whole county. He referred to recent research undertaken by ICBAN in this matter and that this research should be drawn upon.

A number of members expressed support for the motion.

Mr. A. King, Director of Services referred to the Economic Development Strategy which had recently been adopted. A Business Leaders Forum had been established to look at the whole area of I.T. Claire Cunningham, Aura Internet Services and Kevin McNally, MCC had already done a lot of work in this area. He suggested that they would give a presentation to the Council at a future meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr O'Brien it was agreed that Claire Cunningham and Kevin McNally would give a presentation on broadband services to the Council at a future meeting.

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

The time being 3.00 p.m. it was agreed, on the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr O’Hanlon, to extend the finishing time to 3.30 pm in order to complete the remaining items on the agenda.

(b) **Cllr G. Carville proposed, Cllr Keelan seconded**

That this Council rejects the recommendation contained in the recent Efficiency Review of Local Government to impose Tolls on National Roads and calls on the Government not to implement such a measure.

In proposing the motion, Cllr Carville stated that the proposal to impose tolls on national roads is contrary to the economic development of the country. The principal key arteries through Co. Monaghan in terms of economic well-being were the national roads. Local authorities will not be the beneficiaries of the tolls collected and it will be another tax on motorists. The imposition of tolls will reverse the positive impact of the bypasses already in place.

In seconding the motion, Cllr Keelan stated that there were areas where public transport did not exist and the imposition of tolls would penalise people who had to use their car to get to work or go about their business.

A number of members spoke in favour of the motion.

The motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously.

(c) The Members agreed to defer Notice of Motion (c), in the name of Cllr Carthy, to the next meeting.

14. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations:

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that the Council congratulate Darren Doherty, Emyvale on winning the Under 16 title at the U.S. National Finals in San Diego, California.

15. 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.

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members
ICLRD Annual Conference	The Changing Business, Community & Spatial Planning Landscape: Doing More with Less	Radisson BLU Hotel, Ballincar, Sligo	20th & 21st January 2011	Cllr Aidan Murray Cllr Owen Bannigan Cllr Heather Humphreys Cllr John O’Brien Cllr Seamus Coyle Cllr Pat Treanor

Conferences (contd):

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members
TJK Conferences Ltd	The Role of State Institutions & Law Reform in Promoting Ireland's Economic Future	Thomond Park Stadium, Limerick	28th & 29th January 2011	Cllr Hugh McElvaney Cllr David Maxwell Cllr Heather Humphreys Cllr Pdraig McNally Cllr P.J. O'Hanlon Cllr Noel Keelan Cllr Paudge Connolly
AMAI Spring Seminar	The Case for Municipal Government	Westlodge Hotel Bantry, Cork	11th & 12th February 2011	Cllr Owen Bannigan Cllr Gary Carville Cllr Aidan Murray Cllr Robbie Gallagher Cllr John O'Brien

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Meara Meetings Administrator

Date: _____