

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 6th July, 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Chair: Cllr Noel Keelan, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs. Bannigan, Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Maxwell, McElvaney, McPhillips, B. McKenna, McNally, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor and S. Treanor.

Mr. E. Cummins, Chief Executive, Mr. A. King and Mr. P. Clifford, Directors of Services, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Mr. J. McKernan, A/Senior Engineer, Mr. G. McMahon and Mr. D. Hanratty, Senior Executive Engineers, Mr. B. Smyth, Veterinary Officer and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

- (i) On the proposal of Cllr. B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of Council meeting held on 8th June, 2015, be confirmed.*
- (ii) On the proposal of Cllr. P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna, it was agreed that the minutes of Annual Council meeting held on 22nd June, 2015, be confirmed.*

2. Correspondence

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda for the meeting:

- Letter from Mr. Pascal Donohoe, T.D., Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport declining a meeting with a delegation from the Council to discuss funding for regional and local roads.
- Email from Minister Carál Ní Chuilín offering a meeting with a delegation from the Council to discuss the re-opening of the Ulster Canal.
- Letter of acknowledgement from Mr. Paudie Donohoe, Minister for Housing, Planning and the Co-ordination of Construction 2020 declining a meeting with a delegation from the Council in relation to social housing construction.
- Circular letter LG5/2015 in relation to domestic subsistence rates and distance requirements for elected members which come into effect from 1st July, 2015.
- Letter from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to arrangements for AILG training events.
- Resolution from the Ballybay-Clones M.D., calling on the Council to encourage and support local communities to develop Ireland 1916 Gardens of Remembrance.
- Resolution from South Dublin County Council calling on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to introduce a Bin Waiver Scheme for people with health issues.

The following correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Resolution from Donegal County Council supporting the Irish Deaf Society's call for Irish Sign Language to be recognised as an Official Language.

- Resolution from Donegal County Council requesting that all houses built or bought under the Social Housing 2020 will be located in rural areas.
- Resolution from Donegal County Council welcoming the wage increase awarded to Dunne's Stores workers but calling for all employers to guarantee their employees a minimum and liveable number of hours of employment.
- Letter from Castleblayney Arts & Community Resource Centre thanking the Council for the grant of €25,000 towards the Iontas Theatre.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr S. Treanor it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Education requesting clarification regarding what steps have been taken to ensure application of the EU Globalisation Fund to the workers at Bose in Carrickmacross, and an equal number of unemployed people from the area.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that this Council continues in its efforts to secure a meeting with IDA in relation to job creation in Co. Monaghan.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that this Council calls on the Minister for Transport, Paschal Donohue, to meet a representation from Monaghan County Council in relation to the lack of funding for our roads. We also call for the five local TD's to be present at the meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that the Council writes to Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, to ask that his department find suitable dates that would fit the Ministers schedule to meet with this Council in relation to roads funding. We as a Council, would be available to put a delegation forward at the Ministers convenience.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that Council writes to Minister Richard Bruton to ask that he and the representatives from IDA, Enterprise Ireland, ETB and Dept. of Social Protection meet with a delegation from this Council to discuss what exactly is happening in the background of the BOSE closure situation and the loss of jobs to the South Monaghan area.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that this Council writes to Minister Richard Bruton T.D., to establish if either IDA or Enterprise Ireland have shown the plant to any potential investors/industries, and why is the plant not suitable for their needs.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McElvaney, it was agreed that this Council seeks a presentation from representatives of Enterprise Ireland for the purpose of outlining their role in enhancing economic activity in Co. Monaghan and specifically funding opportunities that are available for upgrading industrial plant and machinery.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Council supports the resolution from the Ballybay-Clones M.D., calling on the Council to encourage/assist and support local communities to develop "1916 Gardens of Remembrance" in their local area to provide for future generations a permanent reminder of the 1916 Rising, its legacy to the Irish Republic and all of its people.

3. To receive Draft Annual Financial Statement 2014 and approve over-expenditure and transfers from Revenue Account

The Members noted the Draft Annual Financial Statement 2014 which had been circulated with the agenda. Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance responded to a number of queries from the Members in relation to the Draft AFS.

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr McElvaney, it was agreed to approve the Draft Annual Financial Statement (AFS 2014) and to approve over-expenditures and transfers to Capital Account, as per schedules submitted to the Members, as follows:

Transfer to Capital Account

	Transfer Amount	Budget Provision	Difference
	€	€	€
Loan Repayment Reserve	572,995	574,831	1,837
Maintenance Of Playgrounds	2,102	0	-2,102
Swimming Pool Non Capital Charges	11,702	0	-11,702
Landfill Income Surplus	1,185,375	0	-1,185,375
Machinery Account Surplus	317,542	0	-317,542

Provisions for Transfer to Capital

(included in Budget 2014)

Carrickmacross TC Transfers Before Unification	359,000	360,500	1,500
Monaghan TC Transfers Before Unification	83,816	83,816	0
Castleblayney TC Provision	14,200	57,990	43,790
Disability Initiatives	10,000	10,000	0
Bellamont Amenity Project	10,000	10,000	0
Co. Development Fund	75,000	75,000	0
Landfill Leachate EIS	50,000	50,000	0
Local Elections	30,000	30,000	0
Members Gratuity Scheme	99,999	100,000	1
Fire Service Gratuities	100,000	100,000	0
Budget Provision Capital Land Purchase	400,000	400,000	0
Civil Defence	2,000	2,000	0
Dog Warden Van	3,000	3,000	0
Libraries - Provision for Capital Balances	58,955	58,956	1
Flexi Time System	15,000	15,000	0
Computing - Provision for Capital Balance	100,000	100,000	0
	3,500,686	2,031,093	-1,469,592

Over Expenditure

Division		Expenditure	Income	Net
		(Over)/Under	Over/(Under)	
		Estimates	Estimates	2014
		2014	2014	
		€	€	€
C	Water Services	-875,161	882,031	6,870
D	Development Management	-1,231,489	1,711,560	480,071
E	Environmental Services	-1,604,199	2,151,987	547,788

Responding to queries from the members regarding the future viability of the Scotch Corner landfill, Mr. A. King, Director of Services, stated that a copy of the RPS report would be circulated to each member. He said that a presentation would be made to the next CPG meeting, following which the matter would be discussed by the full Council.

4. Management Report - June 2015

The members noted the Management Report for June which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The Chief Executive responded to queries from the members arising from the report.

5. To approve recommendations and minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 16th June, 2015

Cllr Gallagher proposed, Cllr P. Treanor seconded that the Council discuss 'in Committee' the decision not to award a Civic Reception to a Clay Pigeon Shooting Team and to refer the matter to the Annual Awards Ceremony. A brief discussion took place, following which, the meeting returned to public session.

Cllr Bannigan proposed, Cllr McElvaney seconded that a Civic Reception be awarded to the Clay Pigeon Shooting Team.

A recorded vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs Bannigan, Campbell, Connolly, McElvaney, Total 4

Against: Cllrs Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Gallagher, Maxwell, McKenna, McNally, McPhillips, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor and S. Treanor Total 11

Abstentions: Cllr Keelan Total 1

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal defeated.

Timing of Council meetings:

Cllr Gallagher raised the matter of the timing of Council meetings. He proposed that Notice of Motion 17(2) be taken at this stage. Cllr McNally seconded and it was agreed to take the motion.

Cllr Gallagher proposed that the monthly meetings of Monaghan County Council commence at 1pm and conclude at 5.30 p.m. This schedule can be reviewed again in six months time, if requested. Cllr McNally seconded the proposal.

Following a brief discussion, the Cathaoirleach put the proposal to the meeting. A vote by show of hands resulted in 6 for, 9 against and 1 abstention. The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal defeated.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 16th June, 2015, be confirmed.

6. To receive presentation on the proposed Traffic Management Model for Monaghan town.

Mr. David Hanratty, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads Section, gave a presentation to the Council on plans to develop a new traffic management strategy for Monaghan town. Mr. Hanratty stated that in order for a town 'to work' the capacity of all of the road network must be maximised and utilised in a co-ordinated and planned way, so as to complement and interact with transport network and in particular the national road network. In the same manner the national road network around Monaghan town must complement and interact with the wider regional and national network – its capacity is first and foremost to serve the economic and industrial transport needs of the nation, operating in conjunction with rail, air and sea. He explained that the strategy will attempt to address the large volume of heavy goods transport accessing the town centre, the traffic tailbacks experienced in the vicinity of schools and other locations at peak times. A number of these problems could be greatly reduced by the development of an N2/N54 link, which has been a priority for the Council for a number of years.

Mr. Hanratty then outlined how the proposed Traffic Model would be developed, the consultation that would be undertaken with the Planning department and the public consultation process, together with the expected outcomes and benefits. Some of the possible outcomes that might emerge from this process included the pedestrianisation of certain areas of the town, the introduction of one way streets, bans on HGV's traversing areas of the town centre, new road developments and junction layout changes. He stated that it was hoped that the Traffic Model would be completed by mid-October 2015 and that public consultation would take place in Q4 2015.

Following his presentation, Mr. Hanratty responded to queries from the elected members.

7. To receive presentation from the Council's Veterinary Officer re VTEC bacterium.

Mr. Brendan Smyth, County Veterinary Officer, gave a short presentation to the members on the risk to public health from private wells contaminated with verocytotoxin-producing E.coli, also known as VTEC. VTEC describes a number of strains of E.coli which have the potential to cause serious disease and, in rare cases, fatalities in humans. The most commonly known VTEC is E.coli O157. VTEC was first identified over 30 years ago and has caused outbreaks of disease associated with undercooked burgers, contaminated cooked meats, unpasteurised or raw milk,

and visits to pet farms. In recent years, the HSE has identified a trebling of the number of people infected with VTEC, from 241 in 2009 up to 716 in 2014. The HSE has also identified an increasing number of cases where the source of the VTEC is suspected to be private well water. VTEC are natural inhabitants of the intestine of farm animals, particularly cattle. They cause no disease in farm animals, but children, particularly those under the age of 5, and sick or immunocompromised people e.g. people undergoing cancer treatments, can suffer serious disease resulting in hospitalisation and lifelong kidney problems. Private wells are liable to become contaminated if they are poorly constructed, allowing easy access of groundwater, or poorly located e.g. low-lying or near a farmyard, or if there is slurry-spreading close to the well or if there is heavy rainfall, which can wash contaminating matter into the well. Contaminated water may look and taste fine. Mr. Smyth stated that persons with private wells should take the following steps to protect it –

- Ensure well is sited in a good location.
- The wellhead should be properly sealed so that no surface water can get into it.
- The well water should be tested regularly.
- Ensure that children under the age of 5, people with weakened immune systems and visitors to your home drink bottled or boiled water rather than water direct from your well. Further information on protecting wells is available on the EPA website www.epa.ie/water/dw/hhinfo/

8. To receive update on Branding of County Monaghan.

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Service updated the members in relation to the branding of County Monaghan. He stated that the process to develop a brand for the county had been difficult and was ongoing. The Council was trying to promote the Council and its people, their tourism assets and treasures and the uniqueness of the county. He said the brand needed to emphasise Monaghan's entrepreneurial spirit and its reputation for innovation that was totally unique to the county. He referred to the positive image created for the county by sporting success with the county football team and the success enjoyed by businesses both nationally and internationally as an agri-food county. The brand identity would be something everyone could take pride in and maximise its use to lever business, growth and prosperity – this would give an advantage and a clear identity to the county. He said that the next phase of the process would involve input from the members, consultation through the Public Participation Network and facilitated meetings at Municipal District level.

9. To receive update from Joint Policing Committee.

Mr. A. King, Director of Services referred to the Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2021 which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. He stated that the Plan, whilst drawing on the work carried out to date by the Joint Policing Committee and the organisations it links into, identifies three priority areas which will become the focus of activity during the lifetime of the Committee - these are:

- Crime Prevention and personal safety;
- Policing communities and
- Road Safety.

Mr. King also stated that the Draft Plan is out for public consultation until the end of July and the public will be invited to make submissions during that time, which will be considered by the JPC at its next meeting.

10. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events:

It was agreed that the reports received from Cllrs Conlon, Coyle and McNally, in relation to their attendance at the following conferences/training events:

- Colmcille Winter School, Church Hill, Co. Donegal
- Water Charges Conference, Carlingford, Co. Louth.
- AILG Training (Economic Development), Galway.
- AILG Training (Community Development/LCDC), Sligo
- Wise Use of Wetlands, The Wetlands Centre, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan.
- Interreg Information Day, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
- AILG Training (Housing), Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

11. Business submitted by Chief Executive.

There was no business submitted by the Chief Executive.

12. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 8th June, 2015.

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 8th June and 22nd June were responded to by the relevant Director.

13. To receive update on North South Interconnector project.

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda:

- Letter from Brendan Smith, T.D., enclosing copy of response from the Minister for Communications to Parliamentary Question regarding the North-South Interconnector.
- Letter from the Chief Executive of EirGrid advising that the extension of the 10 weeks for the making of a submission to the North-South Interconnector planning application comes under the remit of An Bord Pleanála.
- Letter from EirGrid confirming that it will continue to engage with local communities and the wider region throughout the development of the project.
- Email from Minister Heather Humphreys, T. D., acknowledging the correspondence from the Council in relation to this project.

It was noted that a meeting of the EirGrid Sub Committee had been arranged for Monday 13th July, 2015 at 10.00 a.m. in the Castleblayney Enterprise Centre. It was agreed that the Oireachtas members would be invited to this meeting.

14. To receive update on Ulster Canal project.

The Meetings Administrator informed the members that she contacted Minister Ní Chuilín's office seeking possible dates for a meeting to discuss the Ulster Canal project. The Minister's Officer had given three dates in August when the Minister would be available to meet a delegation from the Council. It was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would make contact with Minister Humphreys to see if a joint meeting could be arranged.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr McNally, it was agreed that this Council write to all our TD's in the constituency to refocus and prioritise the reopening of the Ulster Canal as soon as practicable.

Development of Ulster Canal Greenway:

Mr. P. Clifford informed the members that Waterways Ireland (WI) has been given a new role by the North South Joint-Ministerial Council on 10th June – see attached NSMC joint communiqué, items 5 and 6. The NSMC agreed to WI undertaking the role of lead partner on the development of a greenway along the route/linear corridor of the Ulster Canal from Castle Saunderson, Co. Cavan to Charlemont, Co. Armagh. WI is assigned to undertake the role of lead partner on this project with the support of the relevant Councils and other stakeholders.

A sum of between €10 and 15m has been allocated under the Interreg Programme 2014-2020 towards the development of 80km of cycleways to promote cross-border inter-modal and sustainable mobility in the region. Eight potential greenway projects throughout the eligible area will have access to the programme and the timeframe for the development of a project is short.

Waterways Ireland hosted a meeting in Monaghan on 30 June 2014 with officials from East Border Region Ltd., Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough District Council, Blackwater Regional Partnership and Monaghan County Council.

The issues discussed included:

- the proposed greenway project that Councils had been planning,
- the scope of what people wanted to see delivered,
- the new role for Waterways Ireland
- the potential to link to the Portadown - Newry Canal Greenway and on to Carlingford where there are advanced plans for Greenways,
- the potential role for EBR,
- the significance of sustainable transport links between Monaghan and Armagh via Greenway.

It was agreed that Monaghan and Armagh should define the potential route of the greenway and should commence meetings with relevant landowners in Monaghan and Armagh areas to introduce them to the concept, as has been done in Monaghan in some places already.

It was noted that a direct link to Armagh city was seen as critical to the success of any application under Interreg. This would result in a deviation from the Canal towpath after Tynan/Caledon, however plans for development of a greenway to Charlemont and potential tourism-related loops off the strategic route could source alternative funding options.

15. To receive presentation from Mr. Gerry Finn, Director of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr. Gerry Finn, Director of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly and invited him to outline details of the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020.

Mr. Finn thanked the Council for the opportunity to address it and then made a presentation to the members during which he outlined the following:

A funding package of €320 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Irish exchequer will be invested in the Border Midland and Western Region over the period 2014-2020. The ERDF aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions. Investment will be concentrated on research and innovation, information and communication technologies, small and medium sized enterprises and promoting a low carbon economy as required by the regulations. In addition the programme provides for an increased focus on sustainable urban development. The Northern and Western Regional Assembly is designated as the Managing Authority for the investment programme.

Mr. Finn referred to the Programme Structure, outlining the six main Priorities together with the specific objectives under each Priority.

He stated that as the Operational Programmes have been formally approved, the new Programme Monitoring Committee has met and approved the programme selection criteria. For each scheme being funding under the Operational Programme, a detailed Implementation Plan has to be prepared and formal administrative agreements have to be put in place with all intermediate Bodies who are responsible for delivering parts of the programmes. Expenditure under the programme is eligible from 1st January, 2014.

Mr. Finn then updated the members in relation to various aspects of the Peace IV and Interreg Programmes. Following his presentation, he responded to questions from the members.

The Cathaoirleach then thanked Mr. Finn for a very informative presentation.

16. Questions:

Cllr B. McKenna asked:

1. Can this Council confirm what date the final payment was made to Gama for the construction of the Castleblayney By-Pass?

Reply: The final payment date to Gama was the 04/12/2012.

2. Was it a requirement, before final payment was made, that Gama provide confirmation from all land/property owners affected by the by-pass that all works had been completed to their satisfaction and if so, can the Council confirm if all land/property owners signed off, that works were completed to their satisfaction?

Reply: There is no requirement for signature from all affected land/property owners for final payment to be made.

ClIr P. McNally asked:

3. (a) What is the rate of collection for commercial rates in this municipal district?

Reply: The approximate average collection rate in the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney MD for 2014 was 66.6%. The average collected to date in 2015 is 28.7%. The collection rate is approximate because revenue collectors operate across MD boundaries, so these figures for one revenue collector include some collections relating to Monaghan MD.

- (b) How many businesses are failing to pay their rates?

Reply: Total 46 in Carrickmacross-Castleblayney.

- (c) Typically on an individual basis how much does each of these business's owe?

Reply: Average across all customers is €16,833.

4. (a) How many Local Authority houses are there in Council ownership in the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney municipal district area?

Reply: 473 Houses in the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District Area.

- (b) Do we expect to lose many of these houses under the new House Purchase Scheme recently announced?

Reply: – Based on the 2011 Fixed Term Tenant Purchase Scheme the uptake for Tenant Purchase was low, four in total for the former Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Town Councils. Please note all tenants will be notified in writing of the new House Purchase Scheme once introduced.

ClIr C. Carthy asked:

5. Can the Council confirm, in relation to Irish Water, when the €100 water conservation grant application procedure will commence and how people will be able to apply?

Reply: The Department of Social Protection will administer, on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, a €100 per annum water conservation grant for households (primary dwellings). It is our understanding that the Department will be communicating with people from the middle of August 2015 inviting them to apply for the Water Conservation Grant. More information on the Water Conservation Grant can be found at the following website: www.watergrant.ie

6. Can the Council confirm if there are any concessions or grants available to help already struggling community centres and non-profit groups cope with Water Rates (owing to

the fact that a number of these facilities offer showering facilities to the public)?

Reply: This query should be referred to Irish Water. Local Representatives can contact Irish Water directly by calling 1890 178 178 and requesting the Local Representative Support Desk or by e-mail to localrepsupport@water.ie.

7. Will the housing section of Monaghan County Council confirm how many vacant properties it currently has in the entire county with a breakdown for each Municipal District?

Reply: Monaghan County Council currently has 20 vacant houses as follows:

- 5 in Clones-Ballybay Municipal District
- 5 in Monaghan Municipal District
- 10 in Castleblayney-Carrickmacross Municipal District

Fifteen of the vacant houses included in the figures above are vacancies that have arisen when tenants have either passed away or surrendered their tenancies and five of the vacant houses in the Castleblayney-Carrickmacross Municipal District are long term vacant semi-derelict properties that are being targeted under the Department funded scheme "Returning Vacant Houses to Productive Use".

Clr R. Gallagher asked:

8. What is the time-frame for completion of traffic calming works on the northern side of Emyvale village? Can the Council ensure that there will be minimum disruption to local businesses and that works are suspended on the Saturday and Sunday of the Ulster Final?

Reply: The closing date for the receipt of completed tenders for the scheme is the 10th of July, allowing for a period for evaluation and tender award, it is envisaged that works will commence no sooner than the 20th July, the day after the Ulster Final. It is estimated that the works will last for approximately 6 weeks.

9. In relation to broadband can the Council state how blackspots will be addressed? Can the Council identify the areas of the county most in need of improvement in broadband provision and what plans exist to address the problem?

Reply: The Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources launched the National Broadband Plan in November 2014. The policy document *Connecting Communities* states that it is the government's plan to build a high-quality broadband network in areas of the country that have no existing or planned high-speed broadband service and that will not be served by private operators by 2016. The Plan aims to provide next generation broadband of at least 30 megabytes per second to people and businesses in all parts of the country that are not served by private operators. An online map of Ireland on <http://www.broadband.gov.ie/> indicates the areas where commercial operators will provide high speed broadband by 2016 and the areas where the State will provide high speed broadband post-2016.

Cllr R. Gallagher asked (contd):

10. What funding has government allocated to the Council for much needed social housing, how much has been spent to date, has the Council identified an indicative start date and location for building social housing?

Reply: The Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government has set “Targets for delivery under the Social Housing Strategy 2015, 2016 and 2017” for Monaghan as follows:

- **Current (leasing, RAS and HAP) and Capital combined target 205 with an estimated cost of €11.5million to be spent in a three year period.**
- **The Department has set a target of 55 of the 205 to be delivered by the Local Authority own construction/acquisition programme and the Capital Assistance Scheme in conjunction with Approved Housing Bodies and returning long term vacant houses (voids) to use with a Provisional Capital Allocation of €10.4million over the period 2015 to 2017.**
- **The Department has set a target of 109 of the 205 to be delivered by the Local Authority through various forms of leasing including the Capital Advance Leasing Facility in association with Approved Housing Bodies.**
- **The Department has set a target of 41 of the 205 to be delivered through RAS**

To date a number of house purchases have been negotiated and some other potential house purchases are being considered; it is intended that between five to ten house purchases will be made in each Municipal District subject to supply/demand and Department approval.

11. (a) In relation to the housing list can the Council state how many people are on the entire list and what is the average length of wait for OPDs, 2 bed, 3 bed, 4 bed properties and what is the longest wait?

Reply: 1,201 Applicants are on the entire list

- (b) Can the Council state how many people are have been waiting 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 years etc?

Breakdown

Type	No. of Applicants	Average length of time of list
OPDs	161	2 years
1 Bed	402	4 years
2 Bed	391	3.3 years
3 Bed	206	2.7 years
4 Bed	40	3 years
5 Bed	1	5.75years

Cllr S. Coyle asked:

12. Will Monaghan County Council carry out a complete review of all road engineering road areas to ensure they are all aligned to the Municipal District L.E.A.s?

Reply: A review of the district engineering boundaries is currently underway to identify cross district roads that will require assignment to a single Municipal District. The municipal districts will be circulated with a list of the roads identified for their comments prior to final assignment.

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

13. In relation to Cnoc Na Greine, Tydavnet, unfinished part of the development, and further to the meeting which the County Council sought with the new owners, what plans/timescales have been agreed regarding site resolution?

Reply: The planning authority has written to the new owners seeking a meeting to discuss the resolution of the site. As of yet, no response has been received, and consequently a timescale for resolution has not yet been agreed.

Cllr C. McPhillips asked:

14. How many graduate positions have been made available within the past 12 month and in what areas are such graduates employed? (By "graduate positions" I mean PAYE liable roles).

Reply: Monaghan County Council recruited 2 graduates on the 11th May 2015 under the National Graduate Recruitment Programme in the following areas:-

- Economic Enterprise and Business Development
- Communications and Marketing

15. Can Monaghan County Council confirm that the Bunnoe River is one of two waterways for which it is responsible? As the responsible authority, what action does Monaghan County Council propose to take to solve the ongoing and economically challenging flooding of agriculture land along the river course in the areas of Drum, Rockcorry, Newbliss and Aghabog.

Reply: Monaghan County Council is responsible for the maintenance of the Bunnoe River system. Prior to undertaking any works on this system, a detailed survey of same is required. This survey would provide an overall characterisation of the river, including bank and channel vegetation, morphology, fishery value and a full topographical survey. Relevant sections would be subject to a more detailed survey, following guidelines given for the River Habitat Survey (RHS) methodology (Environment Agency, 2003). The Council does not have a specific allocation for this work at present.

16. What is the outcome of the recent NRA survey of traffic patterns on the N54 in Smithboro village? What are the next steps?

Reply: The roads section recently met the NRA Road Safety Engineer for the region to discuss the issues in relation to the N54 at Smithboro Village. A number of options were discussed and the Council is waiting on a final decision from the NRA.

Cllr C. McPhillips asked:

17. (a) Can the Housing Section of Monaghan County Council set out the requirements of the HAP scheme? Can the following issues also be addressed:
- (b) What is the situation if a property within the rent band cannot be located?
- (c) Can a HAP tenant remain on the Council waiting list?

Reply: (a) In order to qualify for HAP, a household must be qualified for social housing support by their local authority, which means the household must qualify to go on the local authorities housing list.

HAP recipients will be responsible for finding their own accommodation in the private rented market. The accommodation must be within the HAP rent limits which is based on the size of the household. The landlord must agree to rent their property to a HAP recipient. Both a HAP applicant and their Landlord must complete a HAP application form and both must sign the form.

If the application is approved, the applicant must sign a Rent Contribution Agreement with the local authority. Payment of rent contribution will be made through Household Budget service if the applicant is receiving Social Welfare Payment, and it's paid through the post office.

The Local Authority will then pay the rent in full directly to the landlord.

The earliest date from which the local authority will make a HAP payment to the landlord is the date they receive a complete and valid HAP application from the applicant and landlord.

The tenancy is covered under the terms of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004, this means that the tenancy agreement is, or will be between the applicant and their landlord. The Local Authority is not the landlord. The landlord must be registered with the Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB).

HAP allows recipients to take up full time employment, while still receiving housing support, the amount of contribution the applicant pays to the local authority will increase in accordance with their income.

Reply (b): Under the HAP legislation, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government sets limits for HAP payments based on the number of people in a household. The HAP limits are based on the current Rent Supplement limits operated by the local Social welfare office.

Reply (c): When a HAP Applicant is notified in writing that they are approved for the Housing Assistance Payment, they are also notified that their housing needs are met and they are no longer a qualified housing applicant so they will no longer be on the Local Authority's housing list. At this point the applicant can opt to go on the Council transfer list and be considered for future Council housing allocations. If they take up their option to go on to the transfer list, within two weeks they also keep their timing points accrued to date.

17. Notices of Motion:

Cllr C. McPhillips proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded and it was agreed,

1. This Council will investigate the feasibility and benefits of providing dedicated study areas in all of our libraries, with a particular focus on second level students with the ambition of assisting the students' studies, alleviating their parents concern about after-school care and increasing the usage of our library services.
2. This motion had been dealt with earlier in the meeting.

Cllr B. McKenna proposed, Cllr P. Treanor seconded, and it was agreed

3. That this Council put in place appropriate measures on the entrance to the walkway along the N2 at the underpass in the townland of Glenyhorn, Clontibret, so as to put an end to the use of the walkway by tractors and cars at various times since the opening of the Castleblayney by-pass.
4. In the absence of Cllr S. Coyle, this motion was deferred to the next meeting.

Cllr C. Carthy proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded, and it was agreed

5. That Monaghan County Council calls on the Government to reverse all recent cuts to Social Welfare payments that have crippled those less well off in society based on the fact that we are being told that the State's finances are improving. We also call for this motion to be sent to all local authorities throughout the state for consideration.

18. Votes of sympathy/congratulations:

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

- Monaghan Ladies Senior Football Team on defeating Armagh to qualify for the Ulster Final.
- Fergal McNally and Niall Mooney on being selected as escorts for the International Rose of Tralee in August.

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

- The family of the late Pat Treanor, Doogary, Tydavnet, RIP, who passed away at the age of 103 years.

19. Conferences/Training:

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

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
Celtic Conferences	Local Economic & Community Plans	The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty	10 th to 12 th July	PJ O’Hanlon
ICLRD	The Housing Debate (Re)Building our Communities through Integrated Working with Local Government	Maynooth University Campus	Thursday 10 th September 2015	Sean Conlon Noel Keelan Paudge Connolly
The Department of Public Expenditure & Reform	EU Interreg Information Day	Tullamore, Co. Offaly	11 th June 2015	Cllr Sean Conlon

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____
