

**Minutes of the Adjourned Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in Mtek Building, Knockaconny, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2006, at 10:00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr P McNally, Mayor

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

*Mr. D. Nelson, Co. Manager Mr. M. Fitzpatrick, David Fallon, P. Clifford, and Mr Adge King Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator, Ms. A. Mackle, A/Staff Officer*

Cllr Maxwell referred to the issue at the previous meeting, which caused the walkout of the Fine Gael Members. He asked Cllr Carthy – if he was implying that Cllr Maxwell did wrong at the planning sub-committee meetings, as other members of the Council on the committee did exactly the same and also what was the role of the planning sub-committee. Cllr Carthy replied that he didn't refer to any one individual in relation to re-zoning of land outside their own electoral area and that he had made a statement of fact.

Cllr Maxwell stated he was not happy with the response of Cllr Carthy but that he would raise the matter again at the July meeting.

**Ballybay Development Association – Wetlands Project:**

Cllr Bannigan informed the Members that Ballybay Development Association had recently secured funding from Failte Ireland for the development of the wetlands project. He wished to thank the Ballybay Development Association and particularly Ms Christina Cassidy for their efforts to date and also the County Manager and the Council Members for supporting this project. There had been a number of problems securing funding from Failte Ireland however the Council had indemnified the BDA and vice versa. Failte Ireland awarded a grant of circa €52,000 to the project and hopefully it would be a major boost for the mid Monaghan area.

Cllrs Coyle, O'Brien, Carville and Crowe also welcomed this funding for the project and thanked all involved with the hard work. The BDA, Ms. Christina Cassidy, the County Manager and the Council had done excellent work. Whilst there are a number of conditions attached to this money, the project would become a flagship project for Ballybay.

## **12. Water Services Investment Programme -Assessment of Needs 2007 – 2014**

Mr. Paul Clifford, Director of Services referred to the report, which had been circulated to the Members with the Agenda. He stated that the Council was obliged to prepare, every five years, an Assessment of Needs for major water investment schemes throughout the county. The main purpose of the assessment is to develop an overall strategic investment plan for the medium to long terms and to set out a programme of works to meet the identified water services needs of the county. While the Assessment of Needs must take account of national policy issues, EU environmental, public health and drinking water quality standards, the provisions of the development plan, the National Spatial Strategy, etc. it specifically excludes any scheme already assigned a construction start date in the Water Services Investment Programme 2005 – 2007 and schemes that will be completed under the Small Schemes Measure of the Rural Water Programme. The Council concentrated on the core areas of the towns. Rural areas included the Group Water Scheme sector are more appropriately dealt with under the Rural Water Programme. Strategies for the delivery of a good water supply in the county in a cost effective manner will be detailed in the Monaghan County Strategic Water Plan due for review this year. He further advised that the draft Assessment of Needs document will be available for public consultation from 8<sup>th</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and the Council invites submissions from interested groups or individuals during this period.

Following his presentation a number of Members raised queries to which Mr. Clifford responded.

## **13. Nitrates Directive:**

Mr. D. Fallon, Director referred to the report circulated which included a summary of the main elements of the proposed amendments of the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2005. In addition a report on the Water Framework Directive, prepared by B.O'Flaherty Executive Chemist, was also circulated. The following changes are proposed to this legislation –

- A transition period to benefit pig, poultry and mushroom producers allowing the prescribed limits for phosphorus and nitrogen to be exceeded up to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 for lands using manure from pigs and poultry.
- A transition period for existing REPS farmers with existing application rates continuing for the duration of the plan.
- A change to the nitrogen index system for tillage crops
- A newly defined phosphorus Index 3 for grassland
- A reduction in the number of stocking rate bands for phosphorus and nitrogen grassland fertilisation limits.
- An increase in the nitrogen limit for grassland for the majority of farmers.

Monaghan County Council has not yet begun to carry out the specific statutory inspections, however the regulations are to be used when handling particular complaints and assessing planning proposals. Applicants will be advised where new developments do not comply with the regulations regarding storage or stocking rates.

The Members welcomed the report circulated and the changes outlined. They appealed to farmers, via the members of the media present at the meeting, to ensure that they avail of the new scheme of grants for the provision of additional facilities to comply with the regulations.

“ On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed to write to the Ministers for Agriculture and Finance to immediately update the costings for the Pollution Control grants Scheme ”

Cllr Coyle stated that he had been in contact with Deputy Brendan Smith, Minister of State, who had assured him that these costings were being reviewed and new rates would issue very shortly.

Mr. Fallon confirmed that the Council will co-operate with farmers and will host information sessions to advise them of the requirements under the regulations.

#### **14. North Eastern Regional Drugs Task Force:**

The Meetings Administrator referred to a letter from the North Eastern Regional Drugs Task Force seeking one nominee from the Council to sit on the Task Force.

The Mayor invited nominations from the Members. The following were proposed and seconded – Cllrs Maxwell, Cllr B. McKenna and Cllr S. Coyle.

Cllr Coyle thanked Cllrs O’Brien and Kieran for nominating him and stated that he would withdraw his name.

The Mayor put the two remaining nominations to a vote by show of hands, which resulted as follows:

For Cllr Maxwell – Total 8

For Cllr B. McKenna - Total 7

There were five abstentions. The Mayor declared Cllr Maxwell elected.

**15. To receive minutes of meetings:**

- (a) On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr McAnespie it was agreed that the minutes of the Local Monitoring Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2006 be noted.
- (b) On the proposal of Cllr Treanor, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that the minutes of the Coiste Logainmneacha meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2006, be noted.

**16. Report from Regional Health Forum:**

Cllr Martin enquired if a power sharing arrangement was in place for the election of the Chair of the Regional HSE Forum.

Cllr B. McKenna replied to Cllr Martin that there were bigger issues than the election of the Chair but that Sinn Fein had asked that the Chair would be rotated but a deal was done between Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. He then gave a detailed report on the meetings of the HSE Regional Forum. He outlined the following:

- There had been very little discussion on health issues to date as only two meetings had taken place and these meetings had centered around the election of the Chair and standing orders
- The Executive Summary of the Report “A New Direction for Healthcare in the North East” prepared by Teamworking had been circulated but this summary was only a synopsis of a 120-page document. It would appear from the report that smaller hospitals like Cavan, Dundalk and Navan would now suffer the same fate as Monaghan and would lose services, which would be offered on a regional basis at a new Regional Hospital to be located in the “southern end of the North East region”. A steering committee is to be formed to look at a suitable location.
- The location of any new regional hospital must take into account the “golden hour” and must be sited in a central location.
- It was his opinion that the report broadly reflects the recommendations of the Hanley Report.
- Members of the Forum were permitted to ask four questions and he circulated copies of the answers he received to two questions he asked.

Cllr McElvaney stated that the Chair of the HSC would rotate. He stated that the Members of the Forum had no input into the Report referred to by Cllr McKenna – this was commissioned by the Health Services Executive. He proposed that this Council support the Monaghan Community Alliance Group in their efforts to ensure that there is no further downgrading of services at Monaghan Hospital.

Cllr McNally endorsed the report of Cllr B. McKenna and stated that any new regional hospital must be sited at a central location for the whole region.

Cllr McAnespie referred to a letter from Mr. Peadar McMahon, published in the Northern Standard last week in relation to his late mother.

*On the proposal of Cllr McAnespie, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that Monaghan County Council write to the Taoiseach and the Minister for Health asking them to deal with the issues raised in that letter.*

## **18. Matters arising out of Minutes:**

### **Minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> April 2006:**

In response to a query from Cllr Treanor regarding a full time Irish Language Officer the County Manager stated that he had received a report from Pol O’Clerigh regarding requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003 and will report back to the members in due course.

In relation to query from Cllr Carthy regarding the re-classification of the Carrickmacross/Drumconrath road, Mr. D. Fallon stated that the re-classification of any road was a lengthy process. There is merit in this proposal and he will raise it with officials from Meath County Council.

In response to queries from a number of members in relation to the Castleblayney by pass Mr. Fallon replied as follows:

- Contractor can take material from any licensed source
- The Council’s officials had met with the Contractor in relation to water supply, fencing, dumping of spoil and other issues – some of these have not been resolved satisfactorily.
- The Council’s staff detected the error in the CPO line – this arose because the Council’s Consultants used different maps than those originally supplied. - discrepancies were between 8 and 13 feet.
- The Council do not specify where water supply should be obtained
- The main haulage of rock should finish this summer. Minor repairs will be carried out.
- In relation to speed on these roads he acknowledged that many roads were not capable of a speed of 80 km per hour - a speed relative to the road being travelled should be used at all times.
- The contract is 21 months from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2005. There has been no application to date for an extension of time on this contract. The Contractor has indicated that the project will be delivered in time.

## **Monaghan By pass**

Mr. Fallon stated that the completion date for the Monaghan by pass was 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2006.

Cllr Maxwell referred to the serious loss of trade being experienced by businesses adjoining the northern end of this project. He requested that a schedule of works be issued to these businesses.

The County Manager stated that a bridge had to be built over the old Ulster canal and it was a major feat of engineering to do this work and keep these roads open to the public at the same time, while making provision for the many local business premises at this junction.

### **Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan seconded by Cllr Keenan it was agreed to write to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government rejecting the proposal to have a collection levy per tonne of farm plastic imposed. This amounts to a double charge for a service that does not exist, as a recycling levy applies at point of purchase.*

The Manager said that one of the problems with the farm plastic scheme is that the revenue is not going back into the fund because some farmers are buying farm plastic in Northern Ireland while others are buying plastic from cross border sectors. This shortfall in the fund has made the farm plastic scheme, operated by the Farm Relief Services, not viable.

Cllr Kieran requested that the Council explore the possibility of ratepayers being able to pay their rate demands through the post office. Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance agreed to examine the matter but explained that there may be issues in relation to the Council's Revenue Collectors.

In response to a query from Cllr Keelan regarding the provision of defibrillators Mr D. Fallon, Director of Services said that a defibrillator had been ordered for each of the fire stations in the county.

## **21. Notices of Motion:**

(a) Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr Treanor seconded

“That Monaghan County Council will seek that the Minister for Health put in place a standard medical-staff to patient ratio, for all sectors of the public and private health service. As intensive care is one to one, there should be a scale set for each category, from the newborn nursery to the care of the elderly in nursing homes, clearly defining the minimum number of nurses on duty, day and night to

cater for up to 10 patients, 10– 20, 20– 30, and so on. Ireland should seek to become a model of best practice in healthcare leading the way in this field.”

The motion was put to the meeting and agreed.

**Citizens Information Office – 25 year celebrations**

The Mayor referred to the invite, which the Council members had received to this function, which was scheduled for July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006 – the date of the next Council meeting. It was agreed that the Council would finish its meeting at 1.00 p.m. on that date.

**Votes of Sympathy / Congratulations**

There was a minutes silence for former Taoiseach Charles J Haughey.

The meeting then concluded.

*Signed:* \_\_\_\_\_  
**Meara** **Meetings Administrator**

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_