

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 8th June, 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Chair: Cllr Padraig McNally, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs. Bannigan, Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, Maxwell, McElvaney, McPhillips, B. McKenna, 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 and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

Urgent Business:

At the outset, the Cathaoirleach, Cllr P. McNally, stated that he had received a notice of Urgent Business from Cllr Coyle and the Fianna Fail members proposing that the Directorate of the Border Midland & Western Regional Assembly be invited to address the July meeting of the Council to outline the details of the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020.

The Cathaoirleach put the proposal to take the motion of urgent business and it was unanimously agreed. The Cathaoirleach stated he would deal with the matter before the end of the meeting.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

- (i) *On the proposal of Cllr. C. Carthy, seconded by Cllr S. Coyle, it was agreed that the minutes of Council meeting held on 11th May, 2015, be confirmed.*

2. Correspondence

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

- Circular letter from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the 2015 allocation for the Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability.
- Legal advice from Enda P. O'Carroll, Solicitor, in relation to the erection of posters advertising a jobs event.
- Email from Christina McMahon, Carrickmacross thanking the Council for its contribution towards her participation in the WBO Interim World Boxing Championships.
- Resolution from Monaghan Municipal District in relation to the wide array of EU Funding streams and calling for the recruitment of specialised staff.
- Resolution from Monaghan Municipal District commending the Comhairle na nÓg initiative on youth mental health titled Let's Go Mental and calling for support for the initiative.
- Resolution from Dublin City Council calling for the provision of safe and secure accommodation for victims of domestic violence.

- Resolution from Kerry County Council requesting that private childcare providers would not be levied with rates.

The following correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Circular letter Housing 17/2015 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government informing the Council of the Commencement of Part 2 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 in relation to Local Authority Tenancy Warnings Regulations
- Circular letter Housing 21/2015 in relation to proposals to introduce a Tenant Purchase Scheme for existing local authority houses in the coming months.
- Email from Patrick Duffy, Prince Edward Island, thanking the Council for sending delegates to the Irish Settlers Day celebrations held in May 2015.
- Resolution from Fingal County Council calling for the ending of the derogation on the status of the Irish language in the European Union.
- Resolution from Ballina Municipal District supporting the freedom of the press and also the freedom of the members of the Oireachtas to go about their business without fear of legal threat or any other threat.
- Press release from the Community Section in relation to Social Inclusion Week from 8th to 14th June, 2014, together with a list of the various events being arranged in Co. Monaghan.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed to adopt the resolution from Monaghan Municipal District recognising the wide array of EU funding streams that have made positive contribution to our region and additionally have the potential to provide further economic and social benefit to Co. Monaghan, requests that Monaghan County Council explore methods to improve this Council's approach to applying for and securing funds and that this would include the recruitment of staff to this specialised area.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that Monaghan County Council meet the Minister for Housing in relation to the benefits of the Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes and review the scheme in the context of additional funding and as a result save the Department money by reducing the money spent on nursing homes.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon, it was agreed that this Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to introduce regulations to ensure that all new dwellings (with the exception of single storey dwellings) have a ground floor bedroom with ensuite facilities. This proposal would potentially save the state funds going forward in relation to Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for older people and people with a disability.

Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr Coyle seconded, that the Council adopts the resolution from Kerry County Council requesting that private childcare providers would not be levied with rates.

A vote by show of hands resulted in 14 for, 3 against. The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal carried.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council requests the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government, Alan Kelly TD to reverse the changes to eligibility for Housing Adaptation Grants of Budget 2013, the reversal of age eligibility to 60 years for qualifying persons and the increase to €10,000 from €8,000 for aid for the elderly.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr McKenna, it was agreed that this Council supports the motion from Fingal County Council in relation to the status of Gaelige in the E.U.

On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that the terms and conditions regarding the erection of posters be outlined in writing by the Council Executive.

3. To consider initiating proposed variation to Monaghan County Development Plan to align crèche requirement in housing developments to Childcare Planning Guidelines.

Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planning referred to the report circulated with the agenda for the meeting. He explained that the Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities published in June 2001 does not explicitly state that every 75 dwellings requires a childcare facility but rather gives an average level of provision having regard to provision by existing facilities and their geographical area. He further explained that Policy HDP8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-19 explicitly requires that a crèche is provided within a development of 75 dwellings or more regardless of there being capacity at existing childcare facilities in the area. He stated that this places a burden on the developer which may not be necessary given the level of provision existing in the area, and that this requirement could also have a detrimental impact on the viability of existing childcare facilities, particularly community run facilities, as supply of child places may greatly exceed demand, making competing facilities unviable due to under capacity.

He stated that a number of planning applications have been submitted recently requesting that this requirement placed by condition on the original planning permission be removed on the basis that there was sufficient childcare facility provision in the area. He cited two examples of Latlorcan housing development in Monaghan and Cul Darach housing development in Castleblayney. He also referred to the Wylie's Hill housing development in Ballybay where there was an existing community crèche with sufficient capacity close to the development.

Mr. Gourley explained that as the granting of planning permission for the removal of the condition requiring provision of the crèche is currently contrary to the provisions of the County Development Plan, it was necessary to progress both applications by way of material contravention to the development plan. He added that this has implications for the Council in terms of time required to prepare and consider the material contraventions and cost in advertising and processing the application via material contravention process. Consequently, it is proposed to vary Policy HDP8 of the Development Plan to allow the planning authority to take into account existing childcare provision/capacity in the area of the housing development before imposing a condition requiring the provision of a childcare facility.

Mr. Gourley replied to queries from the members confirming that the onus will be on the developer to demonstrate that there will be sufficient childcare facilities in place to accommodate demand associated with the new residential units as set out in the Childcare

Facilities Guidelines and that the County Monaghan Childcare Committee will be consulted by the planning authority when considering these applications.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr McPhillips it was agreed to recommend that the Council initiate the proposed variation to the Monaghan County Development Plan to align crèche requirements in housing developments to Childcare Planning Guidelines.

- 4. Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act** - To consider granting permission for the renovation of the Market House Building, Drummond Otra, Main Street, Carrickmacross (Ref14/8007)

The members considered the report dated 26th May, 2015, from the Director of Services, which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr McElvaney, it was agreed that the Council approve the granting of permission for the renovation of the Market House Building, Drummond Otra, Main Street, Carrickmacross (Ref14/8007), to comply with report dated 26th May, 2015 and in accordance with Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001.

- 5. To receive Presentation on revised online Self Service Pre Planning System (SSPPS)**

Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner and Ms. A. Burns, IS Project Leader, gave a detailed presentation to the members outlining the Council's online Self Service Pre Planning System (SSPPS) which will go live in the next few weeks.

They explained that the new Monaghan Council Self Service Pre-Planning System (SSPS) is an Online GIS system which will enable the public to draw a proposed development site boundary and receive an instant report detailing the site location and all the planning policies and factors that will be taken into account during the planning decision making process of the application. It factors in information such as townland name, district electoral division, if the site is within the vicinity of a river/lake/quarry/natural heritage area/special area of protection/monument/flood risk area etc as well as giving detailed information on adjacent existing and historical planning applications/roads/protected structures etc. The system allows the user to also email the report generated to themselves which they can then be reproduced in a pre planning meeting with the planners. It basically gives the public advance information and the factors that will be taken into account on their proposed development site. With it being available online it will allow the public 24-7 365 days of the year access from the comfort of their own home/office.

- 6. Management Report - May 2015.**

The members noted the Management Report outlining the activities of the Council for the month of May, 2015.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Treanor it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Environment to ensure that voters entitled to vote in elections and who cannot vote for personal reasons e.g. weddings, holidays, funerals or other family events be

entitled to a postal ballot and that all County Councillors be forwarded a copy of the request/letter.

It was further agreed that the Minister be requested to amend the legislation to ensure that young voters are automatically registered on reaching the age of 18 years and the deceased electors are also removed automatically.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Treanor it was agreed that the Council write to HSE requesting that in relation to the graveyard at St. Davnet's complex, that a plaque be erected with the names and addresses of people buried there.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Treanor it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Transport requesting funding in relation to N2 Clontibret to the Border Road Scheme to progress to the next stage by reducing the present 400m corridor.

The members complimented Carol Lambe, CEDO, Monaghan County Council on the work undertaken by her in relation to securing funding of €20,000 for the development of new play facilities at Mulladuff, Smithboro.

The members also complimented the Chief Executive and the staff on the very detailed information contained within the Management Report.

Cllr Carthy requested that two proposals which were made but not put to the Council at the May meeting would now be put to the members. This was agreed and the following motions were re-submitted.

Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr Conlon seconded and it was agreed, that this Council would, in all future construction projects, use PV solar panels where possible, and call on all LA's in the state to adopt a similar motion also.

Cllr Conlon proposed Cllr B. McKenna seconded, that in pre-planning consultations available to the public prior to the submitting of planning applications, that along with a planning staff representative, there is also present at the consultation event a representative from the Building Control and Fire Safety section for the purpose of clarification around the applications plans.

The Chief Executive stated that whilst it may be possible to facilitate pre planning consultations on large planning applications the Council did not have the resources to comply with this proposal in terms of all applications.

The Cathaoirleach put the proposal to the meeting. A vote by show of hands resulted in 11 for. The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried

7. Roads – To receive update on Roads Survey

Mr. John McKernan, A/Senior Engineer, Roads updated the members in relation to progress on the roads survey which he had given a presentation on at the last meeting. He advised the members that a submission will be made to the Department of Transport, later in the week in relation to additional funding for roads.

In response to queries from the members, Mr. Cummins stated that he would continue to use every opportunity to highlight the need for additional funding in order to ensure the good work done in the past on road maintenance did not deteriorate, He said that the roads programme they had already adopted would constitute the repairs to be delivered in the coming weeks

Cllr Crowe requested that funding be sought for the upgrading of the N53 from Castleblayney to the N.I. border, given that Louth County Council are upgrading the stretch of road in Co. Louth.

8. To receive Annual Report of the Local Community Development Committee

The members noted the Annual Report of the Local Community Development Committee which had been circulated with the agenda.

9. To approve recommendations and minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 19th May, 2015

Cllr Bannigan stated that he was not happy with the recommendation of the Corporate Policy Group in relation to his proposal to host a civic reception for the Monaghan members of the Irish Clay Shooting team on their success in the World Championships in Florida in April. He proposed that the matter be referred back to the CPG for review. Cllr McElvaney seconded the proposal. It was agreed that the CPG would re-consider the matter at its next meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on the 19th May, 2015, be confirmed and that the recommendations contained in the minutes be approved, with the exception of the civic reception outlined above.

10. To nominate two members of the Council to the Garage Theatre Board:

On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Bannigan it was agreed that Cllr David Maxwell be nominated to the Garage Theatre Board.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that Cllr Sean Conlon be nominated to the Garage Theatre Board.

Cllrs Conlon and Maxwell thanked their proposers and seconders and paid tribute to the outgoing Garage Theatre Board for their contributions over the years.

11. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events

It was agreed that the reports received from Cllrs Bannigan, Bennett, Conlon, Connolly Campbell, Connolly, Keelan, McElvaney, in relation to their attendance at the following conferences/training events:

- AILG Training (Economic Development), Galway.
- AILG Training (Economic Development), Limerick

- AILG Training (Community Development/LCDC), Kilkenny
- AILG Training (Community Development/LCDC), Sligo
- Wise Use of Wetlands, The Wetlands Centre, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan.

12. Business submitted by Chief Executive.

Mr E. Cummins, Chief Executive informed the members as follows:

- Mr. Dermot Brannigan, Acting Chief Fire Officer had resigned his position to take up the post of Chief Fire Officer with Meath County Council. He would be replaced by Mr. Paul L'Estrange who had commenced employment with the Council.
- Mr. Con McCrossan, Acting Senior Engineer, Water Services was retiring from his position at the end of the month.

The members paid tribute to both Mr. Brannigan and Mr. McCrossan and extended good wishes to them. They also welcomed Mr. L'Estrange to the Council.

The Chief Executive joined in the good wishes on behalf of the staff.

13. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 11 May, 2015

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr McElvaney, it was agreed that due to many complaints in relation to the Social Welfare Office in Coolshannagh, Monaghan we renew our request to have an investigation carried out.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Bennett, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council again seek through local Minister, Heather Humphreys TD and all Cavan/Monaghan Oireachtas members an immediate meeting with the Minister for Social Protection, An Tanáiste, Joan Burton TD to seek the retention of the Department of Social Protection P.S.C Section in Ballybay and the approximate 40 associated jobs. Also, that this Council expresses its total disappointment and disgust at the total lack of political will from Government Ministers to meet Ballybay/Clones Elected Representatives, Business Representatives and the OPW not providing details/specifications to potential properties in Ballybay.

On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that the Council call on the Government again to stop fluoride being added to our water supplies.

14. To receive update on North South Interconnector project:

The members noted the following correspondence which had been circulated in relation to this matter:

- Letter from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht advising that the Minister does not have a veto at Cabinet and there is no such thing as a Cabinet veto as all Cabinet decisions are collective.
- Letter from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht advising that as a member of Cabinet, the Minister cannot place a motion before the

Houses of the Oireachtas but has passed the concerns of local landowners direct to Minister White.

A lengthy discussion took place during which Cllr Keelan updated the members in relation to the planning application which was expected to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála the next day.

Mr. E. Cummins, Chief Executive stated that he was in favour of the essential nature of the project to so as to ensure good infrastructure going forward. Regarding the Grid West and Grid Link, he stated that these are different projects and he felt that the members were not comparing like with like. He said that An Bord Pleanála will determine if and how this project proceeds. The Planning Authority will make an independent submission on the basis of the County Development Plan. He explained that officials of the Planning Authority could not be involved in assisting the members in making a submission to An Bord Pleanála in this matter. He could provide for administrative assistance from an official of another department.

Mr. Adrian Hughes, Senior Planner informed the members that a copy of the EirGrid planning application had arrived at the Planning Office that day. The Council had 10 weeks to produce a technical assessment of the application. When this was finalised, a copy would be brought to the elected members. The members can make a separate independent submission, either individually or as a group.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council contacts our Oireachtas members and Eirgrid to request that the submission period be extended by a further 10 weeks in relation to the proposed North/South Interconnector planning application.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that the members of Monaghan County Council, requests that the Executive Members of the Council for the various sections, make a robust submission to the planning application for the proposed North/South Interconnector, as was the case on the previous planning application and given that very little has changed since the last application was made in 2010.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council, while expressing it's disappointment that our Oireachtas members including our local Minister were not able to ensure that the people of this County were given equal treatment in terms of the possible undergrounding of the North/South Interconnector. That we call on them all to make a submission to An Bord Pleanála on this planning application.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that the Eirgrid Sub-Committee would meet in the coming weeks to prepare a submission to the North/South Interconnector planning application.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that the elected members of this Council make a submission to the North/South Interconnector planning application both individually and as a body.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that a Senior Executive Member be made available to help the sub-committee and the members prepare a submission to the North/South Interconnector planning application.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed that

(a) as Eirgrid PLC are to lodge a planning application to An Bord Pleanála tomorrow (Tuesday 9th June 2015) for the 400kv, North/South Interconnector Monaghan County Council make a full, detailed and definitive submission to An Bord, before the closing deadline of 5.30pm on Monday 24th August 2015 as the proposed application, directly impacts on a huge area of County Monaghan with the proposed construction of 109 pylons of approx. 30 meters in height crossing 41 townlands of County Monaghan, a blight on our landscape for ever more. It is clearly contrary to the County Monaghan Development Plan 2013–2019, is contrary to proper planning and sustainable development of the area, will have huge adverse effects on the integrity of the environment of the area, the heritage of the area, biodiversity, wildlife, fauna, fishing and tourism potential of the County. The proposed application is totally contrary to all health and safety regulations with the potential for disturbance to landowners/farmers for 3 years of contraction period, totally contrary to citizen's rights.

(b) The Eirgrid sub-committee of Monaghan County Council to meet immediately to discuss the planning application and the Council submission to An Bord Pleanála with all relevant Council staff to attend and an invitation be extended to the County Monaghan Anti-Pylon Committee to attend.

15. To receive update on Ulster Canal project

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that this Council renew our request for a meeting with Minister Carál Ní Chulín to discuss the re-opening of the Ulster Canal.

16. To receive Address from Aogán Ó Fearghail, Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Aogán Ó Fearghail, Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael and invited him to address the meeting.

Mr. Ó Fearghail thanked the Council for the invitation and stated he was delighted to be with his own neighbours. He stated that whilst he was a passionate Cavan supporter, when they exited from competitions, Monaghan was very close to his heart, not only because his wife was from Monaghan, but his father had worked McCaldin's Bakery in Monaghan for years and he himself worked very closely with Padraig Duffy, Ard Stiurthoir.

Remarking that the sense of place is hugely important, he referred to the large number of flags, banners and painted cars he had seen throughout the county on his way to the meeting. Being proud of where they were from was good for people in both their physical and mental state. The Monaghan football team is undoubtedly one of the top half dozen counties in the country in football currently and this was a tremendous achievement working from a low population.

He stated that health and wellness was top of the GAA agenda at present and they had a whole unit established in Croke Park to expand on this agenda. Coaching standards are also important and he thanked the Council for the generous help they gave in support of coaching development in the county. The GAA is expending strongly throughout the world – the traditional areas like America and Britain had now been caught up on by the Middle East and

Asia. There are 1,000 Irish nurses in Dubai and over 2,000 Irish trained primary teachers in Abu Dhabi.

Mr. Ó Fearghail praised the excellent GAA facilities in the county, in particular the Cloghan facility which was hugely significant. In relation to St. Tiernach's Park in Clones, he said there would always be a significant need for it and he assured the members that Clones had nothing to fear from the major redevelopment project being planned for Casement Park in Belfast and that the GAA would not abandon the Clones football grounds. Croke Park is working with the Ulster Council and the Clones Club on plans for the improvement of St. Tiernach's Park.

Following his address, all members paid tribute to Mr. Ó Fearghail, thanked him for attending the meeting and called on him and the GAA to ensure that Clones remained the home of the Ulster Final. He responded to the comments and issues raised by the members.

As a token of appreciation, the Cathaoirleach then presented a piece of Carrickmacross lace to Mr. Ó Fearghail.

17. Questions

Cllr C. Carthy asked:

1. Can the Council confirm, in relation to the Group Home for women with Physical and Sensory disabilities (Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross):
 - (a) The number of tenders it has so far received from contractors to build the unit?
 - (b) The closing date for the tender and date when decision to grant the project is envisaged?

Reply: "RESPOND! Housing Association is the approved housing body responsible for the management of the CAS project relating to the Group Home for People with Physical/Sensory Disabilities. Tenders were invited from suitably qualified contractors for the construction of this GH with a deadline for receipt of all tenders of 12th June 2015. RESPOND! Housing Association will, following receipt and review of tenders, submit their report to Monaghan County Council and it will then be forwarded to the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government for their final approval.

Depending on qualifying tenders within the approved Department budget of €1,293,980, it is anticipated that works could commence on site by September 2015."

2. Has the Council any plans to invest in the purchase of urban lands to facilitate the building of houses in the future?

Reply: Yes. The local authority sought expressions of interest in a public advertisement in March 2015 in relation to acquiring lands and individual housing units with County Monaghan. These individual submissions, where the local authority has an identified housing demand, are being-investigated and progressed through valuations being sought and negotiation of purchase if appropriate.

3. Due to the significant increase in births in many of the towns in County Monaghan, can the council carry out an audit of primary schools throughout the county towns with a view to finding out the maximum capacity in each?

Reply: Monaghan County Council liaises with the Department of Education in relation to the development of new schools, during the preparation of the Development Plan. The Council also has a formal protocol with the Department of Education in relation to the identification and acquisition of lands for new schools, however the Department holds the power and responsibility for this matter.

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

4. Can the Council state what progress has been made on the new speed limit for housing estates?

Reply: The Roads Section submitted a report to the DTTAS in accordance with Circular RW 8/2015 on 15th May 2015. This report identifies the housing estates in Monaghan which will require speed limit changes. The report will be used by the DTTAS as the basis for making additional allocations to the Council in order to fund the scheme later in the year.

5. What progress has been made on the review of the landfill site at scotch corner and the potential for further development of that site?

Reply: The Landfill committee held a meeting on the 28th May 2015 to review the various options proposed by RPS consultants regarding the future of the landfill. A presentation on these options will be brought before the full Council, possibly at the July meeting.

6. Can the Council state what progress has been made on the erection of the new fence at Clontibret from the chapel to McNally's shop?

Reply: The Roads Section has made an application for funding for the replacement of 860m of fence at Clontibret through the NRA's National Road Maintenance programme. The NRA has requested additional information with regard to the location of the fence relative to the crash barrier. This additional information is being compiled presently by the Roads Section and is expected to be submitted to the NRA in the coming weeks.

Cllr S. Coyle asked:

7. Can Monaghan County Council outline the procedures and checking process/criteria for the removal of a person from the electoral register, as in the recent referenda, a person who has lived in the same townland/D.E.D, all of his life, on the electoral register for approximately 30 years, went to vote at their usual polling booth, to be informed, they were not on the electoral register and could not vote (Details supplied to Electoral Register section)?

Reply: On checking this matter, it would appear that the person in question was not removed from the Register but was inadvertently transferred to an adjoining townland in the same polling district. Monaghan County Council provided a helpline to deal with any issues arising on the day of the Referendum. The onus is on each elector to check the register in advance of an election/referendum.

Clr S. Coyle asked:

8. (a) What programme has Monaghan County Council in place for the trimming of hedges/verges at road junctions, as many are currently very blind with recent growth, leaving very little visibility, increasing risk of traffic accidents etc.?

Reply: The Municipal Districts are responsible for the implementation of a programme for the trimming hedges/verges at road junctions as part of their roads maintenance works.

- (b) Can Monaghan County Council outline the circumstances for a land owner to trim hedges during the summer months?

Reply: The trimming of hedges out of season is prohibited under Section 46 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Trimming can only take place in limited circumstances where a road hazard exists. Landowners should contact their local Municipal District Office prior to carrying out any trimming works within the prohibited period 1st March until 31st August.

- (c) What is the exact time period of the year in which hedge cutting/trimming is permitted?

Reply: Hedge cutting is only permitted from 1st September to the 28th February each year.

9. Can Monaghan County Council outline, what plans have they in place for the washing of all signs across the County, directional/road hazard/village/town signage etc. , as dirty signage portrays a poor image of the area to visitors/tourists etc., to the county, and if a programme is not in place, can Monaghan County Council examine and outline, how a programme can be put in place for the washing of all signage and cutting of

Reply: The Municipal Districts are responsible for the maintenance of roads signs as part of their roads maintenance works. The Roads Section will contact the Municipal districts Engineers in relation to developing a programme for the cleaning of road signs.

Clr C. Bennett asked:

10. Can Monaghan Council please provide a breakdown of how they charge premises for public sewage? Can the breakdown please disclose how different rates apply to different commercial and private buildings? For example: How are crèches charged for the use of a public sewage scheme?

Reply: Presently Waste Water is charged at €1.10/m³ based upon the water in/water out principle i.e. the volume is calculated on the volume of water recorded going through the water meter.

11. In relation to Public toilets in the county, who is responsible for the upkeep and cleanliness of these public facilities?

Reply: Monaghan Municipal District is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the automated public toilet in the Court house car park in Monaghan Town.

Cllr C. Bennett asked:

12. In relation to employment within polling booths during elections and referendums, Have Monaghan County Council and the County Register made any inquires into employing or training people that are on the live register for these posts.

Reply: This matter was raised prior to the local elections held last year, when it was referred to the County Registrar who, as Returning Officer, is the person responsible for engaging staff to work as Presiding Officers/Poll Clerks.

13. Have Monaghan County Council explored the possibility of using empty properties as POP UP shops or restaurants. This would enable new businesses to try out a new idea without being subjected to rates, on a short term basis.

Reply: The issue of rates relief schemes is due to be discussed by the Planning and Economic Development SPC.

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

14. Can the Executive please elaborate on the funding allocated to Monaghan County Council from the recently announced €312 million social housing building fund and the detail of plans to spend this money, including the number of houses to be bought and built in each MD before the end of 2015?

Reply: Under both capital and current expenditure in the period of 2015-2017 the Department has issued a target of 205 units to be provided at an estimated cost of 11.5 million.

Under the Capital programmes 55 units are to be secured between 2015-2017. The mechanisms for this provision will be through Local Authority Housing Schemes (Construction/Acquisition, including Part V provisions), and under the Capital Assistance Scheme and the return of Long term void properties.

Under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme (SHCEP) 109 units are targeted to be provided with 30 units for delivery in 2015. The method of provision of these units is by multi use development leased by the LA, individual units leased or rented by the LA, or units leased, purchased or constructed by Approved housing Bodies (AHB's)

Additional units are proposed to be achieved through RAS with 20 units secured in 2015 and 21 additional units in the period 2015-2017.

In respect of the individual construction programmes 2 individual projects are identified where funding has been approved in principle

Latlorcan, Monaghan Town	20 units
Bree, Castleblayney	8 units

15. For the purpose of ensuring optimum road surfaces throughout the County and improving road user safety, what is the current level of usage of the Pothole Patching vehicle?

Reply: Monaghan Co Council has one Velocity Patcher that is permanently deployed to the Municipal Districts for work in pothole repairs. The programme of patching is managed by the Municipal Districts.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

16. What is the up to date position in relation to the councils, (land banks) which could be used for the provision of much needed housing for our citizens, where are these (land banks) located etc?

Reply: Monaghan County Council has no significant land banks for the development of housing.

In March 2015 the Council advertised for expressions of interest from persons wishing to sell development land to the Council and/or to sell or lease houses to the Council. The submissions received have been assessed, valuations have been ordered and, where appropriate offers have been made or negotiations to acquire have commenced.

17. In relation to the provision of housing, what plans have the Council, to build or buy housing units in Inniskeen village and other villages across the county?

Reply: The authority has no plans to build units in Inniskeen in the period 2015-2017. The authority will look to acquire units where demand is identified and where opportunities allow. As indicated an advertisement seeking expressions of interest have been sought for persons wishing to sell their properties. These are currently being considered and relevant individuals contacted.

Staff are constantly investigating opportunities as they arise throughout the year to ensure that any potential units are considered and the local authority seek to secure appropriate units in areas of demand and at a reasonable cost to the public purse.

18. In relation to a question I tabled at the April meeting of the Council regarding the provision of a number of bore-wells/abstraction points, for the Carrickmacross Public Water supply, and issues relating to the use of organic fertiliser, slurry etc, and in consultation with the farming community, I was informed to contact Irish Water on this issue, given that to my knowledge Irish Water had no involvement in this work, will my question be answered in a more satisfactory way?

Reply: As previously stated 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.

19. In relation to planning applications received to date in 2015, how does this figure compare with the same period in 2014?

Reply: The planning authority has seen a 2.2% rise in the number of planning applications received in 2015, compared to the same period last year.

Cllr P.J. O' Hanlon asked:

20. The allocation of funding for local and regional roads 2015 is €7.1 million [the lowest amount in the last 12 years] was received by Monaghan County Council in early February. It is now early June 4 months later, no paving work has even started.

- (a) When will the Paving Work start in the Carrickmacross /Castleblayney District?
 (b) When is it expected that these works will be completed?

Reply: Macadam paving works will commence in the Municipal District of Carrickmacross-Castleblayney in the week commencing 6th July. The 12 local roads and 3 regional road sections in the Municipal District will be complete within the 8 week timeframe provided for under the works contract.

19. Votes of sympathy/congratulations:

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

- Michelle Caulfield, Scotstown on being selected as the Monaghan Rose to go forward to the 2015 Rose of Tralee International Festival at the regional finals in Portlaoise.
- Rachel Hall, Drum and her proud parents Trevor and Florence on Rachel winning the Under 19 Table Tennis All Ireland Championship.

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

- Mrs. Patricia Corrigan, Macken, Enniskillen on the death of her husband Paul a former Chairman of Fermanagh District Council.
- Mrs. Bernie Bradley, Council official on the death of her father Gerard O'Rourke, RIP and also to Liam Bradley on the death of his father in law.
- Eugene Murray, Council employee on the death of his uncle Eugene Sweeney, RIP

20. Conferences/Training:

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

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
EPA	National Water Event	Galway Bay Hotel, Galway	17-18 th June	Brian McKenna
AILG	Training Days	Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone	25 th June	Seamus Coyle Robbie Gallagher Jackie Crowe Cathy Bennett Sean Conlon Brian McKenna Padraig McNally Paudge Connolly Hugh McElvaney Eugene Bannigan David Maxwell

Urgent Business:

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council invite the Directorate of the Border, Midland & Western Regional assembly to address the July meeting of Monaghan County Council to outline the details of the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020, with funding of €320 million available under the priorities of –

- 1. Strengthening RTD I in the region*
- 2. ICT infrastructure*
- 3. SME Support promotion and capacity development*
- 4. Low Carbon Economy*
- 5. Sustainable Urban Development*

As this Council is the lead Authority for economic and community development in the county of Monaghan, we must ensure all funding opportunities are maximised for all section in the County.

The meeting then concluded.