

**Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2013 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr H. McElvaney, Mayor.

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

Mr. D. Fallon, County Manager, Mr. P. Clifford and Mr. D. Treanor, Mr. A. King, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms. R. McManus, A/Meetings Administrator and Ms. Nuala Woods, SEO. Housing Section

The Mayor advised the members that he had received 7 notices of urgent business and advised that he would deal with them at 2.00pm

**1. Confirmation of Minutes:**

*On the proposal of Cllr P Treanor, seconded by Cllr. Gallagher it was agreed that the minutes of Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013, be confirmed.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carville, seconded by Cllr. Crowe it was agreed that the minutes of the adjourned Council Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2013, be confirmed.*

**2. Correspondence**

**The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda –**

- Letter from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to water services charges for non-domestic customers.
- Letter from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to water legislation
- Letter from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in relation to seeking a meeting with the Minister to discuss labelling of food products
- Letter from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in relation to jobs at the AIBP facility in Ballybay
- Letter from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in relation to a fair price for poultry farmers
- Letter from the Minister for Housing and Planning in relation to Clones Regeneration
- Letter from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to the Irish Family History Research Centre
- Letter from the Department of Health in relation to Monaghan General Hospital
- Letter from the Department of Health in relation to the issue of labelling and quality of products – beef, chicken and pork, being imported into Ireland
- Letter from the Department of Health in relation to the Graduate Nurses Initiative Scheme
- Letter from the Department of Health in relation to fluoridation of public water supplies

- Letter from the Department of Health in relation to Country of Origin labelling of chicken products
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Justice & Equality in relation to Templemore Garda Training College and the Garda Drugs Unit
- Letter from the Office of the Justice Minister, NI, in relation to instances of dangerous driving on the N54/A3 road.
- Letter of thanks from An Garda Síochána in relation to the vote of sympathy following the murder of the late Detective Garda Adrian Donohoe
- Letter from the National Roads Authority in relation to the proposed N2 Clontibret to the border road
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council plus copy letter from the NRA in relation to walking and cycling activities on the Monaghan Bypass
- Email invitation from the Fort Augustus Settlers in relation to Annual Irish Settlers Day
- Resolution from Limerick County Council in relation to road hauliers
- Email, together with copy letter to Minister for Health, from Nenagh Town Council in relation to the Community Intervention Team
- Notices of Motion (x3) from Sligo Borough Council in relation to (1) re-enacting the Moneylenders Bills; (2) the importance and significance of local democracy and local self government; (3) Illegal money lending
- Copy of letter from North Tipperary County Council to Minister for Education & Skills in relation to Minor Works Grants for primary schools
- Notice of Motion from Shannon Town Council in relation to the proposed planned savings of €721million by the HSE and reduction of staff by 4,000
- Notice of Motion from Shannon Town Council in relation to the wearing of high visibility vests by pedestrians
- Resolution from Dun Laoghaire in relation to commercial rates
- Notice of Motion from Ballybay Town Council in relation to Coillte harvesting rights
- Notice of Motion from Clones Town Council in relation to roaming charges in Ireland and Europe

#### **Correspondence which was circulated at the meeting**

- Letter from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport in relation to Community Involvement Schemes
- Letter from the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources in relation to EirGrid Interconnector
- Letter from the Department of Health in relation to inspections
- Notice of Motion from Monaghan Town Council in relation to packaging materials

#### **Proposals arising out of correspondence:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Mc Nally, and arising from the letter from the NRA it was agreed that this Council put in place proper walking and cycling facilities along the route of Monaghan Town Bypass.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Mc Nally, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Shannon Town Council recommending to the Minister for Transport that the wearing of high visibility vests or belts/bands by pedestrians be made compulsory at times of darkness or low visibility in all areas.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Connolly, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Sligo Borough Council that calls upon the Government to allow a Moneylenders Bill be enacted that introduces a cap of 40% APR rather than the current legislation which allows licensed moneylenders to charge interest rates as they see fit.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr. Keelan, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Sligo Borough Council that calls upon the Government to adhere to the principle of subsidiarity and to rescind the decision to abolish all borough and town councils.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Connolly, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from North Tipperary County Council seeking reinstatement of the Minor Works Grants for primary schools*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Connolly, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council which calls on the Minister for the Environment and Local Government to change the legislation with regard to commercial rates, allowing for a different rating system to be implemented.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Connolly, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Ballybay Town Council which calls on the Government not to sell Coillte harvesting rights, the right to fell and sell timber for up to 80 years to private operators, in view of Peter Bacon's assessment that the economic rationale for the proposed sale "no longer stands up and cannot be justified"*

*On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr S. Treanor, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Limerick County Council which asks the Minister for Finance to include licensed coach and bus operators in the excise rebate that was granted to road hauliers in the 2013 Budget.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Clones Town Council which calls on the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and An Taoiseach, to seek agreement during this period of our E.U. Presidency to expedite the abolition of roaming charges in Ireland and Europe.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Mc Kenna, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that we renew our request to Minister for Health, James Reilly TD to facilitate a meeting with a delegation from Monaghan Co. Co. to discuss the provisions of services at Monaghan General Hospital.*

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that the Council invite a representative from the HSE to discuss the issue of fluoridation of public water supplies*

*On the proposal of Cllr S Conlon, seconded by Cllr McKenna, it was agreed that the Council accept the invitation to attend the Irish Settlers Day celebrations in Prince Edward Ireland.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally and seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon, and in response to letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013 it was agreed to write again to the Minister for Health requesting an urgent meeting to discuss the issue of labelling and quality of products – beef, chicken and pork being imported into Ireland.*

*On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon and seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed that this Council write to the Minister of Agriculture again to please urgently give us an update in checking and testing of foreign chicken imported into this country.*

*On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon and seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed that this Council write to all major retailers in this country to highlight and support all fresh products manufacturers in Ireland and to create an Irish section in their shops so that people, if they wish, can purchase Irish products*

*On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr. Coyle, it was agreed that this Council call on An Bord Bia to organise a retro-payment of fees when all Irish companies qualify for the Bord Bia Stamp of Approval and also that this Council seeks urgently a meeting with the Chief Executive of An Bord Bia.*

- 3. Part VIII Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations - Construction of a changing shelter, jetty, slipway, pedestrian bridge, footpath adjacent to R188, reconstructed entrance piers gates and walls and the provision of turning area and parking plus the construction of approximately 750m of amenity pathways at Dromore West, Bellamont Forest, Co Monaghan (File Reference 12/8012).**

*On the proposal of Cllr McPhillips, seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed that the Part VIII planning application be approved as presented.*

- 4. Taking in Charge application for development known as “Scarna Court” Emyvale, Co Monaghan**

*On the proposal of Cllr S. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Connolly, it was agreed that the Taking in Charge application for development known as “Scarna Court”, Emyvale, Co. Monaghan be approved.*

**5. To consider Section 183 Notice – disposal of plot of land at Bree, Castleblayney, (16No. Houses) to Castleblayney Town Council**

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the Section 183 Notice to dispose of plot of land at Bree, Castleblayney to Castleblayney Town Council be approved.*

**6. Adoption of Bye-Laws under the Control of Horses Act, 1996**

Brendan Smyth, Veterinary Inspector for Monaghan Local Authorities, outlined the revised draft Bye Laws made under the Control of Horses Act, 1996 amended following submission. He responded to questions from the members.

- The submission related to the cost of micro-chipping. The minimum cost of micro chipping is €30 plus the veterinary fees. All horses must be micro chipped
- The authorised officer is the Co. Veterinary Inspector, or his equivalent from Louth or Cavan (following Section 85 agreement).
- Six horses seized by the Council in 2012.
- The Council does not currently own or operate a pound, but can designate a pound elsewhere and can recoup expenses from owners of impounded animals.

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr. McKenna, it was agreed to adopt the Bye-Laws made under the Control of Horses Act, 1996.*

**7. To approve the nomination of Mr Kevin Donoghue and Mr Patrick McDonald as Traveller representatives to the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr M. Carthy, the nominations were agreed.*

**8. East Border Region – Financial Impact EBR INTERREG IIIA & IVA Projects**

*On the proposal of Cllr J. Crowe, seconded by Cllr Murray it was agreed to write to the East Border Region Ltd, complimenting them on their success in raising funding for the region and the county.*

The members complimented Cllr Crowe for his work on the committee.

The members were advised that there has been no meeting yet between officials on the Memorandum of Understanding with Armagh City.

**9. Presentation: Michelle Murphy, Monaghan Sports Partnership 2.30pm**

Ms Murphy outlined the work of Monaghan Sports Partnership and its role in promoting sports in the county. The work carried out by Kristina Meenaghan in 2012

was complimented as was the work of the many volunteers that support the work of the Partnership.

Cllr O'Hanlon invited Ms Murphy to facilitate an open night in Carrickmacross

The Mayor thanked Ms Murphy for her informative presentation.

#### **10. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences**

The Members noted the reports from Cllrs Bannigan, Keelan, McElvaney, and McNally, in relation to their attendance at the following conferences –

- Disputes between Neighbours and Law: Training Seminar for Councillors, Limerick
- Domestic Water Meters for Ireland, Bunratty, Co. Clare

#### **11. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector**

Cllr Bannigan advised that the members of the Co. Monaghan Anti-Pylon Committee are to meet with the new Chief Executive Officer of EirGrid, Mr Fintan Slye, on Thursday next. He also advised that there will be a public meeting within the next few weeks.

#### **12. Business submitted by County Manager**

##### **Hope Castle building**

The Co. Manager advised that Mr. Chris Haren has appealed to the Supreme Court against the recent High Court decision in favour of Monaghan County Council in relation to his malicious injuries claim. The Council was advised that Supreme Court hearings can take up to four years to be heard.

##### **Property tax**

There will be an exemption from the property tax for a limited number of houses in unfinished housing estates in County Monaghan. The estates affected in Monaghan include dwellings in

- 4 dwellings in Cornamucklaglass, Ballybay.
- Approx. 8 dwellings in Rock River View, Rockcorry,
- 6 dwellings in Candlefort, Iniskeen
- 24 dwellings in Killycard Manor, Castleblayney

The members requested a copy of the report on the estates which are exempt.

The Council is not aware of any houses with pyrite issues in Monaghan.

### **Ulster Canal**

The Council anticipates a response in relation to both the County and the Clones application from the Northern Ireland Planning Service in the coming weeks.

### **Donaghmoyne playground**

The Council is aware of an issue in relation to a community group who have constructed a playground in Donaghmoyne and are experiencing difficulties obtaining insurance cover.

## **13. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2013.**

Cllr. P. Treanor asked the Co. Manager to assign a staff member as Irish Officer. The Council needs to prepare for Seachtain na Gaeilge and to have support for the Coiste Gaeilge.

### **Convent Lands, Carrickmacross.**

Cllr Carthy stated that he was not happy with reply to Question 8. He asked that the Council carry out a full inventory of all the Council owned houses on the estate. Mr A. King to report back to next Council meeting

### **Cllr McPhillips moved that:**

*The matter of diesel laundering be placed on the agenda for the next Roads and Environment SPC and that the Council make available staff to attend public meetings (in particular Community Alert Meetings) who are familiar with these incidents to inform the public of what they should be weary/suspicious of and to where to report such suspicions.*

Following a debate in which the Chairman of the Joint Policing Committee, Cllr. D. Maxwell stated that members were updated regularly on this issue at J.P.C. meetings, Cllr Mc Phillips agreed to withdraw the motion

*On the proposal of Cllr McPhillips, seconded by Cllr Bannigan, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council Environment Section be requested to prepare a document detailing the "tell tale" signs of diesel laundering related pollution which will be available to members who will bring it to the attention of their communities.*

### **Silvercrest/AIBP**

The members were advised that a date for a meeting with representatives of AIBP had not yet become available. The members will be advised when a date is confirmed by AIBP and any member that is available on the day can attend.

### **Standing Orders Committee**

After some discussion it was agreed to ask the Standing Orders Committee to review the rules on the rules on number of times a member can speak at a Council meeting.

**14. Questions:**

**Cllr M. Carthy asked:**

1. What remedial works does the Council intend to carry out on the R179 Carrickmacross-Culloville Road in 2013, the locations and the expected date of commencement, considering this road is in a deplorable condition in many parts?

**Reply:** *The Council has some funding for restoration and maintenance works on this road. The weather conditions over the autumn and winter months have accelerated the deterioration of the road pavement. The Engineers office is actively preparing a works plan to deal with the worst problems.*

2. Does the Council have plans to undertake a 'Spring-clean' comprising of grass cutting and litter collection along the route of the Carrickmacross By-pass and/ or other parts of the N2?

**Reply:** *These works are normally done annually during Spring and Summer months. €6,000 has been allocated from the Spring Clean Budget to each road area.*

3. i) How many households are currently repaying housing loans to Monaghan County Council?  
ii) Of these, how many households are currently in arrears?  
iii) Will the Council make a comprehensive statement regarding households in arrears including amounts, lengths of time in arrears etc.

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council currently has 346 active loans. At 31st January 2013 there were 135 customers in arrears details as follows:*

<i>Period of Arrears</i>	<i>Number of Customers</i>	<i>Total Arrears</i>
<i>Loans between 0 and 1 month old</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>4,476</i>
<i>Loans between 1 and 2 months old</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>4,273</i>
<i>Loans between 2 and 3 months old</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2,956</i>
<i>Loans greater than 3 months old</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>146,811</i>

*Because housing loans are calculated one month in arrears the above figures do not include the January 2013 installment.*

*For loans greater than 3 months in arrears the amounts of arrears range from €92.65 to €8,562.82.*

*For loans greater than 3 months in arrears the following is a breakdown of the monthly installments*

<i>Less than €100</i>	<i>52 loans</i>
<i>Greater than €100 and less than €200</i>	<i>25 loans</i>
<i>Greater than €200 and less than €300</i>	<i>4 loans</i>
<i>Greater than €300</i>	<i>16 loans</i>



*Monaghan County Council currently has 30 customers on payment plans where the arrears are being reduced on a monthly basis. During 2012 Monaghan County Council introduced a new Debt Management System to monitor arrears and record details of all correspondence with customers. Staff engaged in arrears collection are currently undergoing Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP) training.*

**Cllr A. Murray asked:**

4. What is the average annual cost of maintaining and managing (including estate management) of Council's Social rented houses?

*Reply: The total cost of maintaining and managing (including estate management) of the Council's social rented houses is €1million and is included in the Council's annual revenue budget each year. In addition to the revenue budget for maintenance work the Council usually receives grants from central government for energy efficiency improvement work (at the time of writing the grant allocation for 2013 has not been announced). The Council may also use income from the sale of houses to fund its planned maintenance work each year. With almost 800 houses in stock, the average cost is approx €1,250 per house. However this figure also includes the cost of refurbishment works to vacant houses.*

**Cllr P. McNally asked:**

5. Has this Council received any reply from the N.R.A. re additional signage for Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Castleblayney on the M1 motorway? Similar to what has been erected on the N4 directing traffic to secondary towns off the motorway?

*Reply: The last response received from the NRA in May 2011 noted that the NRA had no plans to erect additional signage on the M1 and noted that signs are designed in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual and that it is not possible to include all destinations on a sign as it would be come unreadable for road users travelling at motorway speeds.*

6. When does this Council expect to get the final report regarding the Cavan to Dundalk road upgrade which runs through Carrickmacross?

*Reply: It is expected that the Consultants will finalise the preliminary design for the scheme in June 2013.*

7. When a Council house becomes vacant, has this Council a prescribed period of time set to have it reallocated, as I am told that there are houses being left empty indefinitely.

*Reply: Monaghan County Council does not have a prescribed period set to have a vacant property re-allocated. It is the Councils aim to have vacant properties let as soon as they are available from the persons who relinquish the tenancies. This is dependent however on the condition of the house when it is received back from the previous tenant, the necessity to carry other works (including BER upgrades) on the property whilst it is vacant, and the availability of persons on the housing list seeking housing in that area and persons accepting offers of accommodation when they are made.*

**Cllr B. McKenna asked:**

8. Can the Council indicate what type of tests will be carried out on septic tanks and how many staff members are being trained up by the EPA to carry out these inspections?

**Reply:** *The inspections will determine compliance with the Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012 and associated regulations and in particular the Water Services Acts 2007 and 2012 (Domestic WasteWater Treatment Systems) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 223 of 2012).*

**The inspector will check:**

- *whether the system is registered;*
- *if it is leaking;*
- *if the system components are in working order;*
- *if effluent is ponding on the surface of the ground;*
- *if it is discharging direct to surface water without a licence;*
- *if rainwater or clean surface water is entering the system;*
- *whether the system is being properly operated and maintained;*
- *if the system has been de-sludged; and*
- *if the system is being managed in a manner that does not adversely affect the environment.*

*General information relating to the site conditions will be gathered to inform the inspector's decision relating to compliance with Regulation S.I. No. 223. In addition, information on private wells will be gathered to inform guidance that will be provided to the owner on the proper construction, protection and operation of these wells.*

*Monaghan County Council will train 2 (two) number inspectors and 1 (one) Authorised Person to implement the above.*

**Cllr C. Bennett asked:**

9. In order to address the serious concerns and the additional cost implications for consumers because of the hardness of the water to Scotstown and Ballinode, will the Council examine the possibility of laying a pipe network that would facilitate the mixing of water from Togan and the Crosses WTP. This would ensure the removal of the costs associated with deposits of calcium carbonate on electrical appliances and will the Council, if this is feasible, submit an application for funding to the Department of Environment & Local Government.

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council's Public Water Supplies are mostly sourced from groundwater supplies. The potential decrease in hardness values if Togan water was mixed with Crosses water and distributed to the Scotstown / Ballinode Public Water Supply would be marginal. A cost benefit analysis considering the capital investment required would rank this proposal as a 'low value' project.*

10. In the interest of pedestrian and traffic safety, will Monaghan County Council extend the footpath on the left-hand side out the Roslea Road from Scotstown village as far as Gola Crest and the Ferns housing estates. This has become a very dangerous area for walking or driving. Young families live in both estates and the road is not safe. Without

a footpath extended in this area, it is inevitable that a devastating accident may occur here in the near future.

**Reply:** *The feasibility of providing a footpath at this location can be examined by Monaghan County Council. At present there are no plans or funding in this year's budget to provide a footpath at this location.*

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

11. In relation to the increased traffic flows which will be created on the diversion routes via Glaslough and Knockronaghan, created as a result of the upgrading of the N2 between Monaghan and Emyvale, what plans are there to impose a reduced speed limit on these roads for the duration of their use as diversion routes?

**Reply:** *There are no plans to impose a reduced speed limit along this diversion route. Existing speed limits in towns and villages will still apply.*

12. What plans are there for increased maintenance on the diverted roads via Knockronagan and Glaslough for the duration of their use over the next 5 months?

**Reply:** *The diversion route will be continually monitored by the Contractor PT McWilliams/McLaughlin Harvey Joint Venture and Monaghan County Council.*

13. In view of the severe state of disrepair of small tracks (2 by 70 mtrs approx) of the Heasty's Cross to the Tydavnet road what plans are there for emergency works to be carried out?

**Reply:** *The Emyvale Area Office will examine this section of roadway.*

**Cllr C. McPhillips asked:**

14. (a) Can Monaghan County Council please advise how much funding it has allocated to "The Gathering" events within the County?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council was allocated €30,000 by The Gathering/Fáilte Ireland to support eligible Co Monaghan festivals and events through The Gathering Local Community Fund and the Council has contributed a further €3,000 to the Fund from its own resources.*

*In addition to this Fund, IPB Insurance allocated €25,000 to Monaghan County Council to support three flagship festivals as follows:*

<i>The Lough Muckno Autumn Angling Festival (IADA)</i>	<i>€10,000</i>
<i>The European School Boys Boxing Championships (IABA)</i>	<i>€10,000</i>
<i>The European Powerlifting Championships</i>	<i>€ 5,000</i>

- (b) Where can members of the public find further information in relation to "The Gathering" events in County Monaghan?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council has developed an interactive Gathering calendar on the main county tourism website [www.monaghantourism.com](http://www.monaghantourism.com) which currently provides details of 112+ events in the county – each one of which is accompanied by a description, images, contact information and a location map.*

*The Monaghan Tourism App has been updated with all the Gathering events and a print Calendar of Events for the county is currently being finalised and will be ready for distribution on the week commencing 4 March.*

*[www.thegatheringireland.com](http://www.thegatheringireland.com) is the national website supported by The Gathering/Failte Ireland and provides a comprehensive list of all Gathering events in the country.*

**Cllr C. McPhillips asked:**

(c) Are there brochures available, which B&B, hotels and other accommodation centres can have, to provide to visiting guests?

**Reply:** *In addition to the Calendar of Events, Monaghan County Council is also in the process of producing an updated “Things to Do” brochure for the county, which will be available shortly.*

(d) Has Monaghan County Council had any contact with those involved directly in the tourism industry as to whether visitor numbers appear to be increasing?

**Reply:** *A condition of The Gathering Festival funding is that each event is required to complete a Post-Event report highlighting visitor numbers. This will give a good indication of the level of business generated as a result of The Gathering initiative.*

15. Can Monaghan County Council please advise as to the regulations governing hedge-cutting as of 1<sup>st</sup> March? In what circumstances, if any, can hedge cutting take place from this date?

**Reply:** *Under the provisions of Section 40 of the Wild Life Act it is an offence to cut burn or destroy vegetation growing in a hedge or ditch in the period beginning on the 1st March and ending on the 31st August in each year . The act provides for limited derogations, where prohibited works can be carried out in this period in the interest of public health or safety. It is recommended that where the derogations are to be availed of, that the National Parks and Wild Life Section of the Department of Environment are consulted before any works are carried out so as to avoid the risk of prosecution.*

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

16. In relation to the inspections of septic tanks under the Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012, will the Manager outline what role will Monaghan County Council have in these inspections i.e. when will these inspections commence; where in the county will inspections commence; what are the standards required to pass an inspection; what are the consequences of a septic tank failing an inspection; what is the level of grant aid

available to homeowners if works are required to be carried out; are citizens within their rights to refuse access to an agent of the Council onto their property?

**Reply:** *The Plan will be implemented by the Water Services Authorities (WSAs) under the supervision of the EPA. The Plan will commence in 2013, with the initial focus on citizen engagement and inspections commencing in July 2013. Risk based analysis will determine the location. A minimum of 33 inspections will be carried out in 2013. The inspections will determine compliance with the Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012 and associated regulations and in particular the Water Services Acts 2007 and 2012 (Domestic WasteWater Treatment Systems) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 223 of 2012). The regulations related to Grant scheme are not published to date however a recent press release outlined the following criteria,*

*The Minister has announced that provision is being made in the Rural Water Programme 2013 for a grant scheme to provide financial assistance to those households whose domestic waste water treatment systems are deemed, following inspection under the Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012, to require remediation or upgrading. The grant assistance will only be available to householders that have registered their system by February 1st 2013. The level of grant available will be dependent on the income of the household, as per the table below.*

Household Income	% Costs Available	Maximum Grant
Up to €50,000	80%	€1,000
€50,001–€75,000	50%	€2,500
Over €75,000	No grant payable	No grant payable

*Under Section 22 of the 'Water Services Act 2007' the authorised person has the right to enter any premises.*

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

17. In welcoming the taking-in-charge by Monaghan County Council of the newly constructed footpath and public lighting adjacent to the Pitch & Putt Course in Inniskeen village, given the hard work and commitment of the Inniskeen voluntary groups supported by the local community in delivering this fantastic amenity, when is it hoped to have the public lighting switched on?

**Reply:** *The Council have made an application to the ESB Networks to have the lights connected to the supply network.*

18. (a) In relation to the establishment of Irish Water, which will be the Authority responsible for all public water supply and also waste water supply and treatment, will the Manager outline what will be the consequences for our staff currently working in Water Services, who provide an excellent service to the people of County Monaghan;

**19. Cllr N. Keelan asked (contd):**

- (b) When will Irish Water take full control of all public water services;
- (c) What will be the consequences for elected members, and more importantly, the people of County Monaghan in terms of representations in order to get problems solved and other issues dealt with;
- (d) For those who have a public water supply, what would be the average bill that people can expect to fall through the letterbox in the coming 12 months for water supply?

**Reply:** *As established under Water Services Bill 2013 – ‘Irish Water / Uisce Eireann’ are the new water services authority. The City & County Managers Association along with their Management group Local Government Management Agency in consultation with the Department and respective unions are currently devising workforce plans which will address the future of LA staff which are aligned to the Water Services Section of Local Authorities. Commencement of the relevant sections will be determined by the commencement orders associated to the bill.*

*Local authorities will operate under Service Level Agreements (SLA’s) with Irish Water. The Company is to establish a call centre which will be the point of contact for Elected Members and the public.*

*Irish Water is to develop transition plans in Q2 and Q3 2013 with a view to a regional / national structure. The Company is to be fully operational by 2015.*

*Water pricing is to be controlled by the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) once the relevant legislation is in place.*

20. Will Monaghan County Council carry out works to a dangerous junction known locally as “Wood’s Bridge” on the Shantonagh Road leading to the townland of Greaghlane, as discussed on site with myself and our Roads Section, in the interest of road safety?

**Reply:** *The Council have recently completed works at this location.*

21. (a) In relation to housing, how many people/families are currently on the Council Housing list;

**Reply:** *Monaghan Local Authorities have recently established that there are approximately 1030 applicants in need of housing on their waiting list. However, the Councils are currently carrying out an Assessment of Housing Needs which will be completed at the end of April, 2013 and will provide a definitive number for statistical purposes.*

- (b) How many people/families are currently housed under the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS);

**Reply:** *There are currently 176 people in private rented accommodation and 108 tenants in voluntary accommodation under the Rental Accommodation Scheme.*

- (c) What is the cost per annum to the taxpayer in operating the scheme?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council do not have details of the cost per annum of the Rental Accommodation Scheme to the tax payer. However, this information can be requested from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government who operate this scheme.*

**Cllr S. Conlon asked:**

22. With the rapidly declining state of our road networks and in an effort to meet the increasing demands of patch repair and pot-hole filling, can additional road repair crews be established to carry out this necessary road safety related work?

**Reply:** *The Council has allocated additional resources to repair potholes in the last two weeks to avail of the dry conditions.*

23. To facilitate the implementation of the 'Making Monaghan Accessible' Disability Strategy, what spend has occurred in 2012 and what funding is allocated for this purpose in 2013?

**Reply:** *The Disability Funding previously available from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government ceased in 2011. The last tranche of funding was received in 2010. The following work was completed in 2012 using this funding:*

***Works at Monaghan Leisure Complex***

***Signage in Braille -€5,000***

***Installation of Induction loop -€3,000***

***Gym equipment for people with disabilities - €25,000***

***Internal painting - €5,000***

***Upgrading of public address system -€5,000***

***Upgrading of literature into Braille -€3,000***

***Other Works***

***Information & Directional signage - €50,000***

***Lowering of counter in North Road library- €2,000***

***Extension of counter for wheelchair access - North Road library -€1,000***

***Upgrading access on streetscapes - Monaghan town -€50,000***

***Improvements at disabled parking bays & kerb crossing in Carrickmacross town -€42,000***

***Total spend €191,000***

***MCC has a provision of €40,000 available for disability awareness works in 2013.***

**Cllr P. Treanor asked:**

23. Are there any reports from meetings held with the task force established by Minister Jimmy Deenihan TD involving County Managers, Chief Executives and Waterways Ireland, set up to investigate funding of the Clones to Erne section of the Ulster Canal?

Is the group exploring the possibility of European Funding and if so what progress has the group made so far regarding accessing EU funds?

**Reply:** *This Inter Agency Group is chaired by The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The Manager reported to the Council following the last meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012. The group undertook to explore the possibility of European Funding and will continue to pursue the matter.*

**Cllr R. Gallagher asked:**

24. In light of a new Department of Transport initiative when does the Council intend to survey all of the local roads in the county with a view to evaluating the condition of same under potential new Department of Transport funding guidelines?

**Reply:** *The Council intend to survey the entire local road network over the coming year.*

25. Will this Council contact Coillte as a matter of urgency and request them to cut / trim trees that currently obstruct the road at Rossmore Forest Park on the Monaghan-Threemilehouse Road, in the interest of road safety.

**Reply:** *The Emyvale Area Office will contact Coillte regarding this request.*

**15. Notices of Motion:**

**Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded**

1. *“That Monaghan County Council place an urgent demand on the Taoiseach Enda Kenny T.D., the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton T.D. and the government for the immediate reversal of the €325 cut in the Respite Care Grant to carers in the recent budget. This measure is cruel and unfair to carers and their families”.*

The motion was put to a vote by show of hands and resulted in 16 for, 0 against, 3 abstentions. The motion was declared carried.

It was requested that the motion be circulated to other Councils around the country and to TD's in the region.

**Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr McNally seconded**

2. *“That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Education & Science, Ruairi Quinn T.D. and the government to immediately ensure the completion of processing and payment of Higher Educational grants 2012/13 to third students and to ensure the hardships suffered by students and their families never happen again. They need to adequately resource a processing mechanism for Higher Educational grants, fit for purpose and easily accessible to applicants”.*

*Cllr McKenna proposed, Cllr Keelan seconded that the motion be amended to include a call to reinstate the service under the VEC / LA's.*



The motion was put to a vote by show of hands and resulted in 19 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The motion was declared carried.

3. This Motion was previously dealt with.

**Cllr M. Carthy proposed, Cllr P Treanor seconded**

4. *“That Monaghan County Council acknowledges the fantastic work undertaken by projects involved in the Rural Transport Scheme. That we view any diminution of this scheme to be a further attack on rural communities. Furthermore we believe that this scheme is at its most effective when delivered at a local level and therefore we oppose any effort to centralise the Rural Transport Scheme”.*

The Co. Manager advised that a Sub Committee of the CCMA were considering proposals, nationally in relation to the transfer of responsibility for the scheme to local authorities. Consultation is to take place locally. Cllr Carthy requested that the Mayor be in attendance at the meeting.

The motion was put to a vote by show of hands and resulted in 19 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The motion was declared carried.

**Cllr P. McNally proposed, Cllr Murray seconded:**

5. *“That this Council calls on the Minister for Agriculture, Simon Coveney calling him to introduce a new Reqs Scheme to replace the Reqs 4 Scheme which is now entering its final phase as this is necessary to maintain family farm incomes in many cases”.*

The motion was put to a vote by show of hands and resulted in 19 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The motion was declared carried.

**Cllr P. McNally proposed, Cllr Murray seconded**

6. *“That this Council calls on the Government to speed up the proposed legislation on debt forgiveness for distressed mortgage holders”*

The motion was put to a vote by show of hands and resulted in 19 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The motion was declared carried with a request to circulate it to all local authorities

It was agreed that Cllr’s Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Crowe, Keelan, McKenna & P. Treanor motion be deferred to the April Agenda.

7. *That this Council calls on the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan to instruct all local authorities not to include the nominal amount of additional income social welfare recipients receive from JobBridge, and similar internship schemes, as ‘reckonable income’ for the purpose of determining weekly rent for local authority tenants who participate on these schemes.*

**Cllr R. Gallagher proposed, Cllr O'Brien seconded**

8. *“That this Council calls on the Minister for Justice, Alan Shatter, TD, to introduce a nationwide text alert initiative to tackle rural crime”.*

The motion was put to a vote by show of hands and resulted in 19 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The motion was declared carried.

**Urgent Business at 2.00pm**

**Notice in the names of Cllrs Bannigan, McPhillips, Murray, Carville, Maxwell and McElvaney**

*That while we recognise that the previous Mobility and Motor Transport Scheme were in breach of the Equal Status Act as determined by the Ombudsman, Monaghan County Council calls on the Government to put a new scheme in place that will provide the necessary services required by Disabled People and that any such scheme will meet the requirements of disabled people.*

**Notice in the names of Cllrs Coyle, McNally, Gallagher**

*That Monaghan County Council condemns the cutting of the Mobility Allowance and Motorised Transport Schemes by the government and calls on the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, and the Fine Gael and Labour parties of government to immediately ensure the full restoration of the schemes to all previous beneficiaries and qualifying recipients of the schemes, the most vulnerable members of Irish society.*

**Notice in the names of Cllrs Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Crowe, Keelan, P. Treanor and McKenna**

*That Monaghan County Council calls on the government to withdraw its plans to scrap the Mobility Allowance Scheme and the Motorised Transport Grant Scheme*

It was agreed to take the three motions as one and the motion was adopted unanimously

**Notice in the names of Cllr's Murray and Bannigan**

*Considering the disastrous effect the exceptionally high level of rainfall has had on local country roads over the past two years that Monaghan County Council calls on Minister Varadkar and the NRA to increase the 2013 budget for local roads by at least 25%. This amount to be taken from National Primary and Secondary roads, if necessary.*

*Also that in appointments to the National Roads Authority Board that County Councils be adequately represented.*

The motion was adopted unanimously

### **Notice in the names of Cllr Connolly and Cllr S Treanor**

*That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Health and Department of Health not to proceed with their plans to destroy upwards of 1 million Guthrie cards, after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, that are used to store samples taken under the National New-born Bloodspot Screening Programme (Heel Prick Test) which screen for inherited disorders and help modern medical research in identifying genetic components in many diseases.*

The motion was proposed by Cllr. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Coyle and a roll call vote was requested, which resulted as follows:

<b>For:</b>	Cllrs, Connolly, McElvaney, Mc Kenna, PJ O'Hanlon, S. Treanor	<b>Total 5</b>
<b>Against:</b>	Cllrs. Bennett, Conlon and P Treanor	<b>Total 3</b>
<b>Abstained:</b>	Cllrs, Bannigan, Carville, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, Mc Nally, Murray, O'Brien	<b>Total 9</b>

(Not present for vote: Cllrs Carthy, Maxwell and Mc Phillips)

### **Notice in the names of Cllr P. Treanor and Cllr Mc Kenna**

*Cllr P. Treanor proposed and Cllr B. McKenna seconded that the County Manager ensures that An Oifigeach Gaeilge be appointed to Monaghan County Council.  
Go ndéanfaidh an Bainistéar Iarracht éile chun a chinntiú go mbéidh Oifigeach Gaeilge ag Comhairle Chontae Mhuineacháin*

The motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously

### **Notice in the names of Cllrs Conlon and Bennett**

*In reference to the statistic of 280,000 people volunteering within sports on a weekly basis we ask of the Department of Social Protection and Volunteer Ireland for clarification around eligibility of people on the live register, to volunteer in sports.*

The motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously

## **16. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations.**

It was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to Mary Leah Trainor, Prince Edward Island, on the death of her mother.

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

- Colm Kirke, Clones, on winning the All-Ireland Scór na nÓg title for recitation in Derry last week and his father, who wrote the script.
- Terry McElvaney, Monaghan Harps Handball Club, on winning the Ulster U-21 handball title.

- Michael McCarron, St. Mellan's Handball Club, on winning the Ulster Diamond Masters title.
- Darren Doherty, Emyvale Handball Club, on winning the All Ireland Colleges Intermediate title
- Drumhowan GAA Club and their instrumental music team on winning the All Ireland Scór na nÓg title on Saturday last
- John Connolly on his election as PRO of Ulster Council
- Eoghan McGinnity, Tyholland, on winning All Ireland U11 Schoolboy Handball Championship

## 17. Conferences.

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

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
TGR Seminars	Time and Priority Management for Councillors	Grainne Suite, Bunratty Castle Hotel, Co Clare	8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Cllr S. Coyle Cllr O. Bannigan Cllr H. McElvaney
Public Affairs Ireland	A New Future for Local Government in Ireland	Westin Hotel, Dublin	13 <sup>th</sup> March	Cllr S. Conlon
Alcohol Forum	The Power of Local Community in Reducing Harmful Drinking	National Convention Centre, Dublin	20 <sup>th</sup> March	Cllr Jackie Crowe
TJK Conferences	Freedom of Information training seminar for Councillors	Woodfield House Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick	22 <sup>nd</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> March	Cllr P.J. O’Hanlon
Celtic Conferences	Drug & Alcohol Abuse Seminar	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork	22 <sup>nd</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> March	Cllr Owen Bannigan Cllr Hugh McElvaney Cllr Pdraig McNally Cllr Noel Keelan Cllr John O’Brien
Superior Training	Local Government & Job Creation	The Millrace Hotel, Bunclody, Co. Wexford	22 <sup>nd</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Cllr David Maxwell Cllr Gary Carville Cllr Ciara McPhillips Cllr Aidan Murray
Clare Roots Society	Gathering the Scattering	Templegate Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> April	Cllr D. Maxwell
LAMA	Spring Seminar	Ashdown Park Hotel, Gorey, Co. Wexford	5 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> April	Cllr Pat Treanor Cllr Paudge Connolly Cllr Seamus Coyle Cllr P.J. O’Hanlon Cllr Hugh McElvaney Cllr Owen Bannigan Cllr Aidan Murray
Cantillon	The Economy & Entrepreneurship	Tralee I.T. Co. Kerry	11 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> April	Cllr P. McNally

The meeting concluded at 3.30pm.