

**Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Mtek Building,
Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 21st May, 2012 at 10.00 a.m.**

Chair: Cllr S. Coyle, Mayor.

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

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager, Mr. P. Clifford and Mr. A. King, Mr. D. Treanor, Directors of Service, Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner, Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner, Mr. Simon Carleton, Graduate Planner and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

Apology: Cllr D. Maxwell and Cllr S. McKenna

At the outset votes of sympathy were proposed to the following

- Alan and Mark Hall, Council Engineers on the death of their mother, and to Pauline McClean on the death of her mother in law, Pearl Hall RIP.
- Francis McCarron and Linda Pinkster, Cloverhill, Monaghan on the death of their daughter Emma RIP
- Mrs. Geraldine McCormack, Castleblayney on the death of her brother Dr. Felix Kierans. RIP
- Matt Caulfield, former Councillor, on the death of his sister in law Mary Ann Caulfield, Scotstown. RIP

Cllr Brian McKenna proposed a vote of congratulations to the Monaghan Ladies Senior Football team on winning the National Football League Title recently and that the Council host a Civic Reception in honour of the achievement of the Ladies Team. Cllr Conlon seconded the motion which was agreed by the full Council.

It was agreed that that the Civic Reception be held on Tuesday 5th June at 7.00 pm

It was further agreed that a vote of congratulations be extended to the U-14 girls football team on winning the U14 Ulster Football Championship.

7. To consider the draft Monaghan County Development Plan (*Incorporating the Development Plans for the Towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay*) 2013-2019

In introducing this item, the Mayor stated that the current County Development Plan must be reviewed before March 2013. Currently we are at the half way point in the process with the publication of the Draft Development Plan 2013-2019. The previous public consultation process took place between March and May 2011 to ascertain main issues in relation to planning in the county. The submissions received were set out in the

Manager's report and were previously considered by the elected members last September. The planning officials have met formally with the elected members both in their respective groupings and at Town Plan level to discuss the objectives, policies and zonings of the plan on 19 occasions over the last six months. He thanked the members and officials for their attendance at these meetings.

He stated that whilst he did not wish to stymie debate, it was important to note that the content of the Draft Plan has been the subject of extensive discussion at these meetings over the last six months and he hoped that the Draft Plan can be progressed to the public consultation stage. He encouraged and urged the public to get involved in this stage and to voice their opinions on the draft plan.

He reminded the members that they have been circulated with DoECLG Development Plan Guidelines setting out their responsibilities during the plan making process. The elected members are restricted to

- considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area;
- they must take account of the statutory obligations of any local authority in the area and
- they must take account of the relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government.

Finally he advised the members that there will be an additional opportunities for them to make further comment on the content of the Development Plan prior to its adoption. The public consultation period will last 10 weeks following which the Manager will issue a report to the members on the submissions received during the consultation period for their consideration. Meetings will then be scheduled to discuss the submissions and the Manager's response/recommendations in October/November.

Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner outlined the following:

- The making of the County Development Plan is a Reserved Function
- The Council must have a new Development Plan adopted by March 2013
- In making the development plan the elected members :-
 - are restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development plan relates
 - must take account of the statutory obligations of any local authority in the area
 - must take account of the relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government
- The new Plan must be consistent with:-
 - National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
 - Regional Planning Guidelines for Border Region 2010-2022
 - Planning and Development Act 2010 – Core Strategy

He stated that the following documents were issued to the elected Members

- **Draft Development Plan** – objectives, policies, zonings
- **Draft Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)** – documents how the objectives and policies in the Draft Plan have been shaped to ensure no conflict with the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites
- **Draft Environmental Report (SEA)** – documents how the objectives and policies in the Draft Plan have been shaped to ensure that there is no significant negative impact on the environment
- Any changes to Draft Development Plan will also have to be screened for potential impacts upon Natura 2000 sites and the Environment

He then explained Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) process and outlined the main additions to the Draft Plan as well as the various stages of the Development Plan Review. The Planners will be holding a series of public meetings throughout the county during the public consultation period.

A general discussion then followed to which a number of members contributed. Mr. Gourley and Mr. Hughes responded to queries raised by the members. A number of members suggested that a summary document outlining the main changes in the draft plan, would be prepared for ease of reference by the public.

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager stated that the development plan process is a statutory process with a prescribed timeframe. The Council will welcome all engagement with the public and he encouraged people to make submissions on issues they are concerned about. He further stated that the idea of producing a summary document was a very good suggestion and he said that the Council will consider availing of social networking which wasn't available when the last Development Plan was prepared. In regard to zoning, the Executive was of the view that sufficient land had been identified in the draft plan to allow for sustainable development and that enough land had been zoned for development at this stage.

Proposals:

The following proposals were made during the debate –

Cllr Bannigan proposed, Cllr McElvaney seconded that the Draft Development Plan be amended by the inclusion of the following policy within Policies for Landscape Protection.

“LPP 3

Development which fails to appropriately integrate into the landscape with due regard to visual impact, landscape amenity, the protection of skylines, amenities such as lakes, designated walkways, heritage sites and recreational and tourist facilities shall be resisted.”

The Mayor put Cllr Bannigan's proposal to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr Bannigan proposed, Cllr McElvaney seconded that the Draft Development Plan be amended by the inclusion of the following policy within a new policy section – Residential Amenity.

Development which has an overbearing or dominant visual impact on residential properties in the vicinity of the development shall be resisted.

The Mayor put Cllr Bannigan's proposal to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna and it was agreed that Monaghan County Council write to An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, Minister for Finance Michael Noonan TD and Mr. Jimmy Deenihan TD Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, seeking to have the re-opening and development of the Ulster Canal included in the Infrastructure Stimulus Programme being prepared for submission to the European Investment Bank.

Cllr Gallagher proposed, Cllr McNally seconded, that the definition of local area in relation planning applications for houses in rural areas under strong urban influence be extended from 2km radius to 4km radius.

The Mayor put Cllr Gallagher's proposal to the meeting. A vote by show of hands resulted in 9 for, nil against, 7 abstentions. The Mayor declared the proposal carried.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllrs McNally and Keelan it was agreed that the Draft County Development Plan 2013-2019 be placed on public display and that submissions be invited from the general public and other interested bodies.

The Mayor again thanked everyone involved with the preparation of the Draft Plan and urged the people of County Monaghan to engage in the public consultation process.

11. Business submitted by County Manager

Green Awards 2012 – Mr. Fallon advised that he had attended the Green Awards 2012 event recently and he wished to congratulate Eurotech Castleblayney; Silver Hill Foods and the Environment Section of Monaghan County Council who had all been nominated for awards this year.

Ulster Canal – He referred to the report circulated at the meeting on 8th May and stated that there was nothing further to report on the planning application.

Castleblayney Trust – Mr. Fallon stated that Castleblayney Trust were no longer interested in acquiring the Council's property at Church Street, Castleblayney which had been the subject of a Section 183 notice recently.

Lough Muckno – Mr. Fallon confirmed that he would update the members in relation to this matter at the June Council meeting.

Closure of Tourism Office, Monaghan Town: Cllr Conlon referred to the answer received to a question he had put down on the agenda for the May meeting, which indicated that “...*Monaghan Tourist Information Office at Monaghan Swimming Pool will not be opened this year*”. Mr. Fallon stated that Failte Ireland had notified the Council of this closure on 24th April – he circulated a copy of the letter to the Members. Cllr Conlon stated that the closure of the Tourist Office was a retrograde step particularly having regard to ‘The Gathering’ initiative being rolled out in 2013. A number of members joined in the debate and also expressed their regret at this decision.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that this Council writes to the Minister for Tourism Leo Varadkar and Failte Ireland imploring on them the urgent necessity of reversing the recent decision to close the Tourism Information Office in Monaghan town

Mr. A. King, Director stated that he had met with Kevin Kidney and Paul Hayden of Failte Ireland in mid April and they had advised him during the meeting that the tourist office was to close. He had requested notification in writing to the Council. Failte Ireland were seeking a community group or local authority to take out a licence to operate the facility. He said that the Tourism Officer, Dympna Condra and himself were looking at what might be done for this year. Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager expressed the view that the Council may have to provide the service itself.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council set up a Tourism sub-Committee to include a representative from each Town Council.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that the Council invite Mr. Paul Hayden or another representative from Failte Ireland to attend a meeting of the Council.

Cllr Conlon requested that the Manager would notify the Members of the amount of the contribution paid in respect of tourism grants by Monaghan County Council.

12. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meeting held on 2nd April, 2012.

Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2nd April, 2012 were responded to by the relevant officials.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council write again to Coillte in relation to the entrance fee being charged at Rossmore Forest Park.

In response to a query from Cllr O’Hanlon, Mr. A. King stated that he would circulate a report on the review of the rent scheme following issues raised by the members at the April meeting.

15. Notices of Motion

1. Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr P. Treanor seconded, and it was resolved

This Council calls on the relevant authorities to preserve and restore 10 – 25 Moore Street, Dublin 1, recognising the historical significance these properties and their environs had during the Easter Rising 1916.

In proposing the motion, Cllrs Carthy and P. Treanor referred to the increase in public awareness over the Easter Rising as it nears its centenary in 2016. There are plans to demolish some of the Moore Street buildings and erect a shopping arcade and this development should not be proceeded with having regard to the historical significance of these buildings. A number of members spoke in favour of the motion which was passed unanimously.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the Council write to Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government calling on both Ministers to ensure that the areas around 10-25 Moore Street, Dublin are fully protected.

2. Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr Conlon seconded

That Monaghan County Council supports the work and specific role of Local Development Companies (LDC) like Monaghan Integrated Development (MID) to reinforce their unique position, to combine with local initiatives of community based delivery of public programmes and supports the retention of existing LDC structures in order to maximise potential EU funding drawdown and retain their unique “bottom-up” approach to Local Development, with greater alignment between LDC’s and local government, through improved co-ordination of Activities and Information.

In proposing the motion Cllr Coyle stated that the Minister for the Environment was considering reforms in the area of Local Development Companies. He referred to the great work being undertaken by Monaghan Integrated Development – taking in bodies that may not be reached by other organisations in the county. He called on the Minister to look at the greater realignment of LDC’s and local government. Cllr Conlon stated that the LDC’s engaged with important elements of the community sectors and with many other agencies and are a great asset to any local authority, the local community and local society. Cllrs Murray, Connolly and O’Hanlon also spoke in favour of the motion.

The motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously. It was agreed that the motion would be forwarded to the Minister for the Environment and circulated to all other local authorities.

The meeting then concluded.