

**Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Mtek Building,
Armagh Road, Monaghan on Tuesday 3rd May, 2011 at 10.00 a.m.**

Chair: Cllr J. Crowe, Mayor.

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

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager, Mr. P. Clifford, Mr. A. King, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Mr. J. McGrath, Senior Engineer, Ms. N. Woods, SEO Housing Mr. N. O'Connor, Environment Awareness Officer, Mr. L. Bradley, Museum Curator and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

Apology: Cllrs Carville and McElvaney.

At the outset, the Mayor proposed a vote of sympathy to Cllr Noel Keelan on the death of his mother Brigid, RIP, who passed away since the last Council meeting. Cllr Carthy seconded the proposal.

A number of members expressed their sympathy to Cllr Keelan, as did the County Manager on behalf of the staff. The motion was passed unanimously.

Cllr Keelan thanked all present for the expressions of sympathy and support and for their attendance at the wake and funeral.

A minutes silence was observed, following which the meeting adjourned for ten minutes as a mark of respect.

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the good wishes of the Council be extended to Cllr Hugh McElvaney who was hospitalised and was unable to attend the meeting.

The Mayor advised the Members that following requests from Cllrs Connolly and Gallagher he would allow a short discussion on the recent spate of fires in the Bragan/Knockatallon area of the county.

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager outlined the activities of the Council's Fire Service in dealing with the gorse fires over the weekend in the Bragan area of the county. Fire crews had maintained a monitoring presence overnight and there were no fires of concern in the area at present. The Manager stated that he had no information as to how the fires had started and he called on the public to be vigilant and report any re-occurrence of the fires immediately.

Cllr Connolly stated that he had visited the area the previous day and described the situation as catastrophic. There had been extensive destruction of wildlife habitats and some forestry had also been destroyed. People's lives could have been at risk if emergencies had occurred in other areas of the county whilst firemen were engaged in

fighting these fires. He referred to anecdotal evidence that the fires were started deliberately. Cllrs B. McKenna, Gallagher, Maxwell and the Mayor contributed to the debate. The Members condemned the deliberate starting of the fires and called on the public to be careful with cigarettes when visiting these areas.

The Mayor and Members paid tribute to the Fire Service and the Gardai who were involved in the fire outbreaks.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 4th April, 2011, be confirmed.

2. Correspondence:

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda –

- Letter of acknowledgement from An Taoiseach in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the prominence of the Irish language in the education system.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in relation to the Council's resolution regarding Eirgrid.
- Email from the Minister for Health acknowledging Council's request for meeting in relation to Monaghan Hospital and the Doctor on Call service.
- Letter from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the suspension of the Local Authority Conservation Grants Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the proposed Eirgrid Interconnector.
- Letter from the PSNI Fermanagh Sector Commander, thanking the Council for its resolution of sympathy on the tragic death of Constable Ronan Kerr.
- Letter from the Chief Fire Officer Cavan County Council in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the General Election Count Centre.
- Letter from the County Registrar Cavan (General Election Returning Officer) in relation to the Council's resolution regarding facilities at the General Election Count Centre in Cavan.
- Letter from Comhairle na nOg Youth Development Officer requesting an opportunity to make a presentation to the Council at a future meeting.
- Resolution from Carrickmacross Town Council regarding the Market Square Building in Carrickmacross.
- Resolution from Carrickmacross Town Council regarding the possibility of providing an all weather playing surface in Cloughvalley.
- Resolution from Carrickmacross Town Council regarding the danger to public health posed by various nuclear power plant reactors in Japan.
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council regarding the crippling cost of rates on commercial properties.

- Resolution from Leitrim County Council regarding the safeguarding of jobs at Quinn Insurance.
- Resolution from Leitrim County Council regarding proposed changes to the Primary School Transport Scheme.
- Letter from the BMW Regional Assembly advising the Council of a refund of €9,873.26 against the Annual Demand for 2011.
- Letter from EirGrid advising that it will consider comments and observations from the public up to 31st May 2011 in respect of the Draft Grid25 Implementation Programme.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr O’Hanlon it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Carrickmacross Town Council, as follows:

“ That Carrickmacross Town Council state that it is our view that the Market Square building and yard remains in public ownership for the benefit of our community. That we will do all within our power to ensure that this is the case and that we write to Monaghan County Council indicating this view and requesting a full public consultation process takes place so that the people of Carrickmacross can have a say into the future of this historic building”.

Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr McNally seconded that the money refunded from the BMW Regional Assembly be used to provide additional public lighting.

Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance stated that the Blackwater Regional Partnership are seeking additional once off funding and this refund could be used to meet this amount.

Cllr Bannigan proposed that the Members could make suggestions as to how this money could be spent, in advance of the next meeting of the Council, when a decision on the matter would be taken. Cllr Murray seconded this proposal. This was agreed.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed that the Council write to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government expressing its dissatisfaction at the suspension of the Conservation Grants Scheme.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was agreed that the Council receive a presentation from Comhairle na nÓg following the Annual Meeting to be held in June 2011.

Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr S. Treanor seconded, that the Council write again to the Chief Fire Officer, Cavan County Council and the Returning Officer stating that the Council is not happy with the responses in relation to safety and facilities at the general election count centre in Cavan Leisure Centre.

A vote by show of hands on this proposal resulted in 5 for 8 against. The Mayor declared the proposal defeated.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council adopts the resolution from Monaghan Town Council, as follows:

“ That this Council calls on the Minister for Environment, Phil Hogan T.D. to address as a matter of urgency the crippling cost of rates on commercial properties.”

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that the Council write to Deputies Humphreys and Conlan requesting that they ensure that the Minister for Health meets with a deputation from the Council as soon as possible.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed that the Council adopts the resolution from Leitrim County Council, as follows –

“ That this Council write to the Minister for Education and Skills, Mr. Ruairi Quinn asking him not to introduce the proposed changes to the Primary School Transport Scheme arising from the last budget 2011. These changes will impose considerable financial hardships and inconvenience on parents and pupils living in rural areas ”

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Carrickmacross Town Council, as follows:

“ That this Council investigate the possibility, in conjunction with Monaghan County Council, of having an all weather playing surface provided on the green area adjacent to the playground in Cloughvalley to allow all year round playing of football, tennis, bowls, etc.”

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Bannigan it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Carrickmacross Town Council, as amended:

“ That this local authority, in light of the potentially catastrophic danger to public health posed by various nuclear power plant reactors in Japan; renews its opposition to Westminister’s plans to build 5 new nuclear power stations along the Irish Sea in Britain and calls on the Irish Government to voice these concerns to Westminister in the strongest possible terms, as well as calling on the Irish Government to take further legal steps confirming Ireland’s status as a Nuclear Free State. ”

3. To approve borrowing of €2,000,000.00 from the Housing Finance Agency:

The members considered the recommendation from the Director of Services for Housing which had been circulated with the agenda.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the Council approve of borrowing of €2,000,000.00 from the Housing Finance Agency for housing purposes to be used for the issue of mortgage type housing loans in order to fund the social housing options listed below –

Loan Type	Estimated requirement for 2011
Reconstruction	€140,000.00
House Purchase	€900,000.00
Shared Ownership	€100,000.00
Tenant Purchase	€850,000.00
Caravan Loan	€10,000.00

4. To consider proposal to take in charge the Lough Derry Road, Magheraclone, Carrickmacross:

The members considered the report from the Senior Executive Engineer, Roads Section which had been circulated with the agenda.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Murray it was agreed that the Council take in charge the Lough Derry Road, Magheraclone in accordance with the report and map circulated with the agenda, excluding the section marked 'D to E' on the map.

5. To receive presentation on revamped Council website:

Mr. Paul Treanor, Head of Information Services gave a presentation on the newly revamped Monaghan County Council website which is scheduled to go live in the next week or so. Mr. Treanor outlined the new features of the website which has been designed in a user-friendly format. He referred to the content management system which allows individual sections of the Council to update their information more quickly. The website has been certified for used by people with sight difficulties. He stated that the Council is embracing social networking and can now be followed on Facebook and Twitter pages.

Following the presentation Mr. Treanor responded to queries from the Members.

6. To approve recommendations from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on Monday 18th April, 2011

The Members considered the recommendations from the Corporate Policy Group, as follows:

(i) To consider funding request from Special Olympics Ireland

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed to recommend that the Council support the Monaghan Athlete participating in the Special Olympic World Summer Games in the amount of €750.

(ii) To consider and approve Museum Policy Documents

Mr. L. Bradley, Museum Curator outlined the contents and the objectives of each of the strategy documents.

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that the Council adopt the following documents -

- *Museum Disaster Plan 2011*
- *Care of Collections Strategy 2011-2013*
- *Museum Operational Plan 2011*
- *Museum Education Policy Action Plan 2011*

(iii) To consider funding request from Blackwater Regional Partnership

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed to recommend that an additional once-off payment of £5,780 be made to the Blackwater Regional Partnership.

(iv) To approve allocation of grants under the Environmental Fund 2011.

Mr. N. O'Connor, Environmental Awareness Officer responded to queries from the members in relation to this item.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed to recommend the allocation of grants under the Environmental Fund 2011 as per the report of the Administrative Officer Environment Section dated 8th April, 2011.

(v) To consider review of certain national speed limits

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Murray it was agreed that the recommendations from the Roads SPC and the Corporate Policy Group in relation to revised speed limits be approved.

(vi) To consider motion from CPG members re: NPPR charge/arrears

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council write to the T.D.'s for the constituency requesting them to raise, in Dail Eireann, the matter of payment of NPPR arrears charges by instalments.

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Murray it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on Monday 18th April, 2011 be confirmed.

7. To fix date for Carrickmacross Road Area Meeting:

It was agreed that a meeting of the Carrickmacross Road Area Committee would be held on Friday 13th May, 2011 at 10.00 a.m., in the Carrickmacross Town Council offices.

8. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences:

The Members noted the reports from Cllrs Bannigan, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Humphreys, Maxwell, McKenna, Murray and O'Brien in relation to their attendance at the following conferences –

- ACCC Conference, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
- Renewable Energy Conference, Croke Park, Dublin.
- Effective Public Relations, Ennistymon, Co. Clare.
- Rattoo Heritage Society Annual Conference, Tralee, Co. Kerry
- The Role of State Institutions & Law Reform in Promoting Ireland's Economic Future, Thomond Park, Limerick
- ILCRD, The Changing Business, Community & Spatial Planning Landscape, Ballinac, Sligo
- The Future of Local Politics, Roscarberry, Co. Cork
- AMAI Spring Seminar, Bantry, Co. Cork.
- Carlow Tourism Conference, Carlow Town.
- Managing Public Relations, Ennistymon, Co. Clare

9. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector

The Members noted the letter from Eirgrid advising that the company will consider comments and observations up to 31st May 2011 in relation to the draft Grid25 Implementation Programme.

10. Business submitted by County Manager

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager advised the members of the following:

Presidential Election:

Mr. Fallon briefly outlined the process whereby the Council may nominate a candidate to contest the Presidential Election later this year.

Age Friendly Initiative:

Mr. Fallon advised that, subject to the agreement of the Members, Ms. Catherine McGuigan, Regional Co-ordinator, Age Friendly Initiative would make a presentation to the Council at the June meeting. This was agreed.

Market House Castleblayney:

Mr. Fallon stated that funding is being pursued for a proposal to re-roof the Market Housing building in Castleblayney. The Council is in consultation with Castleblayney Enterprise Ltd., with a view to the provision of shared office accommodation for Monaghan County Council and Castleblayney Town Council.

Hope Castle/Lough Muckno:

Mr. Fallon advised that the arson prosecution case has been adjourned pending clarification on the insurance cover on Hope Castle.

Regarding the Hope Castle lease renewal the Manager stated that he has requested the Council's Solicitor to have the matter heard in court as soon as possible.

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr O'Brien it was agreed that the Council go *'into committee'* to discuss the status of the insurance cover on Hope Castle. Following a brief discussion on this matter, the meeting came back into public session.

Housing:

Cllr B. McKenna raised the issue of the new *'Application form for Social Housing Support'*, details of which had been circulated to the Members since the last meeting. Cllr McKenna stated that the application form had been revised a number of times in recent years. He said that the Department's focus appeared to be on the application form and not on the provision of social housing and the necessity to reduce the numbers on the waiting lists. Cllrs Conlon, Carthy and Maxwell also contributed to the discussion.

Mr. A. King, Director of Housing explained that the new application format issued by the Department was in line with the roll out of the Housing Act 2009 and the intention to introduce uniformity in the applications process across the country. He stated that the Council was also now obliged to have a new Housing Allocation Scheme in place by June 13 2011 and in this regard a draft scheme would be brought before the members at the June meeting

11. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meeting held on 4th April, 2011

Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 4th April, 2011 were responded to by the appropriate official.

12. To receive presentations from the following:

(i) Presentation from Clones Erne East Shadow Youth Partnership

The Mayor welcomed Michael Bravender, Project Officer with Clones Erne East Shadow Youth Partnership (SYP) and Sheila McMahon, Youth Work Ireland.

Mr. Bravender thanked the Council for the opportunity to address the Members. He explained that the project has now been wound up due to cessation of funding, but he proceeded to outline the work undertaken by the group. He stated that the aims of the SYP was to encourage young people to be active citizens; to enable them to have an under-standing and take a role in local governance in their area; and to ensure that the views of young people are heard and acted upon in addition to exploring solutions to issues they have identified. There was also a cross border element to the group in that young people from the Clones and the East Fermanagh areas were involved.

He outlined the various projects undertaken by the group since 2007. The group had also made similar presentations to Clones Town Council and Fermanagh District Council

Following the presentation, Mr. Bravender responded to questions from the Members.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Bravender and Ms. McMahon for the presentation and wished them success in the future.

(ii) Presentation on Broadband – Claire Cunningham

Ms. Cunningham thanked the Members for the opportunity to address them. She outlined the work undertaken by the Business Leaders I.T. Forum since September 2010. The Forum in conjunction with the Community & Enterprise section had surveyed the public in relation to existing broadband services and had received 66 submissions.

She advised that the IT Forum proposes to hold a seminar in the near future to outline what's available in the county, what the issues are, how they might be addressed and how to move forward. In addition the Forum hope to map broadband services and fibre in the county as well as providing information for companies seeking locations in Ireland. She stated that I.T. Companies are continually looking for new locations to establish data centres which are an essential component of the new 'cloud' concept of computing where software, normally located on a computer hard drive, can be accessed on a remote location, which could be likened to a 'warehouse' of computers. There is huge broadband width access in the county which will be very attractive to such companies. She referred to the need to raise awareness of the availability and potential of broadband in the county and stated this could be done through information seminars.

Following Claire's presentation she responded to queries from the Members.

The Mayor thanked Ms. Cunningham for a very interesting and knowledgeable presentation and he wished the IT Forum success in the months ahead.

13. Questions:

Cllr P. McNally asked:

1. Has this Council finalised the arrangements for the introduction of the 50% reduction scheme for the new sewerage connections?

Reply: *A 50% discounted connection charge will be available to existing houses on septic tanks, for a limited period of 6 months, following the completion of the civil and mechanical/electrical contract. Monaghan County Council will contact all homeowners before the year-end, with information and advice on the discounted connection charges applicable and the closing date for receipt of applications.*

The current cost of a connection to the public sewerage scheme is €3,090 per residential unit.

2. Has this Council plans in place to deal with the litter along public roads, in particular, our National Secondary and National Primary Roads?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council is providing €28,000 in 2011 for litter picking along National road routes as well as supporting local groups that get involved in organising clean ups. Through out the year Monaghan Local Authorities will spend nearly €1 million on litter related activities which include picking up litter from our streets and roads.*

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

3. In an effort to reduce the traffic hazard that exists on the N2 to vehicles turning right at Moyles (L5520, known locally as Larry Forde's) can appropriate road markings be put in place?

Reply: *The provision of a right turning lane at this location on the N2 will have implications for the efficiency and capacity of the route. Monaghan County Council will however carry out a review of this junction and prepare a report for the next North Monaghan Area Meeting.*

4. Among the fleet of Council vehicles, are any fuelled by renewable energy bio fuels or electricity? Are plans in place to include these environmentally friendly vehicles to the Council fleet in the future?

Reply: *No Council vehicles are currently powered by renewable energy. The inclusion of these vehicles in any plans need to have regard to the financial resources available to the Council for fleet replacement, the number and type of vehicles to be replaced, the efficiency and availability of a renewable fuel source.*

5. Are any of the Council buildings energy requirements met through the use of renewable energy? Are the new Civic Offices in Carrickmacross currently under construction fitted with alternative energy plant?

Reply: *The new Fire Station in Monaghan has solar panels which cater for the hot water needs of the building. A wood chip burner has been installed which will supply the heating needs of the building during the winter months. In addition to this, a rain-water harvesting system has been installed. Similarly, in the Carrickmacross Civic offices a wood chip burner and a rain-water harvesting system will be installed.*

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

6. What plans are in place to ensure that the entrance to Latlorcan Development on the N2 Monaghan, which has fallen in to a dishevelled state of repair and is unsafe

to members of the general public, to confirm that works will be carried out to ensure that the entrance is brought up to an acceptable standard of workmanship and the safety of the public ensured?

7. Further to the report on unfinished housing developments what plans are there in place to ensure that the construction company at Latlorcan Development Monaghan render the site secure for the inhabitants and finish the site to the standards outlined under the planning conditions?

Reply to Q.6 & 7: *The Latlorcan housing development is located within the functional area of Monaghan Town Council. It has been the subject of ongoing discussions between the Town Council and the developer.*

In the event that the development is not satisfactorily completed, the planning authority shall seek the surrender of the development bond to facilitate remedial works.

Cllr A. Murray asked:

8. What progress has been made by the Economic Working Group set-up under the County Development Board?

Reply: *Substantial progress has been made and a report will be presented at the June Council Meeting. A separate presentation on the progress of the IT Business Leaders Forum will take place at the forthcoming May Council meeting.*

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

9. In light of the completion of the three Bypasses of Towns on the N2, Monaghan/Carrickmacross/Castleblayney, that this Council/NRA would undertake as a matter of urgency, in order to safe guard existing jobs and in the interest of Tourism Development, to erect large information signs displaying names of hotels/tourism attractions at the entrances to each said town.

Reply: *Monaghan County Council will write to the NRA regarding the mater. It should be noted that the Council contacted the NRA on a previous occasion regarding the same issue and we were informed that they had not agreed with the Hotel Federation regarding the type and size of sign that could be erected.*

10. With regard to previous queries regarding the state of tourism signage and picnic facilities on the N2 at Emyvale and north of Ballyoisin what progress has been made to improve the condition and presentation of same?

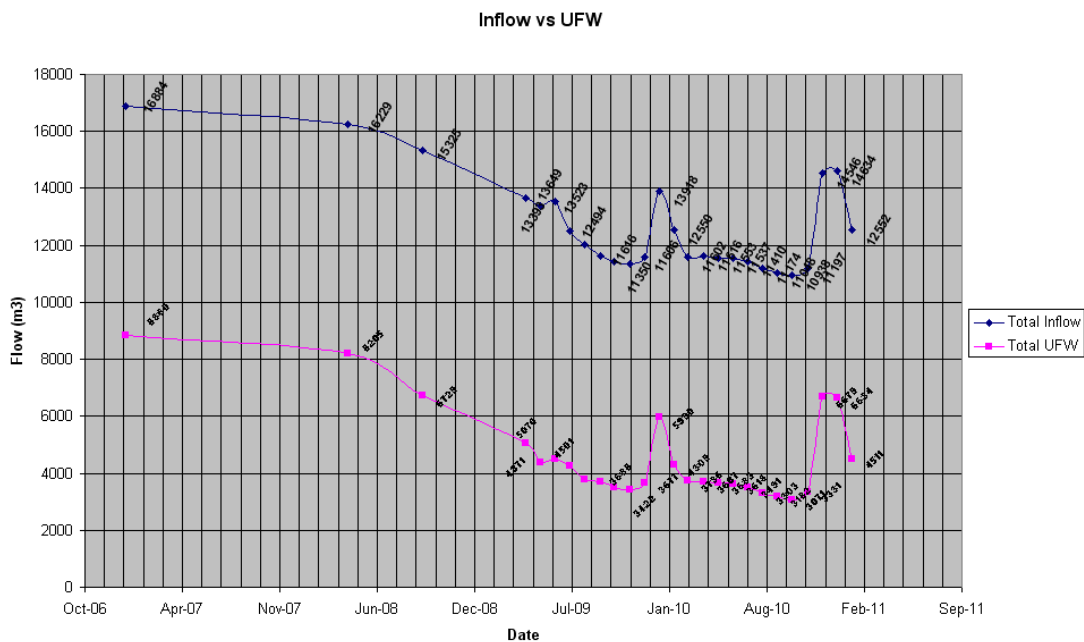
Reply: *The planned works are now completed.*

Cllr. N. Keelan asked:

11. In relation to the most efficient use of taxpayer money regarding water conservation, what efforts have Monaghan County Council made to-date on this issue; approximately how much treated water never reaches the end user as a result of poor infrastructure etc; what would this loss amount to in monetary terms?

Reply:

The graph below details up to date position in respect of total UFW countywide at the end of February 2011.



Conservation Project has now established active leakage control on all 54 DMA's (District Meter Areas). UFW currently standing at 36% (Please note this figure was as low as 28% before the big freeze)

In terms of monetary valuation there are a number of ways in which we can consider same:

- 1) *Marginal cost of producing water – will be very low as fixed costs make up significant proportion of costs - associated variable cost include pumping, chemicals etc.*
- 2) *The second method is to value on the basis of the saleable cost of the water lost (i.e. €1.01/ m3) Loss would be equal to €4,511 per day.*
- 3) *A better approach is to consider the sustainability of leakage in terms of not only the environmental impact but also the added benefit of prolonging the need for future investment in capital infrastructure.*

As can be seen from the above possible scenarios monetary evaluation is complex and the specific evaluation methods will be scheme specific and can relate to the quantity of usage, %UFW, age of infrastructure, plant energy usage, sustainability, etc.

NB; A full Cost Benefit analysis is prepared for each Phase of the water conservation projects as submitted to the DOE.

Cllr. N. Keelan asked:

12. In relation to a recent change in planning legislation regarding the granting of an extension of time for the completion of a one-off rural house and housing developments, will the council clarify this matter given the number of people, particularly in rural areas who are not in a position to commence work on their home at this time for financial reasons? (can't secure a mortgage, cost of employment etc.,)

Reply: *The Planning and Development Act (Amendment) Act 2010 included a new provision whereby an applicant could apply for an extension of duration of a planning permission where no works had been carried out on that development due to commercial, economic or technical reasons, which were beyond their control.*

The legislation states that the granting of an extension can however only be granted where it would not be contrary to any objectives of the development plan, regional planning guidelines, or any guidelines issued by the Minister.

Circular PSSP 1/10 issued by the Minister in January 2010 stated that planning authorities were required to implement the new EPA Code of Practice for Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems from 8 January 2010.

The planning authority is consequently prohibited from granting an extension of duration of planning permission for any development which proposes to employ a waste water treatment system which was granted planning permission prior to that date. Such a prohibition does not apply to developments proposing to connect to a public sewerage network.

13. In relation to the ongoing upgrading of the Sewerage Collection Network in Carrickmacross, will the council give a broad overview of this project; when will this project, including snagging list, road/trench reinstatement and treatment plant upgrade, be completely finished?

Reply: *Pipeline contract now almost complete and remaining works include the provision of petrol interceptors and final connections. These connections & reinstatement of all roads will be completed before year end. Treatment Plant contract documents are still with the Department.*

14. Given the deteriorating condition of many of our regional and county roads and the approximate 50% reduction in road funding in recent years, what plans have the council to keep our vital road infrastructure up to standard; will our senior executive continue to lobby the Department for additional funding for our roads?

Reply: *The Council is constrained by the available funding and the agreed roads programme. The Council will write to the Department of Transport seeking additional funding.*

Cllr. N. Keelan asked:

15. In relation to Inniskeen village, what plans have the Council to upgrade the footpath, which is in a poor state, adjacent to St. Daigh's Tce?

Reply: *The Council have no plans for these works in 2011, as no funding is available.*

Cllr M. Carthy asked:

16. Will the Council agree to the request by the community owned Mannan Castle Golf Club for the erection of additional signage advertising the location of their great facility? Can a 'cul-de-sac' sign be re-instated at the end of the road which Mannan Castle is situated as a previous sign was removed?

Reply: *In relation to the cul-de-sac sign, this is a private road and therefore a matter for the owners.*

17. When will the Council place speed ramps in Clonseady housing estate, Magheraclone?

Reply: *It was previously agreed to place one ramp in the estate. This is planned to be done during the summer.*

18. Will the Council consider placing speed ramps in the Foxfield Housing estate, Carrickmacross in the interest of safety?

Reply: *There are no funds available for the provision of ramps at this location. The Council will liaise with An Garda Siochana in relation to the matter at the next scheduled meeting of the Collision Prevention Programme.*

19. Will the Council, in conjunction with the NRA, carry out works to include the provision of a turning lane, at the Roes Cross junction on the N2 Carrickmacross-Ardee Rd?

Reply: *The provision of a right turning lane at this location on the N2 will have implications for the efficiency and capacity of the route. Monaghan County Council will however carry out a review of this junction and prepare a report for the Area Committee Meeting.*

20. When will Carrickmacross Main Street be resurfaced following the waste water network works? Has the Council contacted other utility providers to ensure that any plans to dig this Street are implemented prior to works so as to ensure that our town centre will not be subject to further disruption for the foreseeable future?

Reply: *All utility providers were contacted before commencement of the pipelines contract – Only Eircom completed short sections of ducting on O'Neill and Farney Street. At this time, we still intend to reinstate Main Street before End May 2011.*

14. Notices of Motion:

Cllr Carthy proposed, B. McKenna seconded,

1. *That Monaghan County Council recognises that:*

- *The Universal Social Charge is an unjust and regressive tax, bearing down most heavily on those least able to afford it;*
- *The Universal Social Charge affects people earning as little as €77 per week;*
- *The Universal Social Charge is indiscriminate and affects someone earning €100,000 at the same rate as someone earning €16,016;*
- *Low income workers, including medical card holders, working lone parents and working widows, who were exempt from the health and income levies which the Universal Social Charge replaced, are no longer exempt;*
- *Coupled with the changes to tax credits and bands introduced in Budget 2011, the Universal Social Charge has increased the burden of taxation on the working poor*

We hereby call on the Government to abolish the Universal Social Charge.

Cllr Murray proposed an amendment, Cllr McPhillips seconded

That the last line of Cllr Carthy's motion be amended to read as follows – We hereby recommend that the Government review the Universal Social Charge with a view to introducing a more equitable scheme particularly for lower paid workers.

A vote by show of hands on Cllr Murray's amendment resulted in 6 for 7 against. The Mayor declared the amendment defeated.

A vote by show of hands on the original motion resulted in 10 for 3 against. The Mayor declared the motion carried.

It was agreed that the motion be forwarded to An Taoiseach and the Minister for Finance.

Cllr P. McNally proposed, Cllr Keelan seconded

2. *That Monaghan County Council calls on the Department of Enterprise and Employment to introduce a scheme of incentives to encourage employers to employ over 50's.*

In proposing the motion Cllr McNally stated that people over 50 had a reduced change of getting or retaining employment and this could be soul-destroying for them. He added that unless incentives are put in place, the natural instinct is for employers to choose younger people when recruiting. Cllr Keelan seconded the motion and agreed with the comments of Cllr McNally and stated that people

should not be discriminated against on age grounds. Cllr McPhillips stated that there is legislation in place to prevent this.

The Mayor put Cllr McNally's motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr P. McNally proposed, Cllr Murray seconded

3. *That this Council follows the lead of Kerry County Council in putting hidden cameras in areas subject to illegal dumping.*

In proposing the motion Cllr McNally stated the Council should locate hidden camera in areas where illegal dumping is taking place. He expressed the view that part of the solution would be to have very severe monetary fines for anyone caught dumping illegally. He understood that Kerry County Council were purchasing a number of small discreet mobile cameras that could be moved around on a regular basis and would create a fear in the mindset of those carrying out the dumping. Cllr Murray seconded the motion and called for the publication of the names of those people who are fined for dumping illegally. Cllrs O'Hanlon, O'Brien, B. McKenna and S. Treanor also spoke to the debate.

Cllr McNally thanked the members for their support and asked that the Council would correspond with the refuse collectors in the county to establish a fall-off in the use of their services or in the purchase of refuse bags.

The Mayor put Cllr McNally's motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr O'Hanlon seconded,

4. *That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Finance & the Government to make the Post Office a central part of the re-organisation of banking services in Ireland, thereby utilising the extensive physical retail network that An Post offers to customers in local communities across the country.*

In proposing the motion Cllr Coyle referred to the huge difficulties in the banking sector in recent times. He stated that An Post's services extended right across the rural community and he was asking the Minister for Finance to examine how An Post could play a key role. Cllr O'Hanlon seconded the motion and expressed concern at proposals to put some of An Post's services out to private tender and this could lead to the postal service being split up. Cllr B. McKenna supported the principles of the motion but felt that it would take a great deal of work to introduce banking services to individual post offices, particularly those in rural areas.

The Mayor put Cllr Coyle's motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously. It was agreed that the motion be circulated to other local authorities and the Minister for Finance.

15. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

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

- Mr. Martin O'Brien, CEO, Co. Monaghan VEC on the death of his mother, Margaret, RIP, late of Moynalty, Kells, Co. Meath.
- The family of the late Francis Kerley, Cornaslieve, Carrickmacross, RIP, a former member of the Council's outdoor staff.
- Ms. Helena McGeough, Water Services Section on the death of her uncle Peadar McGeough, Tanderagebrack, Monaghan, RIP.

It was agreed that the Council congratulate the following

- The dancers from the NiCorra, Ó Bolin, McMahon School of Dancing on their recent success in the World Irish Dancing Championships and in particular to Aoife Bannigan, Eileen and Jessica Cullen, Peter, Ann Marie and Catherine Parker. Congratulations were also extended to the School on coming 1st in the World 13-16 year old Mixed Championship.
- Paul Brady, Cavan on winning the All-Ireland 40' x 20' Handball Senior Singles Title for a record 8th time.
- Carrickmacross Emmett's GFC on winning the U-14 League Division 1 title (Mone Cup).
- Ballybay Pearse Brothers GFC on winning the U-14 Division 3 League Title.

16. Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, 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
Conference for Local Authority Elected Members	The Current Challenges Facing Irish Local Authorities in Delivering Effective Customer Service with ever-decreasing resources	Theatre Royal Waterford City	26th -27th May 2011	Cllr Padraig McNally Cllr John O'Brien Cllr Pat Treanor Cllr Owen Bannigan Cllr Aidan Murray Cllr David Maxwell
The Inaugural Water Metering Summit	Defining the National Strategy on Water Metering	Croke Park, Conference Centre, Dublin	31st May 2011	Cllr Brian McKenna Cllr PJ O'Hanlon Cllr Ciara McPhillips Cllr Gary Carville

Conferences (contd):

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members
Tipperary Peace Convention	International Peace Conference	Ballykisteen Hotel & Golf Resort Ballykisteen, Limerick Junction Tipperary	2nd – 5th June 2011	Cllr Paudge Connolly Cllr Seamus Coyle Cllr Pdraig McNally Cllr Owen Bannigan Cllr Hugh McElvaney Cllr David Maxwell Cllr Jackie Crowe
The Inaugural National Food & Agribusiness Conference 2011	Putting Food and Agribusiness at the Centre of Ireland's Economic Recovery	Croke Park, Conference Centre Dublin	June 16th 2011	Cllr John O'Brien
Ulster GAA	Ulster GAA Good Relations Forum	St Patrick's GAA Torrent Centre Donaghmore Co Tyrone	24th May 2011 (Half Day)	Cllr Pat Treanor Cllr Brian McKenna Cllr Seamus Coyle
BMW Regional Assembly Annual Conference	Innovation & Competitiveness – Restoring the Regional Economy	Sheraton Hotel, Athlone	6th May 2011-(Half day)	Cllr Sean Conlon Cllr Owen Bannigan

The meeting then concluded.