

**Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Mtek Building,  
Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2011 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr S. Coyle, Mayor.

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

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager, Mr. P. Clifford, Mr. D. Treanor, Directors of Service, Mr. J. McNally, A/Head of Finance, Mr. K. McNally, Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. S. MacConghail, Arts Officer, Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

**Apologies:** Cllrs Bannigan and S. Treanor.

At the outset, Cllr McElvaney proposed that the Council extends its good wishes for a speedy recovery to Cllr Owen Bannigan who is currently hospitalised. The motion was seconded by Cllr Carville and agreed unanimously. Mr. David Fallon A/County Manager associated himself and the staff with the vote of good wishes.

The Mayor advised the Members that he had received two notices of Urgent Business, as follows:

(i) Notice in the names of Cllrs McNally, Coyle, Gallagher and O'Hanlon:

*“ That Monaghan County Council calls for an urgent meeting with the Minister for Health Dr. James Reilly, T.D., to seek a reversal of the proposed reduction in opening hours of the Minor Injuries Unit at Monaghan General Hospital and calls on the two Government T.D.'s – Deputies Conlon and Humphreys – to assist in this regard. ”*

(ii) Notice in the names of Cllrs B. McKenna, Carthy, Keelan, Crowe, P. Treanor, S. McKenna and Conlon:

*“We propose a motion of urgent business to discuss the proposed reduction in the opening hours of the Minor Injuries Unit at Monaghan General Hospital –*

*That this Council calls upon the Minister for Health, Dr. James Reilly, T.D., to personally intervene in this matter to ensure that the present opening hours at this unit are retained. ”*

In accordance with Standing Order 14.2 the Mayor put the proposals to deal with urgent business to the meeting and they were agreed unanimously. He stated that he would take the urgent business at the end of the meeting.

## **1. Confirmation of Minutes:**

### **(i) Minutes of Council Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2011**

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Carville, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 be confirmed.*

### **(ii) Minutes of Special Council meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 be confirmed.*

## **2. Correspondence:**

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

- Letter from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to National Disability Strategy funding.
- Letter from the Mr. Jimmy Deenihan, T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to funding for the Ulster Canal Project.
- Letter from Deputy Heather Humphreys, T.D., enclosing copy letter from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the payment of arrears of NPPR charges in instalments.
- Letter from Artswell Ltd., seeking to make a presentation to the Council.
- Letter from Rith 2012, seeking to make a presentation to the Council.
- Email from Mícheál Callaghan on behalf of the European Youth Parliament, seeking the support of the Council towards the hosting of the Ulster Connacht Regional Session of the Parliament in Monaghan Town.
- Letter from Fran McGarry, Enfield, Co. Meath seeking a nomination from the Council to enable him contest the Presidential election.
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council calling on the Government to fast track the Criminal Justice Community Service Bill 2011.
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council calling on the Government to desist from introducing water charges and property taxes.
- Letter from Mr. Brendan Smith, T.D., enclosing copy of letter received from the National Roads Authority outlining the current position on the proposed N2 Clontibret to the NI Border scheme.
- Letter from Irish Public Bodies informing the County Manager of the payment of a dividend of €134,174.78 to the Council.
- Letter from the Chief Superintendent thanking the Council for its resolution of sympathy on the death of Garda Adrian Martin.

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

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council would provide assistance to the hosting of the Ulster Connacht Regional Session of the European Youth Parliament to be held in Monaghan from 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2011.*

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council invite the Rith Group to make a presentation to the Council at the November meeting.*

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that the Council invite Artswell Ltd. to make a presentation to the Council at the November meeting.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Crowe, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council write again to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government requesting that he re-consider his decision not to allow the payment of the arrears of NPPR charges by instalments.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed to write to Irish Public Bodies and Cllr George Jones expressing the Council's thanks for the payment of a dividend of €134,174.78.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that the Council congratulate all involved with the organisation of the National Famine Commemoration Ceremony in Clones recently.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council support the resolution from Monaghan Town Council calling on the Government to fast track the Criminal Justice Community Service Bill 2011 in order to further develop the community service provision as an alternative to offenders being a burden on the State and the taxpayer and in addition that recruitment of community service supervisors who will ensure that offenders have the opportunity to serve their full sentences in community service work quickly, appropriately and fully”.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O’Hanlon it was agreed that the Council write to Mr. Patsy Treanor (former member of the Council) congratulating him on securing an allocation of €15,000 from Irish Public Bodies for the new Garage Theatre project.*

*On the proposal of Cllr O’Hanlon, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council write to Irish Public Bodies enquiring why there was no dividend allocated to the Council in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009.*

**3. To approve Overdraft accommodation in the sum of €10m for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.**

*On the proposal of Cllr Carville, seconded by Cllr Murray it was agreed that the Council approve of overdraft accommodation in the sum of €10m for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2012.*

**4. To consider Section 183 Notices, as follows:**

**(a) Disposal of 392 m<sup>2</sup> at Cornamucklaglass, Ballybay**

*On the proposal of Cllr Crowe, seconded by Cllr Carville it was agreed that the Council approve the disposal of 392m<sup>2</sup> at Cornamucklaglass, Ballybay to Patrick and Mary Lynch 'Ard Alainn', Castleblayney Road, Ballybay in accordance with the terms of notice dated 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2011 under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001.*

**(b) Disposal of 195 m<sup>2</sup> at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross**

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that the Council approve the disposal of 195m<sup>2</sup> at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross to Enda McCabe, 16 Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross in accordance with the terms of notice dated 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001.*

**5. Part VIII Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001 -**

To consider granting permission to locate one demountable dwelling with associated site works, wastewater treatment system and percolation area at Stranooden, Monaghan. (Reference 11/8006)

The Members considered the report relating to this permission which was circulated with the agenda.

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the Council approve the construction of one demountable dwelling with associated site works, wastewater treatment system and percolation area at Stranooden, Monaghan (Ref 11/8006) to comply with the Director's Report dated 23 September, 2011 and in accordance with Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001.*

**6. To approve list of newspapers in accordance with Part 4 Article 18(2) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2006 for use in Monaghan Planning Authorities**

*Cllr Maxwell proposed, Cllr McPhillips seconded that The Irish Sun and The Sunday Times be added to the list of newspapers circulated with the agenda notice.*

*Cllr B. McKenna proposed, Cllr P. Treanor seconded that The Irish Sun and The Sunday Times are not added to the list of newspapers circulated with the agenda notice.*

The Mayor put Cllr Maxwell's proposal to the meeting. A vote by show of hands resulted in 7 for 8 against. The Mayor declared Cllr Maxwell's proposal defeated.

The list of newspapers approved in accordance with Part 4 Article 18 (2) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2006 for use in Monaghan Planning Authorities for giving notice of the intention to make a planning application is as follows:

Monaghan Electoral Area:	Northern Standard, Anglo Celt, Irish Independent, Irish Daily Star, Irish Times.
Monaghan Town Council:	Northern Standard, Anglo Celt, Irish Independent, Irish Daily Star, Irish Times, Evening Herald
Carrickmacross Electoral Area and Carrickmacross Town Council	Northern Standard, Dundalk Democrat, Irish Independent, Irish Times, Irish Daily Star.
Castleblayney Electoral Area and Castleblayney Town Council	Northern Standard, Dundalk Democrat, Anglo Celt, Irish Independent, Irish Times and Irish Daily Star.
Clones Electoral Area and Clones Town Council	Northern Standard, Anglo Celt, Irish Independent, Irish Daily Star, Irish Times.

## **7. To receive report on the operation of the Landfill:**

In accordance with Ethics legislation, Cllr McElvaney declared an interest in this matter and withdrew from the meeting room at this point.

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager gave the members an overview of the current situation regarding the Council's landfill at Scotch-Corner. He stated that the waste market was changing and was very volatile and that there had been a general downturn in market conditions. The incinerator at Carranstown, Duleek Co Meath is ready to go fully operational and once on stream it can accept 200, 000 tonnes of waste per annum which will impact severely on the quantity of waste going to landfills. The tonnage figures have decreased significantly over recent weeks. Mr. D. Treanor, A/Director of Services then outlined the details of the comprehensive report which has been circulated to the Members. The report detailed the following:

- An overview of the Waste Management Plan (2001)
- The quantities of waste generated in the region
- The targets proposed in the original plan
- Market sounding exercise
- Levy increases
- Waste licence W0020-02
- Historic landfills in the county that will require risk assessments and remediation.
- Changes to waste collection and future capacity/operating costs.

Mr. Treanor referred to the “Market Sounding Exercise” which the Council had carried out earlier this year which found that there is no apparent interest from the private sector in the Scotch Corner Landfill above and beyond the manner in which the Council are currently operating the facility.

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council go ‘into committee’ to allow the A/County Manager given commercially sensitive information relating to the landfill. When this information had been imparted it was agreed on the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Keelan, that the Council revert back to public session.

Mr. Fallon suggested to the Council that it would examine the possibility of accepting bottom ash from the incinerators as material that could be deposited in the landfill which might generate some additional income. He accepted there may be public opposition to this proposal on the grounds that the material might be toxic, but the findings indicated that bottom ash is not toxic. Mr. D. Treanor stated that the incineration process is subject to monitoring and testing by the EPA and strict standards had to be met in relation to the materials produced.

*Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr B. McKenna seconded that the Council write to Mr. Phil Hogan, T.D., asking him to reverse the decision to remove the levy on incineration.*

A vote by show of hands on the proposal resulted in 14 for 1 against.

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council write to the main waste collecting services in the county enquiring if they intend to reduce their waste collection costs to their customers, given that they will experience a significant reduction in waste disposal costs with the coming on stream of the incinerator in Co. Meath.*

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council set up a sub-committee to meet in the immediate future, to discuss the future operation of the landfill.*

The following members were nominated to the sub-committee – Cllrs S. Coyle, J.O’Brien, A. Murray, C. McPhillips, B. McKenna, M. Carthy and P. Connolly.

It was agreed that the sub-committee would meet as soon as possible to discuss the matter and report to the Corporate Policy Group in advance of the preparation of the Budget for 2012.

## **7. To receive presentation on Flood Risk Management Assessment**

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager referred to the information circulated to the Members in relation to this item. Mr. Fallon stated that the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme, which is being rolled out by the Office of Public Works in conjunction with local authorities, is designed to assess and map the country’s river system to identify areas at risk of significant

flooding. There are three main stages in the Programme and a suite of documents will be produced for public consultation at each stage –

- 2011 – Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PRFA)
- 2013 – Flood Hazard Mapping
- 2015 – Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans.

The draft PRFA which has been prepared by the Office of Public Works and which is currently on public display at the Council offices until 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2011, is an important first step in determining how flood risk will be assessed and managed in the future; both in this county and nationally. The Council may make submissions to the Office of Public Works during the public consultation period.

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that the Council write to the Office of Public Works asking if the final report on the Flood Risk Assessment will give an indication as to what agency is responsible for each water course. Also, will a corresponding budget for remedial works be allocated to the responsible agency.*

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that the Council write to the Department of the Environment enquiring if the River Basin District Advisory Councils are still in existence and if so, what role do they have.*

**8. To approve recommendations from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2011**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the recommendations and minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2011, be approved.*

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

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

- Magill Summer School, Glenties, Co. Donegal
- Parnell Summer School, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow.
- Housing Practitioners Conference, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

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

Cllr Keelan referred to the meeting of the sub-committee that had been held on 12<sup>th</sup> September. The sub-committee had considered the response from Eirgrid to questions asked by the Council at the presentation on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2011. It was agreed by the sub-committee that the response from Eirgrid was totally unsatisfactory. He stated that the Council's senior planning staff were at the meeting and had prepared

a draft response to the Eirgrid document indicating the members dissatisfaction with its contents.

*On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed that the response prepared by the planning staff be issued to Eirgrid.*

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

### **Lough Muckno/Hope Castle:**

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager stated that he had met with the Lough Muckno Sub-Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> September. The Court case to agree the terms of the lease of Hope Castle was listed for 8<sup>th</sup> October. Regarding the lease to the Castleblayney Golf Club he had written to the Trustees of the Golf Club requesting that they surrender the lease to the Council.

### **Water Services Investment Programme – 2010-2012:**

Mr. Fallon referred to the Report on the Water Services Investment Programme 2010-2012 which had been circulated to each member. He then outlined the main elements of the report.

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that the Council write to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government urging the immediate approval of the Carrickmacross Waste Water Treatment Project.*

## **13. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.**

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 were responded to by the relevant officials.

**Twinning Committee** - It was agreed that a meeting of the Twinning Committee would be held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 at 10.00 a.m. in the Conference Room, The Glen, Monaghan.

**Housing Grant Schemes** - Cllr B. McKenna stated that the Council had been advised in early August that the Council was suspending acceptance of new applications under the Housing Adaptations Grant scheme. Cllr McKenna queried why this had not been advised to the Members at the July meeting. Mr. A. King, Director replied that he advised the members that, with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2011, the Council intended to suspend the acceptance of all new applications for grant aid under the Housing Grant Schemes – there are approximately 50 applications on hand that have not been processed. The budget allocation for 2011, including the local authority contribution was €1,319,083. Due to the unprecedented demand on these schemes and the reduced funding available since 2010, the allocation had been fully committed. Applications relating to priority/emergency cases will be looked at



on an individual basis. He referred to the numbers of applications received in 2011 and 2010 (as detailed in the reply given to Cllr Keelan for Question 15 on the agenda)

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr McPhillips it was agreed that the minutes of SPC meetings would be made available to the members of the Council.*

It was agreed that the Housing Grant Schemes would be an item on the November Agenda.

**Winter Maintenance** – In response to queries from the Members in relation to the Winter Maintenance Programme 2011, the A/County Manager stated that the Road salting routes would be made available on the Council's web-site shortly. He said the Council will do its best to provide the same level of service they had provided in the past two years. A new salt barn has been completed and stocked at Knockaconny and construction of a second salt barn will commence very soon at Lislanly, near Castleblayney.

Regarding the provision of salt bins to residents/community groups, Mr. D. Treanor, A/Director Roads stated that if the Members wished to have that service made available to these groups then the Council will facilitate it. A similar scheme was rolled out in Cavan last year but there was only a limited take up of it.

Cllr McNally requested that the County Manager would issue a report to the members detailing current staffing levels.

#### **14. Questions:**

##### **Cllr A. Murray asked:**

1. Considering the attractive discount available to long term tenants how many applicants has the Council received under the Tenant purchase scheme to date this year?

**Reply: *Monaghan County Council has received two applications to date this year.***

2. Has the Council funds available under the Home Loan purchase scheme for suitable qualifying applicants?

**Reply: *Borrowing Resolution passed at Council Meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011 - €2m for Housing Loan Purposes - of this €850K allowed for TP Scheme.***

3. Will the Council have any difficulty in securing sufficient grit and salt, should we have another severe winter and would the Council consider employing local contractors to cover exceptionally bad areas of local county roads?

**Reply: *The National Roads Authority and the Department of Transport have a framework competition in place to purchase salt centrally for local authorities. Monaghan County Council has been allocated 1,870 tonnes and 2,100 tonnes for***

*use on national and non-national roads respectively. It is expected that the level of funding for winter maintenance available to Monaghan County Council will be similar to last year. Last winter the Council did employ local contractors to supplement the Council's operations in severe weather conditions.*

**Cllr M. Carthy asked:**

4. In relation to the Waste Water Treatment Plant in Carrickmacross:  
- When will the upgrade of the Treatment Plant be completed?

**Reply:** *Carrickmacross Sewerage Scheme – Contract 3 (Treatment Plant Upgrade and Outfall) provides for the construction of the following infrastructure at the existing wastewater treatment plant:*

- *Inlet Pumping Station*
- *Stormwater Holding Facility*
- *Inlet Works*
- *Final Effluent Pumping Station*
- *400mm diameter final effluent outfall*

*The estimated cost of Contract No. 3 is € 5.5M. Approval of the Contract Documents was deferred by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in May 2011 subject to further clarification and amendment of Monaghan County Council's Contract Documents and associated Water Pricing Report. It is not possible to accurately forecast a completion date given the uncertainty surrounding the affordability issues.*

- Has the level of the threat to the water quality at Monalty Lough from the discharge of the current treatment plant been fully evaluated and if so what is that threat at present considering Monalty is a source of public drinking water?

**Reply:** *Yes. Monaghan County Council has made an application to the Environmental Protection Agency for a waste water discharge licence in accordance with the Urban Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007. The current Carrickmacross Wastewater Treatment Plant effluent is also monitored in accordance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment (Amendment) Regulations 2010 (S.I 48/10)*

- Will the upgraded treatment plant be capable of eliminating any future pollution threat to Monalty Lough giving that the present plant only offers primary and secondary treatment which is considered by many to be insufficient?

**Reply:** *Yes. The Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, enacted under Irish law, requires that wastewater from all towns with populations greater than 10,000 discharging to specified waters, including the River Proules, must be subject to stringent treatment standards. Carrickmacross Wastewater Treatment Plant offers Primary, Secondary and Tertiary treatment including nitrogen and phosphate removal.*

- Will the Council give a full report of all relevant information relating to the current waste water treatment plant and the proposed upgrade of same?

***Reply: Yes. A Report to the Members on the County Monaghan Water Services Investment Programme 2010 – 2012 is available.***

**Cllr M. Carthy asked:**

5. Will Monaghan County Council be in a position to assist parents and staff at Ballynagearn National School, Magheraclone in their bid to improve traffic management and parking at the school?

***Reply: This matter will be discussed at the next Roads Area Committee Meeting.***

6. Has the Council an estimated costing for providing improved footpath and public lighting at Lurgans, Carrickmacross? Can these works be included in upcoming programmes?

***Reply: This matter will be discussed at the next Roads Area Committee Meeting.***

7. In relation to the Remedial Works Scheme and new houses at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross:

- a. When is it expected that works will be completed?

***Reply: It is expected that the works will be completed in December 2011.***

- b. When are allocations likely to be made?

***Reply: It is expected that the allocations will be made in late November / early December 2011.***

- c. Further to previous reply has the council completed its investigation into the possibility of providing additional parking spaces as part of this project and if so what is likely to be provided in this regard?

***Reply: The Council in consultation with the consultants and contractor has found potential for an additional ten or more car parking spaces by providing more parking spaces within the front gardens of the houses under construction. The additional parking spaces would have to be constructed with permeable paving as a sustainable urban drainage measure. The Council will provide as many car parking spaces as is reasonably practicable without compromising the design of the development.***

8. Will the Council carry out an audit of the Old Castleblayney Road, Carrickmacross in a bid to estimate costs of eliminating the extremely dangerous bends on this road?

***Reply: Roads funding for capital works has been reduced significantly in recent times and there is no funding presently available for local road easements.***

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

9. In relation to the issue of bonds for unfinished housing developments  
(a) How many of these bonds are being actively pursued and for which unfinished developments?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council has made claims on the bonds relating to 3 developments. These are:*

- *The Ferns, Scotstown*
- *Thorndale, Castleblayney*
- *Cnoc Na Greine, Tydavnet*

*The Planning Section have also negotiated the extension of bonds on a number of other developments in the county*

- (b) What is the likely timeframe for obtaining these monies?

**Reply:** *The Council have found that financial institutions have been reluctant to release payment following a claim on bond. It is anticipated that legal action will be required to remedy this situation in a number of cases. As such it is impossible to estimate a likely timeframe for the release of finance attached to bonds.*

- (c) Is it likely that the monies received will be sufficient to finish these developments?

**Reply:** *It is considered unlikely that bonds will be sufficient to complete every development.*

10. Where Monaghan County Council has a number of social housing units on unfinished housing developments has the Council any plans to ensure that safety issues will be prioritised?

**Reply:** *Matters of public safety in unfinished developments are currently being investigated by the Planning Section. Priority has been given to those developments which pose a significant public health risk and where there is currently no developer in place. This has been done in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government.*

**Cllr PJ O'Hanlon asked:**

11. (a) In relation to the stock of salt for the coming winter, is Monaghan County Council happy that we have sufficient stock?

**Reply:** *The National Roads Authority and the Department of Transport have a framework competition in place to purchase salt centrally for local authorities. Monaghan County Council has been allocated 1,870 tonnes and 2,100 tonnes for use on national and non-national roads respectively.*

**Cllr PJ O’Hanlon asked:**

- (b) What volume of salt have we in relation to last year?

**Reply:** *During last winter the Council used 4,733 tonnes of salt for 85 call outs. If the last three severe winters are excluded, then, for the last eight years the average number of callouts per year was 28.*

12. €50,000 was approved by the NRA for safety works to be done at the junction North side of Carrickmacross to Dublin, (N2). When is this starting?

**Reply:** *The Council is in the process of preparing traffic management and Health and Safety Plan for these works.*

13. €10,000 was approved by the NRA for safety measures on the N2 at Broomfield, (Francie Finnegan’s), when will this work commence?

**Reply:** *The Council is in the process of preparing traffic management and Health and Safety Plan for these works.*

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

14. In relation to Monaghan County Council’s readiness to deal with a severe winter such as we had last year:

- (a) Will the Council executive give an overview as to our supply of salt;

**Reply:** *The National Roads Authority and the Department of Transport have a framework competition in place to purchase salt centrally for local authorities. Monaghan County Council has been allocated 1,870 tonnes and 2,100 tonnes for use on national and non-national roads respectively.*

- (b) What is the up to date position in relation to our salt barns;

**Reply:** *The Council completed construction of a salt barn in March this year. The National Roads Authority gave an allocation to build a second barn at Lislanly in August last. The Council is currently assessing the tenders received. Each barn has a capacity of 1,500 tonne.*

- (c) Have we a good supply of salt bins to service both rural and urban areas, and if necessary have we a plan in place to involve Residents Associations and the farming community if they are needed to help keep our roads and footpaths clear and safe for our citizens.

**Reply:** *The Department of Environment Community Environment and Local Government’s report on the response to severe weather events between 2009 and 2010 recommends that advice is prepared nationally in relation to the involvement of local communities in clearing footpaths during severe weather. Last winter the Council made grit available at certain locations throughout the county during the severe weather.*

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

15. Given that grant applications are no longer being accepted for mobility aids, housing aid for the older people and housing adaptation for people with a disability, will the Council give a report as to the number of people we have assisted in the current year and also what funding we have spent or committed to spend. What is the comparison with last year's figures?

**Reply:** *Figures for 9months – Jan to Sept 2011 Total Allocation €1.3m*

- 182 Applications Received
- 193 Grants Approved €1.4m
- 134 Grants Paid €900K
- 32 Applications Pending €200K(approx)  
(9/10 Priority Cases)

*Figures for 12months – Jan to Dec 2010 Total Allocation €1.8m*

- 220 Applications Received
- 249 Grants Approved €2.1m
- 213 Grants Paid €1.55m
- 56 Applications Pending €260K(approx)

16. In relation to the ongoing upgrading of the sewerage and water collection network in Carrickmacross:

(a) Will the Council executive give an overview of the project?

**Reply:** *Monaghan County Council will prepare a Final Outturn Report on the Carrickmacross Sewerage Scheme – Pipelines Contract before Year End.*

(b) When will the roads in and around the town including Lower Main Street be resurfaced?

**Reply:** *Carrickmacross Town Council proposes to undertake road resurfacing on Lower Main Street. All roads in and around the town are reinstated at this time with the exception of Mullinary Road and Mullinary Street. Monaghan County Council currently awaits the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government's consideration of a recent application for an increase in the available road reinstatement fund.*

(c) When will letters offering a sewerage connection at a 50% reduction be sent to residents?

**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 all mechanical and electrical commissioning. 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 €3,140 per residential unit.*

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

(d) Has our waste water treatment plant the capacity to deal with the almost 400 households who may wish to connect to the network?

**Reply: Yes.**

17. In welcoming the upgrading and removal of the unsightly power lines on the old Ardee road in Carrickmacross, when is it hoped to have this work completed and new lighting in place, and also when is it hoped to have the new lighting columns on the Donaghmoynne road adjacent to Lisanisk connected to the power supply?

**Reply: In relation to both these locations the Council are awaiting the ESB to undertake works.**

18. In relation to getting the best value for money for the goods and services on behalf of the people, and also ensuring that local employment and services are used as much as possible, what effort is Monaghan County Council making in this regard?

**Reply: Monaghan County Council contracts goods and services in strict accordance with E.U. and national procurement legislation. Where the value of supplies and services exceed €25,000, an open procedure applies with advertisement on the e-tenders website. For supplies and services under this threshold, local procurement rules apply with three written quotes obtained where the value exceeds €5,000.**

**Cllr C. McPhillips asked:**

19. Can Monaghan County Council advise what remedies or powers it has at its disposal when a river is causing flooding on private lands? In particular, the flooding caused by the Bunnoe River and its tributaries in the Aghabog and Drum areas and the Togan River travelling through the village of Threemilehouse?

**Reply: The areas in question do not fall within the obligations of Monaghan County Council under the Arterial Drainage Act 1945. However Monaghan County Council will refer this question to the Office of Public Works for their report.**

20. Will Monaghan County Council consider increasing traffic control measures on the Monaghan/Cootehill road? In particular, at the series of bends which occur immediately before Swanns Cross when travelling from Monaghan to Cootehill, in the townlands of Rakean and Lismagonway, which have been the site of a number of accidents in recent years?

**Reply: The Council will review these locations when preparing applications for funding under the Low Cost Safety Improvement Schemes next year.**

21. In recent years, much work has been carried out on the Threemilehouse to Newbliss road. However, works between the junctions at Cornasoo and Drumgarley appear to

have ceased. Can Monaghan County Council advise the extent of works planned on this section of road and the intended completion date of such works?

**Reply:** *The planned works included the widening and re-alignment of the existing Threemilehouse to Newbliss road in the vicinity of Cornasoo crossroads and also improve visibility at the junction. The Council is currently in negotiations with a landowner to purchase the land needed for the improvement of the junction.*

**Cllr R. Gallagher asked:**

22. With regard to any return of severe weather:  
(a) What is the current situation regarding the Council's replenishing of salt stocks and what reserves have been built up?

**Reply:** *The National Roads Authority and the Department of Transport have a framework competition in place to purchase salt centrally for local authorities. Monaghan County Council has been allocated 1,870 tonnes and 2,100 tonnes for use on national and non-national roads respectively.*

- (b) Does the Council have any plans to consult with the public with regard to community venues, schools and any particularly dangerous roads outside of main roads?

**Reply:** *The Department of Environment Community and Local Government's report on the response to severe weather events between 2009 and 2010 recommends that advice is prepared nationally in relation to the involvement of local communities in clearing footpaths during severe weather. Last winter the Council made grit available at certain locations throughout the county during the severe weather.*

23. With regard to road safety and junctions at Knockconan, Ballyoisin is there a case for a speed limit between the junction at the N2 at Ballyoisin and the far side of Oisinvale?

**Reply:** *The Council will review this location.*

24. What is the current position with regard to traffic calming at Cul Banagher, Glaslough?

**Reply:** *The Council propose to erect warning signage at this location.*

25. What is the position regarding the upkeep of the roundabouts on the Monaghan Bypass and would it be possible to seek sponsorship to upgrade them with regard to planting etc?

**Reply:** *The Council will review the current landscaping plan with a view to having a revised plan in place for the next growing season.*



## **15. Notices of Motion:**

### **Cllr P. McNally proposed, Cllr Murray seconded, and it was agreed -**

1. That this Council calls on the Minister for Agriculture, Simon Coveney, to ensure that in the new CAP reform negotiations there is more equality between large and small farmers with more assistance being given to the small farmers at the expense of larger ones.

### **Cllr P. Connolly proposed, Cllr McPhillips seconded, and it was agreed -**

2. That in view of the recently launched JobBridge scheme which is designed to help people who have been unemployed for at least 3 months to get back to work Monaghan County Council calls on the Government and Minister for Social Protection to have the criteria for the internship widened to include people on disability allowance.

### **Cllr R. Gallagher proposed, Cllr McNally seconded, and it was agreed -**

3. That this Council seeks that the government fast track the Criminal Justice Community Service Bill 2011 in order to further develop the community service provision as an alternative to offenders being a burden on the state and the tax payer and in addition that recruitment of community service supervisors who will ensure that offenders have the opportunity to serve their full sentences in community service work quickly, appropriately and fully.

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

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

- Tom Freeman, Scalkill, Magheraclone on the death of his sister RIP
- The family of the late Kevin Woods, Armagh RIP
- John & Gene Meegan and family on the death of Noel Meegan, Lisagore, Broomfield, Castleblayney RIP

It was agreed that the Council congratulate the following:

- Monaghan Ladies Senior Football Team on a great performance in the All Ireland Final on 25<sup>th</sup> September.
- Truagh Gaels Hurling Club on winning the U-16 Hurling League final
- Castleblayney Hurling Club on winning the Senior Hurling Championship title.
- Carrickmacross Emmets GFC on winning the Intermediate Football Championship title.
- Shane Duffy, Magheraclone on winning the All Ireland 'Cic Fada' Competition.
- Cremartin GFC on winning the minor Division 3 Football Championship Final.

- Eamon Ward, Ardaghly former member of Clontibret GAA Club who won a Senior Football Championship medal with Glenswilly GAA Club in Donegal.

## 17. Conferences

There were no conferences for consideration.

### **Urgent Business:**

- (i) Cllr Gallagher proposed, Cllr McNally seconded:

*“ That Monaghan County Council calls for an urgent meeting with the Minister for Health Dr. James Reilly, T.D., to seek a reversal of the proposed reduction in opening hours of the Minor Injuries Unit at Monaghan General Hospital and calls on the two Government T.D. ’s – Deputies Conlon and Humphreys – to assist in this regard. ”*

- (ii) Cllrs B. McKenna proposed, Cllr Carthy seconded

*“We propose a motion of urgent business to discuss the proposed reduction in the opening hours of the Minor Injuries Unit at Monaghan General Hospital –*

*That this Council calls upon the Minister for Health, Dr. James Reilly, T.D., to personally intervene in this matter to ensure that the present opening hours at this unit are retained. ”*

A debate on both motions followed to which a number of members contributed and rejected outright the proposal to cut the opening hours of the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) at Monaghan Hospital. A number of members referred to the unacceptable overcrowding conditions at Cavan and Drogheda hospitals and called on the Minister to defer any reduction in the MIU opening hours until the situation at these hospitals improved significantly.

The Mayor then put both motions to the meeting and they were agreed unanimously.

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

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