

**Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2015 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr Noel Keelan, Cathaoirleach

**Present:** Cllrs. Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Maxwell, McElvaney, McPhillips, B. McKenna, McNally, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor and S. Treanor.

Mr. A. King, Chief Executive, Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms. P. Monahan, A/Director of Service, Mr. J. McKernan, A/Senior Engineer, Mr. P. L'Estrange, A/Chief Fire Officer and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes**

- (i) *On the proposal of Cllr. S. Coyle, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2015, be confirmed.*
- (ii) *On the proposal of Cllr. S. Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna, it was agreed that the minutes of the Special Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2015, be confirmed.*

**2. Correspondence.**

**Urgent Business:**

The Cathaoirleach advised the members that he had received a notice of Urgent Business from the Sinn Fein members in relation to the postal strike which had commenced on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

It was agreed that the Urgent Business would be dealt with at the end of the meeting.

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

- Letter from the Meetings Administrator informing the Council of a Casual Vacancy in the membership of the Council arising from the resignation of Cllr Eugene Bannigan and enclosing copy of letter from the former Councillor.
- Letter from An Bord Pleanála advising the Council that the decision to hold an Oral Hearing on the North/South Interconnector Planning application is a matter for the Bord.
- Letter from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in relation to the N2 Clontibret to the Border Road Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation of Council resolution regarding the jobs lost at the BOSE facility in Carrickmacross.
- Letter from the Area Manager, HSE Cavan-Monaghan regarding the home help hours in Cavan and Monaghan.
- Letter from Tourism Ireland inviting the Cathaoirleach to attend the Lord Mayor's Show in London on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2015.
- Letter from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions regarding the Congress Charter for Fair Conditions at Work and requesting an opportunity to address a Council meeting.

- Email from the Monaghan M.D. enclosing two resolutions passed by the M.D. in relation to (i) taking in charge an additional 150 metres of a county lane in the townland of Killycarron, Emyvale and (ii) that the Council initiate a campaign to promote organ donation through members, staff, extended families community groups and sporting bodies.
- Letter from the Ballybay-Clones M.D. in relation to school transport facilities for children attending special education facilities.
- Resolution from Sligo County Council calling on the Minister for Finance to listen to the concerns of T.D.'s before he signs new Regulations into law on the remaining Sections of the 2012 Credit Union Act.
- Resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister for Agriculture to increase the slaughter period from 30 to 36 months in order to help small and medium producers of beef.
- Resolution from Tipperary County Council calling on the Department of Education to introduce the topic of suicide awareness, depression and mental health into the Irish Secondary School education curriculum.

The following correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Resolution from Leitrim County Council calling on the Minister for Finance to reduce the amount of Inheritance Tax payable on the transfer of lands or property at the moment.
- Resolution from Leitrim County Council calling on the Minister for Social Protection to have epilepsy included as a condition for a Free Travel Pass.

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

*On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Bennett, it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Tipperary County Council calling on the Department of Education to introduce the topic of suicide awareness, depression and mental health into the Irish Secondary School education curriculum, as presently it is not.*

*Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr S. Treanor seconded that this Council calls on Transport Infrastructure Ireland to provide information on the traffic flow counts that indicated the need for a new routing for the N2 Clontibret to the Border road, and calls for renewed traffic flow count to indicate whether our upgraded N2 Monaghan to the Border will continue to handle our traffic volumes going forward.*

A recorded vote was taken which resulted as follows:

**For:** Cllrs P. Connolly and S. Treanor Total 2

**Against:** Cllrs Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, McElvaney, McPhillips, B. McKenna, McNally, O'Hanlon and P. Treanor Total 14

**Abstentions:** Nil.

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion defeated.

*Cllr P. Treanor proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded that this Council supports the motion from Ballybay-Clones Municipal District in relation to school transport for students with special educational needs.*

A vote by show of hands resulted in 13 for, 2 against, 1 abstention. The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried.

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor seconded by Cllr Bennett it was agreed that this Council write to the HSE seeking an increase in the Home Help Hours. This will facilitate more people to remain in their homes and ease pressure on hospital beds and residential care places.*

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council write to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) inviting them to address a future meeting of Monaghan County Council to outline their campaign for 'Fair Conditions at Work'.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council is represented at the Tourism Ireland Lord Mayor's Show in London on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr N. Keelan.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister for Agriculture to increase the slaughter period from 30 to 36 months in order to help small and medium producers of beef.*

*Cllr Gallagher proposed, Cllr B. McKenna seconded that this Council adopts the resolution from Monaghan M.D., requesting that the Council take in charge an additional 150 metres of a county lane which is attached to the local road LT51421 in the townland of Killycarron, Emyvale.*

A debate took place on this motion, to which a number of members contributed. Mr. J. McKernan, A/Senior Engineer, read an extract from a report from Mr. D. McElwain, M.D. Co-ordinator which recommended that this portion of road is not taken in charge by the Council at this time, due to the costs involved.

Mr. A. King, Chief Executive advised the members that the taking of a road in charge was subject to a consultation process in accordance with Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 and that if the members were to pass the motion it would be to initiate the process of declaring this portion of road to be a public road. The members agreed to insert the words 'initiate the process' into the motion.

The Cathaoirleach stated that he was putting the amended motion to the meeting.

A recorded vote was taken which resulted as follows:

**For:** Cllrs. Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, B. McKenna, McNally, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor. Total 11

**Against:** Cllr Connolly and S. Treanor Total 2

**Abstentions:** Cllrs Campbell, McElvaney and McPhillips Total 3

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried.

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Campbell it was agreed that Monaghan County Council invites Bus Eireann to a meeting of Monaghan County Council to defend their position of what they are accused of in the motion coming from the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District - that transport was not available for special needs children wishing to attend special education facilities and that all children of the nation are not being cherished and treated equally.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that this Council writes back to the HSE regarding Home Help Hours. We don't need to know how many hours were given in 2014, instead we need to point out that we need many more hours in order to keep people in their homes thus freeing up beds in our hospitals.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council write to Minister Pascal Donohue T.D., and An Taoiseach Enda Kenny, T.D., expressing our outrage that the government package of €27 billion contains no funding for the N2, in particular, the section in Co. Monaghan.*

*Cllr O'Hanlon proposed, Cllr McNally, seconded that Monaghan County Council calls on the IDA to provide the county with development lands, properly serviced so that we have an attractive product for inward indigenous investment. That we call on the IDA to review the situation with the current facility in Knockaconny.*

*Following a brief discussion it was agreed to defer the motion, pending circulation of the report from the recent meeting with IDA/Enterprise Ireland officials*

*On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that this Council writes to the Minister for Finance and the Minister for the Environment Community and Local Government requesting that LIS schemes be re-introduced in their original format*

#### **Good wishes to former Cllr Eugene Bannigan:**

The Members noted, with regret, the letter from former Councillor Eugene Bannigan indicating his intention to resign from the membership of the Council with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.

All members joined in paying tribute to Eugene for his service with the Council in what was a difficult period following the sudden death of his late father Owen in 2014. The Members wished Eugene every success in his future career. Mr. Adge King, Chief Executive, joined in the good wishes on behalf of the staff.

### **3. To approve Overdraft Accommodation in the sum of €10 million for the period from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016.**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Carthy, it was agreed that the Council approve of Overdraft Accommodation in the amount of €10 million for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31 December, 2016.*

**4. To receive Management Report for September 2015**

The members noted the Management Report for September which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The Chief Executive and relevant Directors responded to queries from the members arising from the report.

*On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that this Council write to Irish Water asking them to address the issue of hard water in the Scotstown and Ballinode areas. Presently water users in these are experiencing very hard water which costs them additional expenses daily. A solution to correct this hardness issue is available if Irish Water would only mix water from two different sources – a softer water would be available to these areas.*

Mr. J. McKernan, A/Senior Engineer informed the members that the Consultants for the Dundalk-Sligo Road project were available to make a presentation to the Council. It was agreed to have the presentation at either the November or December meeting.

**5. To approve the nomination of Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Service to the Local Community Development Committee.**

Mr. A. King, Chief Executive informed the members that it was necessary to fill the vacancy on the Local Community Development Committee arising from the resignation of the former Chief Executive, Eugene Cummins. He recommended to the members that Mr. Paul Clifford, Director of Services be appointed to fill the vacancy.

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Service be appointed to the Local Community Development Committee.*

**6. To receive Presentation on Fire Policies/Building Control from Mr. Paul L'Estrange, Acting Chief Fire Officer.**

Acting Chief Fire Officer Paul L'Estrange presented three policies to the Council for adoption. The first related to building control inspections allowing for a proportionate, transparent and consistent approach. It focused on the nature of work, size/complexity of projects, compliance history of applicant or agent, level of competency and environmental considerations. The second related to during performance inspections. It provides guidelines for inspecting pubs, nightclubs and nursing homes during night time hours. The last policy relates to community fire safety. It incorporates a 5 year programme to address areas such as primary schools programmes, smoke alarm and CO alarm campaigns and public information campaigns.

*On the proposal of Cllr Bennett seconded by Cllr McPhillips it was agreed that the following policy documents be adopted:*

- (i) Monaghan County Council Community Fire Safety Policy 2015-2019*
- (ii) Monaghan County Council Risk Assessment decision making tool for Building Control Inspections*
- (iii) Monaghan County Council During Performance Inspection Policy and Procedure 2015.*

**7. To fix date for the following meetings:**

**(i) Statutory Budget meeting**

It was agreed that the Statutory Budget meeting would be held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November from 9.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

**(ii) Lough Muckno Development Committee**

It was agreed that a meeting of the Lough Muckno Development Committee would be held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October at 3.00 p.m., in the Castleblayney Enterprise Centre.

**8. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events**

It was agreed that the report received from Cllr Keelan in relation to his attendance at the Housing Conference in Maynooth, Co. Kildare be noted.

**9. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September**

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2015 were responded to by the appropriate officials.

*On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council write again to Minister Burton and express our disappointment at her lack of response to a motion passed at last month's meeting 'The motion stated that a delegation from Monaghan County Council would go to meet Tánaiste Burton in Leinster House'. With the new rural and village renewal scheme now launched, this is the appropriate time to call for the purchase of a social protection office in Ballybay and also to call for a public car park in Ballybay.*

*Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded, that Monaghan County Council immediately seek clarification from the County Monaghan Fine Gael Oireachtas members, Heather Humphreys, TD, and Sean Conlan TD on the Department of Social Protection offices, Ballybay on the following:*

- 1. Why has it only being disclosed recently, that there was an offer from the owner of the main property currently occupied by the DSA, to carry out the necessary work?*
- 2. Were designs/specifications ever given to the owner of the property for the works to be carried out?*
- 3. Why were the major costs necessary to upgrade the proposed Monaghan location never revealed?*
- 4. Will they arrange an immediate meeting with Joan Burton, TD to seek an assurance of the permanent continuation of the 30 plus jobs in Ballybay?*
- 5. Will they explain their inaction on this critical issue, for the economic and social activity of Ballybay, and give a commitment on behalf of Fine Gael to the retention of these vital jobs in Ballybay?*

A recorded vote was taken which resulted as follows:

**For:** Cllrs. Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, B. McKenna, McNally, O'Hanlon and P. Treanor. Total 11

**Against:** Cllr Campbell, Maxwell and McPhillips Total 3

**Abstentions:** Cllr S. Treanor. Total 1

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried.

**10. To receive update on North South Interconnector project.**

The members considered the letter from An Bord Pleanála advising the Council that the decision to hold an Oral Hearing on the North/South Interconnector Planning application is a matter for the Bord. Also considered was a letter from Minister Heather Humphreys T.D., regarding submissions made by her Department in relation to the planning application for the North South Interconnector project.

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council view with serious concern the response from An Bord Pleanála as to the holding of an Oral hearing on the North South Interconnector, and in circulating a copy of this correspondence to local Oireachtas representatives, request local Fine Gael Oireachtas members to ensure through An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, and Alex White, TD, that the 2,500 persons/ groups who made submissions are given the opportunity of a full public oral hearing on the proposed North South Interconnector project.*

**11. To receive update on Ulster Canal project.**

**The following letters were circulated with the Agenda:**

- Letter from Minister Heather Humphreys, T.D. in relation to Council resolution regarding the Ulster Canal project.
- Letter from Brendan Smith, T.D. enclosing copy of reply from Minister Heather Humphreys, T.D., in relation to the Ulster Canal project.

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that Monaghan County Council take the lead and establish the Ulster Canal Task Force, involving representatives from Monaghan County Council, Cavan County Council, Fermanagh/Omagh Council, Mid-Ulster Council, A.B.C. Council, the Chief Executive of ICBAN and EBR and a nominee from the two relevant Ministers.*

**12. Business submitted by Chief Executive.**

There was no business submitted by the Chief Executive.

**13. To receive Presentation on Broadband - Ms. Ciara Bates, National Broadband Programme**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed, Ms. Ciara Bates, from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and thanked her for accepting the Council's invitation to address the elected members in relation to broadband.

Ms. Bates then outlined details of a new Government initiative, the objective of which is to substantially address the deficit in high speed broadband availability in rural locations in Co. Monaghan and throughout the country by 2020. She stated that it was estimated that 42% of Co. Monaghan would be covered by commercial broadband operators by the end of 2016 and the Government initiative would aim to address the needs of the remaining 58%. By 2018, it is proposed that 85% of homes and businesses across Ireland will have access to high speed broadband, regardless of location, with all having access by 2020. She stated that many towns and villages in Monaghan and the surrounding areas would see significant '*Fibre to the Home*' (FTTH) rollouts from commercial operators in the near future and the Government intervention would ensure that rural areas would not be left behind. She said that the state intervention would cater for very small rural villages with less than 900 premises, rural ribbon development and rural one-off housing. The infrastructure built now has to be capable of meeting future demands. She said that the Department hoped to award contracts in 2016 to commence provision in 2016 and they hoped the exercise would be substantially completed by 2019.

Following her presentation Ms. Bates responded to queries from the members who generally welcomed the targets outlined by her, with some members expressing the view that the targets might be a bit too ambitious. All members stressed the importance of the availability of high speed broadband in rural areas and stated that it was an issue that was to the forefront of their everyday dealings with constituents. They also expressed the view that any upgrade to the service should not result in excessive charges, but should be affordable to all that required it.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms. Bates for her presentation and she withdrew from the meeting.

**14. To receive Presentation from Mr. John Boylan, Liaison Officer, Eirgrid**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr. John Boylan, Liaison Officer and Mr. John Fitzgerald, Director of Grid Development, EirGrid to the meeting. The Cathaoirleach noted that they had been accompanied to the meeting by David Martin, Aidan Geoghegan, Fergal Keenan and Siobhan Shiels and he invited Mr. Boylan to address the Council.

Mr. Boylan thanked the Council for the invitation to address the meeting. He explained that EirGrid had appointed a number of Agricultural Liaison Officers who would be available to meet with the elected members or any individual who wanted to speak to them about any of the agricultural aspects of the interconnector project. He stated that his background was in agriculture having worked as a dairy farmer all his working life before moving on to different enterprises. He had been involved in many different roles in the Irish Farmers Association both at local and national level. He also had experience of conflict resolution over a number of years having been Chairman of the Farm Business Committee.

Responding to queries from the members, Mr. Boylan replied as follows:



- EirGrid is proposing a total artery of electrical power availability throughout Ireland, Britain and Europe in the most efficient way. It's about putting a system in place that will allow the free flow of electricity through Europe, forwards and backwards, regardless of where it is generated.
- Monaghan farmers are among the best innovators in Ireland and the county is the second biggest exporter of food behind Dublin. Going forward they were going to have to produce a lot more electricity by renewable sources. Monaghan farmers would be able to generate electricity in this way and the network being provided by EirGrid would provide opportunities for this.
- Regarding devaluation of land he referred to comments by a Valuer regarding a property that had made the highest price for land during the boom years and had a 400Kv line running through it.
- He acknowledged that there were health scares and worries about agricultural production being in danger – he intended to impart knowledge and answer questions openly and honestly. Any questions he couldn't answer he would go to the relevant bodies.
- There would be inconvenience and fencing problems. The Agricultural Liaison Officers would be liaising with landowners on an ongoing basis. The IFA Code of Practice would be updated to deal with such matters. He acknowledged that if the Liaison Officers had been in place earlier it would have been a more open approach.
- The ultimate decision was now in the hands of An Bord Pleanála who were an independent body and would make an independent decision on the planning application.

Mr. John Fitzgerald stated that the independent expert panel had looked at the Grid Link and Grid West projects but no decision had been made to underground either of them. The panel had also looked at the North/South project and said that the work done by EirGrid was comparable.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Boylan and Mr. Fitzgerald and the other officials for attending the meeting and the delegation then withdrew.

## 15. Questions:

**Clr P. McNally asked:**

1. Why has the speed limit on the old Castleblayney road in Carrickmacross not been extended as per a discussion taken by the speed limit camera some time ago?

**Reply: The Department of Transport issued 'Guidelines for the Setting and Management of Speed Limits in Ireland in 2015. A meeting of the Speed Limit Committee is to be arranged and this item will be discussed at that meeting.**

2. Has Monaghan County Council a plan in place for the construction or purchase of Residential Units in line with the Government initiative over the next 5 years?

**Reply: The Local Authority has a series of measures to attempt provide additional units over the next five years. As requested at the previous meeting a presentation is being made at the Housing and Fire SPC for their review in respect of this matter. This report will be brought to the next meeting of the Council.**

**Cllr P. McNally asked:**

3. Has this Council lobbied the Department of Environment for compensation for farmers affected by the ban on spreading fertiliser and slurry on their lands adjacent to water sources in Co. Monaghan.

**Reply:** The Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblayney requested a response in February 2015 from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government on the issue of ‘restrictions to farmers on the spreading of slurry and pesticides on lands located within the specified distances of the drinking water abstraction point (‘as prescribed in the Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Water Regulations, 2014)’.

The response from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government details:-

*‘The EU Nitrates Directive aims to protect all waters against pollution from agricultural sources. Particular care is of course required for the protection of public health especially in the case of waters which serve as the source of drinking water. The Nitrates Regulations include a prohibition on the application to land of organic fertiliser or soiled water within specified distances from drinking water sources. These prohibitions are necessary for the protection of sources of drinking water generally. These distances are measured from the actual abstraction point. On the advice of the Expert Advisory Group on Nitrates in 2010 the prohibition distances in the vicinity of water abstraction points for human consumption were revised to 30m in the case of abstraction points providing 10m<sup>3</sup> of water or supplying 50 or more persons; and to 15m from any other abstraction point, subject to technical assessment being carried out by a Local Authority. In relation to compensation specifically, the Minister has been advised by the Attorney General’s Office that compensation does not arise in this instance.’*

4. Has Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District any land available for the construction of badly needed residential units to deal with the huge numbers from this area presently waiting on a house?

The Technical Section has assessed the available and suitable lands for housing in the Castleblayney/Carrickmacross Municipal District.

The following lands have been deemed as meriting consideration and are being progressed with the Department

- Lands at Bree, Castleblayney

**Cllr C. McPhillips asked:**

5. Has Monaghan County Council received any information to date regarding the **Town and Village Renewal Scheme** launched by the Government? If so, what are the details? Can Monaghan County Council confirm that Clones and Ballybay are eligible?

**Reply:** Monaghan County Council has yet to receive details of the scheme and eligibility criteria for the proposed €30m investment in rural towns and villages, as announced by Ministers Kelly and Phelan on 23 Sep 2015.

**Cllr C. Carthy asked:**

6. Has Monaghan County Council received approval to proceed with works on the Group Home for People with Physical/Sensory Disabilities in Carrickmacross this month (October)?

**Reply: No. The Authority has not received approval to proceed with the works on the Group Home for People with Physical/sensory Disabilities in Carrickmacross.**

As indicated in last month's response Monaghan County Council received a letter from the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government on the 1st of September 2015 requesting further information and reaffirmation of H.S.E. support for the project and confirmation of the number of individuals with disabilities that require the specialised accommodation that is to be provided in the proposed Group Home at Tailte an Chlochair (Convent Lands) Carrickmacross The Council replied to the Department on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2015 providing the further information and stating that there is a need for the type of specialised accommodation proposed AND confirmation of H.S.E. support for the project was again provided by the H.S.E.

We are awaiting confirmation or otherwise from the department in respect of whether they are satisfied with the submission as made.

7. Has the Council been informed of any proposed reintroduction of the 'Tenant Purchase Scheme'?

**Reply: No there has been no further update from the Department.**

8. Has the Department of Transport allocated any additional funding this year to MCC to help with the high number of roads that are in poor condition and does this council envisage any further funding before year end?

**Reply: The Council received of an additional allocation in July of €629,050 from the DTTAS as part of the additional €24 million of funding being provided nationally for regional and local roads. This allocation has allowed for additional pavement restoration works to commence on 2 Regional Roads and 5 Local Roads and the council does not envisage any further funding being received in 2015.**

9. What is the Council's official position on landowners who refuse to cut trees/hedges on their lands that are a safety hazard to motorists:

- (a) Will the Council cut the trees/hedges and then charge the landowner?

**Reply: Where an immediate hazard to road safety exists Monaghan County Council will cut/trim trees & hedges. Where the landowner refuses to take remedial action Monaghan County Council will carry out the works and charge the cost of same to the landowner/occupier.**

- (b) What is the average compliance rate over the last 2-3 years?

**Reply:** Generally, there is a good overall compliance rate with a few exceptions. A system to record and identify all hedgecutting offences is being put in place with the aim of adopting a more rigorous approach and prosecuting persistent offenders.

**ClIr N. Keelan asked:**

10. In the interest of road safety and as a matter of good practice, will Monaghan County Council ensure that all the road signs across the county are made clearly visible, given that many of them cannot be seen as a result of overgrown hedges or are in need of cleaning?

**Reply:** The Municipal Districts will investigate and take whatever action is deemed necessary within the resources available.

**ClIr R. Gallagher asked:**

11. With regard to housing -  
(a) How many people are currently on the county Council housing list overall and in each municipal district?

**Reply:** There are 1,327 households on the waiting/transfer list. This is broke down as follows:-

552 Monaghan MD ;  
226 Ballybay Clones MD ;  
549 Carrickmacross Castleblayney MD

- (b) How do these figures compare to 2012, 2013 and 2014?

**Reply:**

	People on Waiting List
2012	497 – Monaghan County Council only
2013	984 – incorporates Town Council Areas
2014	961 – incorporates Town Council Areas

- (c) How many new housing units has the Council provided in each of these years?

**Reply:** The following allocations were made in the following years as follows:-

2012 – 142;  
2013 – 95;  
2014 – 153;  
2015 to date – 61

In respect of acquisitions the following figures apply

2012	2013	2014
31	6	7

**Cllr R. Gallagher asked:**

12. With regard to the recent announcement of a 30 million euro fund for rural towns and villages what will be the amount allocated to County Monaghan and what process will take place to determine where the money will be spent?

**Reply: An allocation of €75,000 (which requires matched-funding by the local authority) has been awarded to Castleblayney/Ballybay/Lough Egish under the Rural Economic Development Zone pilot scheme. The allocation was made in respect of an application prepared and submitted by Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District outlining works and initiatives to be carried out in the town of Castleblayney and its hinterland.**

13. Does the Council have any plans to:
- Construct a Garden of Remembrance in the county town or other municipal areas as part of its 1916 commemoration activities?
  - Agree to the placing of the Proclamation in a prominent place?
  - Pass a resolution that the National Flag is to be flown on all council buildings on St Patrick's Day and Easter Sunday.
- or would these just be referred to the relevant committee?

**Reply:**

- There are plans to construct a 'Garden of Remembrance' in a number of towns in the county.**
- & (c) These matters will be considered by the Ireland 2016 Steering Committee as part of the official Civic Commemoration to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2016.**

14. What was the total income received from the Local Property Tax in 2015?
- What was the rate of compliance?

**Reply: Based on figures received from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount due for 2015 is €3,715,515. Details regarding compliance have not been supplied to Monaghan County Council.**

**16. Notices of Motion:**

**Cllr S. Conlon proposed, Cllr Crowe seconded, and it was agreed:**

- "That Monaghan County Council supports Cork City Council in its actions against the proposed merger of Cork City and County Councils, supporting its challenge to the Local Government Reform programme, which undermines the European principle of subsidiarity."
- This motion was deferred to the November meeting at the request of Cllr B. McKenna.

**17. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations:**

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

- Rosemary McManus, SEO, Human Resources on the death of her mother Mary (Mai) McManus, RIP.

- Sean Treanor, Council Caretaker on the death of his wife Patricia, RIP.

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

- Carrickmacross Tidy Towns Committee on winning a gold medal in the National Tidy Towns Competition and also all Tidy Towns Committees in the county on their achievements.
- Monaghan Phoenix Athletic Club on hosting its second annual Monaghan Marathon event and to Leslie Crawford on running his 100<sup>th</sup> marathon.
- Carrickmacross Emmets U14 team on winning the Mason Cup.

## 18. Conferences/Training:

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr O’Hanlon, it was agreed that the Council be represented at the following Conferences/Seminars by the members listed.*

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
URBACT	Ireland Information Event	Rehahan Hall, NUI Maynooth	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2015	Sean Conlon Pat Treanor
AILG	Roads, Transportation & Safety – A key function for Local Authorities	Silver Springs Hotel, Cork	17 <sup>th</sup> October 2015	David Maxwell Hugh McElvaney Ciara McPhillips Aidan Campbell Paudge Connolly
Celtic Conference	A Practical Guide to Budget 2016	The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co Cork	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> October ’15	Aidan Campbell
Monaghan University of the Third Age	“What do we tell the children when they start to ask us why?”	Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2015	Brian McKenna
AILG	Roads, Transportation & Safety – A key function for Local Authorities	Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon	27 <sup>th</sup> October 2015	Pat Treanor Noel Keelan Brian McKenna Sean Conlon Jackie Crowe Seamus Coyle Padraig McNally Robbie Gallagher PJ O’Hanlon
AILG	Groundwater & Septic Tanks & Registration of Lobbying Act 2014.	Ballinasloe	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Cathy Bennett Brian McKenna Sean Conlon Jackie Crowe David Maxwell Seamus Coyle Padraig McNally Robbie Gallagher PJ O’Hanlon

