

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Carrickmacross on Monday 6 February, 2017 at 2.00 p.m.

Chair: Cllr P.J. O’Hanlon, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs. Aughey, Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gilliland, Keelan, Maxwell, McElvaney, B. McKenna, McNally, P. Treanor and S. Treanor.

Mr. E. O’Sullivan, Chief Executive, Mr. P. Clifford and Mr. A. King, Directors of Services, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms. P. Monahan, A/Director of Service, Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner, and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

(i) Minutes of Special Council meeting held on 9th January, 2017

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of the Special Council meeting held on the 9th January, 2017, be confirmed.

(ii) Minutes of Council meeting held on 9th January, 2017

Cllr Conlon referred to a ‘*typo*’ on page three of the minutes of the January Council meeting under the heading ‘Proposals arising out of correspondence’. The word *confiscation* in the first resolution should be amended to read *confirmation*. The amendment was agreed.

Cllr Bennett referred to proposals that she had made following the presentation on hard water and which were not recorded in the minutes. She requested that the minutes be amended to include the following:

“ That Monaghan County Council provide a report on the solutions to improve the hard water issue in Smithboro ”

“ That Monaghan County Council presents the solutions for hard water in Scotstown, Ballinode and Smithboro to Irish Water ”

The Meetings Administrator advised Cllr Bennett that the proposals had not been submitted in writing at that meeting and therefore were not included in the minutes.

The members agreed to amend the minutes to include the two proposals.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 9th January, 2017, as amended above, be confirmed.

(iii) Minutes of meeting with Oireachtas members held on 23rd January, 2017 re North South Interconnector.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of the meeting with the Oireachtas members in relation to the North South Interconnector held on the 9th January, 2017, be confirmed.

2. Correspondence.

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

- Letter from the office of the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government regarding the exclusion of Part V units and specified classes of houses being excluded from the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Health regarding hospital waiting lists
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Tanaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality regarding the Coroners Bill making provision for an automatic inquest into maternal deaths.
- Letter from Minister Naughten in response to the Council's resolution regarding the future viability of the post office network.
- Letter from the Chief Superintendent confirming that a Drugs Unit will be operational in the Cavan-Monaghan Division in the first quarter of 2017.
- Letter from IDA Ireland Border Region confirming that it continues to market County Monaghan to FDI opportunities, enquiries and potential investors.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the National Ambulance Service in response to the Council's resolution regarding ambulance response times.
- Update from ICBAN relating to activities during 2016.
- Circular letters LG 01/2017 and LG 02/2017 relating to changes to annual expenses allowances for members and changes in the PRSI treatment of elected members.
- Letter from Cavan County Council, enclosing correspondence from the Minister for Finance and seeking the views of members in relation to the situation that exists for self employed cross border workers who are subject to double taxation in this jurisdiction.
- Email from the Northern and Western Regional Assembly requesting that the Director of the Assembly would give a briefing to the Council on the Regional Assembly and the National Planning Framework.
- Resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister for Agriculture to introduce a financial aid compensation package for the grain sector due to the impact of the disastrous weather on the 2016 harvest.
- Resolution from Tipperary County Council requesting the Department of Planning Housing, Community and Local government to amend/increase the planning exemptions for Solar Photovoltaic energy production for residential and non residential buildings.
- Resolution from South Dublin County Council calling on the Minister for Transport to regulate the use of bus lanes to allow vehicles that display the standard Disability Parking Permit to use the bus lanes at all times, to facilitate speedy access to hospitals.

The following additional correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Email from Minister Naughten confirming that he had arranged a meeting regarding the North South Interconnector on Wednesday 8th February in Leinster House and inviting representatives from Monaghan County Council to attend.
- Email from Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin confirming details of the meeting with Minister Naughten on 8th February.
- Letter from the Public Accounts Committee advising that it had referred the Council's letter regarding EirGrid to the Minister for Communications and to the Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Change and Energy.
- Letter from the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport regarding funding for public lighting in the Ballybay-Clones area.

- Letter from the Office of the Tanaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality confirming that the Minister/Department does not have a role in the scheduling or conduct of an inquest in individual cases (ie Mary Boyle case) which is a matter for the relevant Coroner.
- Copies of various responses to Parliamentary Questions received by Deputy Niamh Smyth which she had forwarded to the Meetings Administrator with a request that they be circulated to the elected members.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed that David Minton Director of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly is invited to the March meeting of Monaghan County Council to give a presentation on the Regional Assembly and the National Planning Framework.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys T.D, to immediately implement the Post Office Network Business Development Group report of January 2016, an appropriate investment to protect the Network, sanction additional state and financial services, with new and community services to be provided by Post Offices, particularly in rural areas, where sustainable and vibrant Post offices are essential, with proper remuneration to those who operate them.

It was agreed that the resolution would be circulated to all local authorities and the Oireachtas members for the constituency.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr S. Treanor, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council re-issues the correspondence which was sent to the Minister for Health in 2016 in relation to a motion which was unanimously adopted by Monaghan County Council in relation to cross border emergency care.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that Monaghan County Council requests the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government Simon Coveney T.D and the Government to immediately address the anomalies in the Tenant Purchase Scheme, in particular the exclusion of Part V dwellings as tenants made application and took occupancy of houses on the basis that they could purchase their home and now are excluded from doing so.

It was agreed that the resolution would be circulated to all local authorities and the Oireachtas members for the constituency.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council calls on An Tanaiste Frances Fitzgerald TD Minister for Justice and Equality, to make it clear, to this Council her role in relation to regional Coroner's; also can she confirm what oversight is carried out regarding State Coroner offices.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that in relation to PV (Photovoltaic) Solar Panels, (For Minister for Communications Climate Action and Environment, Denis Naughten T.D). Monaghan County Council calls on an electricity rebate scheme to be introduced to promote the use of Solar Technology. Also, we call on Government to make Solar panels easier to fit by introducing planning exemptions.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McKenna it was agreed that this Council requests the issue of the increased level of criminal activity, specifically burglaries and breaks in, in recent months in the Killygoan/Connolly park area of Monaghan town, be included on the agenda of the next Joint Policing Committee meeting for discussion and consideration of actions available to tackle this damaging activity.

On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to Minister Damien English and requests an update on the Part V housing exclusion from purchasing their homes.

On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to Minister Shane Ross Minister for Transport Tourism and Sport and requests that a grant programme is made available to fund the excess public lighting needs that are currently present in County Monaghan.

On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to TUSLA and ask them to provide funding to County Monaghan for Domestic abuse services. The dedicated national budget for domestic sexual and gender based services of €20.6m should review adequate resources.

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Gilliland it was agreed that TUSLA be invited to make a presentation to Monaghan County Council outlining their work in County Monaghan.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed that the Council be represented at the meeting on 8th February, organised by Minister Naughten, in relation to the North/South Interconnector by the following members:

Cllr P. J. O'Hanlon, Cathaoirleach, Cllr D. Maxwell, Cllr N. Keelan, Cllr S. Coyle and Cllr H. McElvaney.

Following a query from Cllr Maxwell regarding the circulation of answers to Parliamentary Questions by T.D's with the Council agenda, it was agreed that this matter would be referred to the Corporate Policy Group for consideration.

3. To consider Report in relation to Taking in Charge Estates

Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner referred to the Taking in Charge (TIC) report which had been circulated to the members. He outlined the procedure for taking a development in charge and the National Taking in Charge Initiative (NTICI) which was launched by the Department in 2016, and which was intended to help reduce the number of outstanding TIC applications. The Council had been successful in its application for funding under the initiative and had been awarded €111,170. Significant progress had been made in 2016 through the successful implementation of the NTICI and remedial works had been carried out on 12 developments within the county. It is anticipated that these developments will be formally taken in charge at the April Council meeting.

He stated that going forward, engagement with the developers that remain in place will be prioritised in the early part of the year. In addition, the Planning Authority shall make an

application for funding following the anticipated roll out of the NTICI 2017 later this year. It is expected that the successful implementation of the scheme in 2017 will help resolve a significant number of the remaining outstanding TIC applications.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Maxwell, it was agreed that the Council would discuss the up to date position on the Latlorcan Glen development in Committee.

Following a brief discussion on this matter, the Council returned to public session on the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Conlon.

4. To approve Newspapers in accordance with Part 4 Article 18 (2) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2006

On the proposal of Cllr McKenna, seconded by Cllr Maxwell, it was agreed that the Council approve the following newspapers in accordance with Part 4 Article 18(2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2006 (as amended) for use in Monaghan Planning Authority for giving notice of the intention to make a planning application.

- Northern Standard
- Anglo Celt
- Dundalk Democrat
- Irish Independent
- Irish Daily Star
- Irish Times

5. To approve the Community and Environment Grant Scheme Guidelines 2017

The members noted the Guidelines for Community and Environment Grant Scheme for 2017 which had been circulated with the agenda.

On the proposal of Cllr McKenna, seconded by Cllr Bennett, it was agreed that the Community and Environment Grant Scheme Guidelines for 2017 be approved and that the Council proceed to advertise the scheme – closing date 3rd March, 2017.

6. To receive Presentation on the new Monaghan County Council website and Map Alerter system.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Susan Duffy and Janice McAnenly, I.S. Technical Support to the meeting and invited them to make a presentation to the members.

Ms. Duffy outlined the new look Council website and how to access the various parts/sections of the site.

Ms. McAnenly explained the operation of the Map Alerter system which is designed to alert members of the public, who are registered for such alerts, to incidents/events etc as soon as they happen in their area. She demonstrated how members of the public can sign up for the alerts. She asked members to promote the system among their families, friends and clients to ensure a wide uptake of the system.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms. Duffy and Ms. McAnenly for the presentation and complimented the staff for the work undertaken in the design/launch of the new website and the roll out of the Map Alerter system.

7. To consider entering into Section 85 Agreement with Westmeath County Council for the management of invasive alien plant species (IAPS)

The members considered the correspondence and draft Section 85 Agreement from Westmeath County Council relating to the management of invasive alien plant species on the road network in County Monaghan with Westmeath County Council acting as the lead authority for the engagement of a contractor to undertake the treatment and surveys.

On the proposal of Cllr McKenna, seconded by Cllr McElvaney, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council hereby resolves to enter into an agreement with Westmeath County Council under Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 2001, in respect of a contract for the management of invasive alien plant species (IAPS) on the road network in County Monaghan, whereby Westmeath County Council will be enabled to undertake appropriate works in County Monaghan.

8. To receive Management Report – January, 2017

The members noted the Management Report for the month of January which had been circulated with the agenda. The Chief Executive responded to a number of queries from the members in relation to the report.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Bennett it was agreed that Monaghan County Council calls on its Executive to carry out a rent review on private rented dwellings throughout County Monaghan with a breakdown of average rent being asked for by private landowners in each town, village and Municipal District rural areas.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McNally, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council immediately expedites the provision of a new Fire Station in Ballybay, as the current station is 40 years old, inadequate and unsuitable for the provision of a proper fire fighting service to Ballybay and the surrounding area. The Council also commends the excellence of the Fire Fighters operating from these conditions.

It was agreed that the resolution would be circulated to the Oireachtas Members.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr S. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council re-issue the invite to Failte Ireland to visit Monaghan County Council with a view to discussing a Strategic Tourism initiative for County Monaghan

9. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events.

The members noted the report from Cllr Aidan Campbell regarding his attendance at the Waterways Ireland Conference, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.

10. Business submitted by Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive informed the members that he had made changes to the Management Structure, which would take effect from 6th February, 2017, as follows:

- **Paul Clifford, DOS** Economic & Community Development (including Economic Development, Local Enterprise Office, Planning, Rural Development & Rural Broadband, Community, Tourism, Peace IV and Leader)
- **John Murray, Head of Finance** Housing, Finance & Innovation (including Finance, Housing, Motor Tax, ICT – Innovation)
- **Adge King, DOS** Corporate, Cultural & Capital Project Management (including Corporate Services, Project Management & Delivery, Cultural Team, Library, Arts, Museum & Heritage, and Internal Audit)
- **Patricia Monahan, A/DOS** Infrastructure & Operations (including Transportation, Water Services, Environment, Fire & Civil Protection, Procurement and Health & Safety)
- **Cathal Flynn, Senior Engineer** to be assigned responsibility for Environment, in addition to Water Services.

11. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 9th January, 2017.

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 9th January, 2017 and the meeting held on 23rd January, 2017 were responded to by the relevant officials.

On the proposal of Cllr McKenna, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that we write to Cathal Hand, HSE requesting that he clarify once and for all, if a commitment was given to residents of Oriel House that, following their transfer to Castleblayney, they would be returned to Oriel House once the works required by HIQA have been completed at Oriel House.

12. To receive update on North South Interconnector project.

The members noted the following correspondence

- Email from John Woods, SEAT (Safe Energy Armagh/Tyrone) confirming it was positively disposed to the three anti pylon groups (SEAT, NEPP and CMAPC) merging together under one umbrella to ensure that EirGrid underground the powerlines for the North South Interconnector.
- Letter from the County Monaghan Anti Pylon Committee CMAPC confirming support for the Council's proposal for the three committees to work together to achieve the undergrounding of the powerlines.
- Email from NEPP confirming support for the Council's proposal for the three committees to work together to achieve the undergrounding of the powerlines.

13. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project.

There was no discussion on this item.

14. Questions:

Cllr S. Coyle asked:

1. Will Monaghan County Council give a full and detailed breakdown of the estimated cost of the full restoration and repair of roads in County Monaghan-National, Regional and Local Roads in each L.E.A. and the County in total?
 - (a) The mileage of road in County Monaghan per Local Electoral Area of National, Regional and Local road requiring restoration, drainage and repair?
 - (b) The cost of road repair per Local Electoral Area of National, Regional and Local roads requiring restoration, drainage and repair?
 - (c) The total mileage/ cost for County Monaghan of road restoration, drainage and repair?
 - (d) At current levels of funding per year, annually deterioration and current conditions, how long will it take for residences of County Monaghan to expect a fully restored network of roads?

Reply: The following table gives a breakdown of the costs per Municipal District for the full restoration of local roads currently identified in the PSCI 1-6 category on the Pavement Management System. Monaghan County Council does not have condition data on the National Road network as this is managed centrally by the TII. The total cost of restoring the local road network currently identified is approximately €40 million and will take 9/10 years to complete based on current levels of funding. However, this does not take into account the annual rate of deterioration which has yet to be quantified.

Approximate Regional Road Restoration Cost (€/Km) €120,000
 Approximate Local Road Restoration Cost (€/Km) €95,000

Municipal District	PSCI 1-6 Length (Km)		Total Length Per MD	Restoration Cost		Total Cost Per MD
	Regional	Local		Regional	Local	
Monaghan	5.3	97.6	102.9	€636,000	€9,270,480	€9,906,480
Ballybay-Clones	20.8	127.3	148.1	€2,494,800	€12,094,640	€14,589,440
Carrickmacross - Castleblayney	19.8	136.6	156.4	€2,379,480	€12,974,055	€15,353,535
Totals	45.9	361.5	407.4	€5,510,280	€34,339,175	€39,849,455

2. Will Monaghan County Council outline the following "Rebuilding Ireland" Initiatives-

- Repair and Renewal Initiative
 - Buy and Renewal Initiative
- (a) The details of each scheme?
 - (b) What is involved in each initiative for the property owner/Monaghan County Council?
 - (c) The terms and conditions of each scheme?
 - (d) To whom and where may an interested property owner in the above initiatives, register an expression of interest?

Repair and Leasing Initiative

(a) The details of each scheme

The Repair and Leasing Initiative is being rolled out on a pilot basis in both Carlow County Council and Waterford City & County Councils from October 2016. The initiative is available to owners of houses or apartments in these local authority areas that have been vacant for at least one year and which require repairs to bring the property to the required standard for rented properties. The cost of repairs cannot exceed €40,000. Minister Coveney has announced that the initiative is to be available nationally in April 2017.

(b) What is involved in each initiative for the property owner/Monaghan County Council?

The purpose of the initiative is to restore suitable properties to the required standard for rented properties and to make them available to local authority Housing Applicants. The Local Authority or an Approved Housing Body (AHB) will agree with a property owner the specific works and associated costs on a case by case basis having regard to the condition of the property. Not all properties will require significant works to bring them up to standard. As the property owner is paying for these repairs through and offset against rental income, it is in the interests of the property owner that repair costs are not excessive. The benefits of the long-term lease arrangement to the property owner are (1) Guaranteed Rent (2) Avoid losing rent during vacant periods (3) No dealing with tenants and day to day maintenance (4) No need to collect rent (5) No advertising costs (6) No need to find tenants.

The owner retains responsibility for the structural insurance, structural maintenance and repair. The owner will retain responsibility for the payment of management fees, where applicable, and is responsible for payment of Local Property Tax and NPPR.

The property will then be allocated to an applicant/family/household on Social Housing Waiting list in compliance with the Scheme of Letting Priorities for social housing. Properties will not be available to RAS, HAP or private tenants.

(c) The terms and conditions of each scheme?

The property must be vacant for at least 12 months prior to submission to the Local Authority - proof of vacancy will be required; there has to be a social housing demand for the property; the property has to be assessed as being viable to provide social housing. If the property meets the required standards, it will be inspected by the L.A. or AHB staff who will identify the works that are required to bring the house up to the required standard. If the owner wishes to enter into a lease arrangement to make the property available for social housing with the local authority or AHB the following conditions will apply:

The minimum lease term is 10 years, 15 years or 20 years depending on the cost of the upgrade works; the lease payment will be based on (1) The general terms of social leasing which is set at 80% (85% for apartments) of the current market rental rates in the property location; (2) a further adjustment to the lease payment to offset the cost of the repair/upgrade work until the cost of the work has been repaid.

Properties must be in good structural condition and will be subject to inspection. Properties must be compliant with the Standards for Rented Houses Regulations. BER Certificates will be required for all properties. Property owners will also be required to

prove ownership of the house and tax compliance. There are 2 options for the completion of the necessary works: (1) Property owner arranges a contractor or (2) Local Authority/AHB engages a contractor. If the cost of repairs is less than or equal to €10,000 the minimum duration of lease is 10 years and the offset to be cleared by year 8; if the cost of repairs is greater than €10,000 and less than €20,000 the minimum duration of lease is 15 years with offset to be cleared by year 12; if cost of repairs is in excess of €20,000 the minimum duration of lease is 20 years with offset to be clear by year 15.

Once a lease agreement is signed the Local Authority/AHB becomes the landlord and not the owner. Should the owner require the property back before the end of lease term, there will be a claw-back clause included in lease agreement to ensure the value of the works already paid for by the Local Authority/AHB is repaid. Should the owner wish to sell the property during the term, he or she can on the condition that the lease agreement is transferred to the new owner and the Local Authority/AHB are notified in advance.

- (d) To whom and where may an interested property owner in the above initiatives, register an expression of interest?

As the scheme is being piloted in Carlow and Waterford Local Authorities and is not due to go live nationally until April 2017, property owners in County Monaghan can forward an expression of interest in writing marked "Repair and Leasing Initiative" to the Housing Section in Monaghan County Council.

Buy and Renewal Initiative

- (a) The details of each scheme

Minister Coveney is introducing a new funding scheme to support Councils and Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) to purchase and renew dwellings in need of remediation, and make them available for social housing use. There will be Twenty Five Million Euros available nationally for the Buy and Renewal Initiative in 2017 rising to Fifty Million Euros in 2018. Councils and AHBs have been buying second hand housing in recent times to increase the number of social housing units. This new initiative will focus on an area of acquisitions that avoids direct competition with private purchasers for good quality housing stock. It also taps into a potential supply of housing that may be sitting vacant. Monaghan County Council hopes to avail of the scheme when it becomes available nationally however no commencement date for the scheme is available at present.

- (b) What is involved in each initiative for the property owner/Monaghan County Council?

This 'Buy and Renewal Initiative' will also be complementary to the new 'Repair & Leasing Initiative' that the Minister announced in Rebuilding Ireland. It will mean that Councils and AHBs can approach owners of vacant, privately-owned houses in need of repair/remediation, with the option to either lease/repair the housing unit, or to buy and repair/remediate the unit.

- (c) The terms and conditions of each scheme

The property must be vacant for at least 2 years. Proof of Vacancy is required. The property must be in an area where there is a demand for social housing.

- (d) To whom and where may an interested property owner in the above initiatives, register an expression of interest?

Property owners in County Monaghan can forward an expression of interest in writing marked "Buy and Renewal" to the Housing Section in Monaghan County Council.

Cllr S. Coyle asked:

3. When does Monaghan County Council expect the appointment of a permanent Chief Fire Officer to the county?

Reply: The Public Appointments Service have interviewed for the post and recommended a candidate for appointment as Chief Fire Officer. The Chief Executive will notify the members when a start date has been agreed with the candidate, in due course.

4. What changes in rateable valuations will result in County Monaghan from the Valuation Office's review of property in the County Monaghan and how many property/businesses can expect decreases/ increases in their rates demand from Monaghan County Council resulting from the review?

Reply: The valuation of property for rates purposes is carried out by the Valuation Office. Monaghan County Council has not received notification of when the general revaluation of commercial property in the county will take place. The impact of any future revaluation on individual properties is not known by Monaghan County Council but there will be no impact on the overall amount of rates to be raised as this is determined by the difference between expenditure and income in the annual budget.

Cllr C. Carthy asked:

5. What safety measures are planned for the N2 through Co. Monaghan with the funds allocated from TII for 2017?

Reply: Roadplan Consulting Engineers are finalising their N2 road safety study and it is intended to bring the findings of this report to the members of the Carrickmacross/ Castleblaney Municipal District in February.

6. Has Monaghan County Council applied for additional funding from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government to deal with the significant increase of homelessness in Co. Monaghan over the last 12 months?

Reply: The level of funding provided from the department in 2016 was € 80,000. This is provided through the Regional Homeless Forum, co-ordinated by Louth County Council. In the event of additional funding being required this will be secured through the regional budget.

7. How many private houses/apartments were purchased by Monaghan County Council in 2016?

Reply: In 2016 Monaghan County Council considered approximately 300 houses that were potentially available to purchase before selecting approximately 100 houses for inspection prior to making offers. The Council made offers on 95 houses 48 of which were accepted in 2016 and resulted in contracts for 45 houses being signed. The Council received keys for 27 of the 45 houses in 2016 and will receive the keys for the balance of 18 houses shortly.

Cllr J. Crowe asked:

8. Will Monaghan County Council consider replacing a skid path at Ballinacarry Bridge on the N53 in the interest of safety to motorists?

Reply: Roads Section will raise this matter with the TII Safety Inspector.

9. Does Monaghan County Council have any update on the progression of the realignment of the Ballinacarry Bridge?

Reply: There is no funding available for this scheme in 2017; Roads section will discuss the progression of the project with the TII Regional Manager.

10. In comparison to accidents on the N2, will Monaghan County Council investigate the accident counts on the four 2+1 pilot road schemes, of which the Castleblayney by pass on the N2 was one of the four chosen by the NRA.

Reply: Monaghan County Council has referred this question to the TII for their response.

11. When is it proposed to start and finish construction on the eight social housing units earmarked for Bree, Castleblayney?

Reply: Monaghan County Council has appointed a Design Team to prepare tender documents for the proposed 8 no houses at Bree, Castleblayney. Due to changes in the Building Regulations the Council is required to appoint Design Certifiers and an Assigned Certifier to certify compliance with the Building Regulations and a Building Services Consultant for the detailed design required for the building drawings and Building Energy Rating compliance documents. The building drawings, Building Energy Rating compliance documents and detailed cost plan will be ready to submit for Department approval in April 2017 following which invitations to tender will be issued in May 2017. Allowing for an adequate tender return period, evaluation, recommendation and further approval by the Department, notification, standstill period, contractor getting bond etc. the commencement date could be as late as Quarter 3 of 2017 with a completion date of Quarter 3 of 2018.

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

12. For the purpose of 'future proofing' for additional utility requirements in years to come by providing spare capacity, has consideration been given by this Council to have ducting installed during excavation works required along 9km of road in Monaghan and Clones during the water mains replacement project due to commence in March?

Reply: There is no funding provision in 2017 for the provision of ducting along the R212 in the 9km section of roadway been excavated during water mains replacement.

13. Will the Planning Section provide a public clinic opportunity to town centre property owners who may consider availing of the pilot scheme that will encourage residential occupancy in town and village centres?

Reply: The Planning Section operates public clinics every Wednesday morning to facilitate pre planning discussions with the public. In addition the Planners are available every Tuesday and Thursday morning by telephone, between 09:30 am to 11:00 am, to discuss planning matters.

Individuals wishing to discuss this scheme should contact the Planning Section during these times.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

14. How many septic tanks have been inspected by this Council to date, what has been the results of these inspections. Have we any idea how many people availed of the grant aid to upgrade their waste water treatment systems?

Reply: The National Inspection Plan sets out each year the number of inspections of Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems to be undertaken by each Water Services Authority. Following inspection, a person receives either a Notice of Compliance or an Advisory Notice outlining a list of measures to be undertaken by the owner. Subject to a person meeting all qualifying criteria the Water Services Authority may pay a grant to a person who carries out repairs, upgrades or replaces a septic tank or other domestic waste water treatment system. The table below is a breakdown of inspections to date.

Year	Number of inspections	In progress	Compliance Notices	Advisory Notices	Grants
2013	4	-	2	2	
2014	47	-	29	18	3
2015	33	-	23	10	5
2016	34	6	19	9	1
TOTAL	118		71	39	9

15. How many claims for personal injury have been made in the last 2 years against Monaghan County Council including the 3 Municipal District Councils. What were the nature of these claims, what is the breakdown per area, and how much has been paid out if that figure is available?

Reply: The total number of claims made against Monaghan County Council in respect of 2015 and 2016 for Personal Injury are 34 claims. The nature of these claims involved trips and slips on footpaths, road traffic accidents, potholes and signage defect. The breakdown - Monaghan Municipal – 17, Carrickmacross/Castleblayney – 9 and Ballybay Clones - 8. A total of €20,699.10 has been paid out to date.

16. How many claims for damage to motor vehicles have been made against Monaghan County Council as a result of poor road repair etc, in the last 3 years? How much has been paid out as a result of these claims?

Reply: For the period 2014 -2016 Monaghan County Council received 61 claims for damages to motor vehicles resulting from road defects. Total number of 40 claims have been settled to the value of €16,246, liability was denied on 20 claims leaving a balance of 1 claim to be finalised.

18. Notices of Motion:

Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr Connolly seconded

- 1. That Monaghan County Council demands of the Minister for Social Protection, Leo Varadkar T.D. and the government the immediate reversal of the proposed changes to the Rural Social Scheme, to a maximum of 2 terms of 3 years, as the changes will have a hugely negative impact on a scheme for under employed farmers and their communities, financially, economically and socially.*

Following a short debate on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr C. Carthy proposed, Cllr Crowe seconded

- 2. We call on Monaghan County Council (in relation to illegal practices of Chinese organ trafficking):*
 - To call on the Irish government to ratify, as soon as possible, the Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs, which was adopted by the Council of Europe on 9 July 2014, in order to criminalise illegal organ transplantations. (The Irish Government has already signed this convention, but is yet to ratify it).*
 - To call on the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs committee to follow through on the pledge made by the Oireachtas Sub Committee on Human Rights to "investigate to the maximum extent possible", persistent, credible reports of forced organ harvesting and other severe human rights abuses imposed on Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience in China.*
 - To call on the Chinese Government to end its practice of forced live organ harvesting of prisoners of conscience and release all illegally detained Falun Gong practitioners in China.*

Following a short debate on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr S. Conlon proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded

- 3. That this Council considers Action No 153 of the recently launched Action Plan for Rural Ireland in relation to the development of the 'Ireland's Lakelands' brand as a separate proposition to sit alongside the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East.*

In proposing the motion Cllr Conlon made reference to the establishment of a Tourism Committee by the Council and he submitted a further motion in this regard. The Meetings Administrator advised that the Council could only consider notice of motions that had been included on the agenda.

Cllr Conlon's original motion was put to the meeting and agreed.

18. Notices of Motion (contd):

Cllrs N. Keelan proposed, Cllr Carthy seconded

4. *That Monaghan County Council supports the campaign by Cystic Fibrosis sufferers and their families to have the Drug Orkambie available on the general medical card and the long term illness scheme. This Council calls on the Minister for Health Mr. Simon Harris TD to ensure this drug is made available as soon as possible on the aforementioned schemes.*

Following a short debate on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr Keelan requested that the resolution be circulated to all local authorities.

19. Votes of sympathy/congratulations.

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

- Cllr Hugh McElvaney on the death of his brother-in-law, Frank McFadden, Rockcorry, RIP
- Samantha Boyle, Council employee and the McGovern Family, Clones on the death of her mother Marie McGovern, RIP.

Cllr McElvaney thanked the members for the vote of sympathy and extended thanks on behalf of his sister Bridie to the Council members and officials that had attended the wake/funeral.

20. Conferences/Training

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Council be represented at the following conferences by the members listed.

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
AILG	National Planning Framework	Hotel Kilmore, Cavan	7 th February 2017	Cllr. C. Carthy Cllr. N. Keelan Cllr. P. McNally Cllr. B. McKenna Cllr. J. Crowe
AILG	National Planning Framework	Dooley's Hotel, Waterford City,	11 th February 2017	Cllr. S. Coyle Cllr. C. Bennett Cllr. S. Conlon Cllr. D. Maxwell Cllr. C. McPhillips Cllr. P. Connolly
Celtic Conferences	'Constituents' Tax Entitlements & Reliefs'	The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork	24 th – 26 th February 2017	Cllr. S. Coyle
Centre for Cross Border Studies Annual Conference	'Building and Maintaining Relationships Across & Beyond these Islands After the Referendum	Armagh City Hotel, Armagh	23 rd – 24 th February 2017	Cllr. B. McKenna Cllr. P. Treanor

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The Cathaoirleach reminded the members that Minister Heather Humphreys was meeting the Council at 6.00 pm in relation to the North/South Interconnector. Following that meeting there would be a Civic Reception for the Donaghmoynne Ladies Football Team at 7 p.m.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____
