

**Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 6 March, 2017 at 10.00 a.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.

At the outset the Cathaoirleach informed the members that he had received three notices of Urgent Business, as follows:

**Notice No. 1 in the name of Cllr P. Connolly**

*That in view of the impact that Brexit will have on the people of Ireland and more particularly on border communities and the fact that each County Council have within their gift the ability to establish, under section 4.3 of the Local Government Act 2001, an SPC “where it may be necessary in some limited and exceptional circumstances to form an ad hoc or specialist committee” that Monaghan County Council take the necessary steps to set up a dedicated EU SPC.*

*A number of members objected to this proposal being taken as urgent business. The Cathaoirleach put the proposal to the meeting. A recorded vote resulted as follows:*

**For:** Cllrs Aughey, Connolly, Coyle, McNally, O’Hanlon and S. Treanor. **Total 6**

**Against:** Cllrs Bennett, Campbell, Conlon, Crowe, Gilliland, Keelan, Maxwell, McKenna and P. Treanor. **Total 9**

**Abstentions** - Nil.

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion defeated as it had not obtained the support of at least one half of the membership of the Council.

**Notice No 2 in the names of Cllr. Seamus Treanor and Cllr. Raymond Aughey:**

*That we call on the Dublin North East HSE regional health board to immediately carry out the repairs that are needed on Oriel House, and re-open it to the displaced residents, and also to make available the report which HIQA used to close this facility.*

The Cathaoirleach put the proposal to the meeting. A recorded vote resulted as follows:

**For:** Cllrs Aughey, Bennett, Campbell, Conlon, Connolly Coyle, Crowe, Gilliland, Keelan, Maxwell, McKenna, McNally, O’Hanlon and P. Treanor and S. Treanor. **Total 15**

**Against:** Nil.

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal carried.

### **Notice No. 3 in the names of Cllr S. Coyle and Cllr P. McNally**

*That Monaghan County Council demands of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Michael Creed TD, and the relevant government Ministers to intervene to expedite the immediate payment of all outstanding GLAS & AEOS payments to the affected farmers.*

The Cathaoirleach put the proposal to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously. He stated that he would take the urgent business at the end of the meeting.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Standing Orders and Procedures Committee would be held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 at 9.30 a.m. to discuss the matter of proposals being put forward as urgent business when they should have been included as motions on the Council agenda.

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

##### **(i) Minutes of Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017**

*On the proposal of Cllr Crowe seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017, be confirmed.*

#### **2. Correspondence.**

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

- Letter from the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Shane Ross TD regarding the Local Improvements Scheme.
- Letter from the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, Simon Coveney, TD regarding the policy of removing households from housing lists on income grounds where they are in temporary employment for less than three years.
- Letter from the Minister for Arts, Heritage Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in relation to the future sustainability of the Post Office Network.
- Letter from the Chief Superintendent confirming that the setting up of a Drugs Unit in the Cavan/Monaghan Garda Division is at an advanced stage.
- Resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD to fund the drug Orkambi to the sufferers of Cystic Fibrosis who request the drug.
- Resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister with responsibility for farm safety to propose that all new farm machinery implements are equipped with a hydraulically driven system as opposed to power take-off shafts in the interest of farm safety.
- Resolution from Sligo County Council calling on the Taoiseach to make a statement setting out a work programme on how it will implement the Statement of Principle in the Programme for Partnership Government relating to Credit Unions.
- Resolution from Tipperary County Council calling on the Minister for Transport to remove the current uncertainty in relation to existing Bus Eireann services throughout the country as soon as possible.

- Email acknowledgement from the Office of An Taoiseach in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the inclusion of local authority representation on the All Island Forum on Brexit.
- Email from Brendan Smyth, TD enclosing response to Parliamentary Question relating to the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- Email from Brendan Smyth, TD acknowledging Council motion regarding the Post Office Network.

The following additional correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Justice acknowledging the Council's resolution regarding the oversight role for State Coroners.
- Email from the Office of Minister Denis Naughten acknowledging the Council's resolution regarding solar panels.
- Email from Niamh Smyth, TD circulating response to Parliamentary Question in relation to the Tenant Purchase Scheme and the exclusion of Part V tenants from the scheme.
- Email from Niamh Smyth, TD circulating response to Parliamentary Question enquiring if the realignment works between Castleblayney and Carrickmacross can be considered for additional capital funding.

**Proposals arising out of correspondence:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that Monaghan County Council express its total disappointment at the allocation to County Monaghan of roads funding for 2017, receiving less than one fifth of the required 40 million euro to repair our atrocious road network across County Monaghan. We request the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Shane Ross TD to make an immediate allocation to County Monaghan for L.I.S lanes, due to the rural nature of the County.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that this Council call on Minister Shane Ross TD to immediately introduce a special fund to allow us to commence our LIS scheme independent of our roads funding.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that the motion calling on Minister Simon Coveney, TD to review the Tenant Purchase Scheme to allow tenants in Part V housing purchase their homes be included in this review as part of the submissions.*

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr McKenna, it was agreed that we invite the Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge, Feargal Mac Thrèinfhir and Niall O'Connor, Oifigeach Gaeilge of the County Council, to do a presentation at our next meeting, on the progress being made on promoting the Irish language in County Monaghan.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that Failte Ireland be invited to give a presentation to the Council at the April meeting.*

**3. Preparation of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 – 2025.**

Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner outlined to the members the process involved in the preparation of a new County Development Plan for the period 2019 – 2025. He explained that

a Planning Authority is legally obliged to make a new Plan every six years. The current Plan expires on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The preparation of the new Plan will take two years to complete and the Council must commence the process of delivering it on or before the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Mr. Hughes advised that the Council will commence an initial eight week period of public consultation during which it will conduct public consultation events and meetings in order to engage with as many people as possible to hear their opinions.

He stated that the new Plan will have the potential to directly impact on the quality of life of every single person in County Monaghan. It directs the provision of important infrastructure and influences capital investment by both public and private sectors. It will detail how the needs of our growing population will be met and how our natural and built heritage will be protected for future generations. He encouraged members of the public to become involved in shaping the future development of the county.

Following his presentation, Mr. Hughes responded to queries from the members.

The Chief Executive stated that the consultation process for the draft County Development Plan, which is about to commence, is crucially important for the future of the county. He called on the public to engage at every level. He referred to the PPN which he said was a very strong representative body for the Community Sector. He complimented the staff in the Planning Section for the Issues Paper, which he stated was an excellent document to commence the consultation process with.

*On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr McNally, it was agreed that this Council calls on all border Counties (Chief Executive's and Cathaoirleach's) to meet in relation to addressing a meeting with the Minister for Transport for additional funding for our road network.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that this Council includes as an item for consideration the issue of Brexit on the monthly meeting agenda.*

#### **4. Section 183 – Disposal of land at Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross**

The members considered the Section 183 Notice and report which had been circulated to the members in advance of the meeting.

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services referred to the report before the members proposing to dispose of 0.2442 hectares (0.6033 acres) at Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross, for the consideration stated in the Section 183 Notice. An independent valuation had been obtained for the site in question and he stated that the matter had been considered by the Corporate Policy Group and they had recommended the disposal to the Council.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr O'Hanlon informed the meeting that he had been approached approximately eight months ago by two men from the South Monaghan area that had strong local connections. They indicated that they wished to move their business to County Monaghan and intended to bring circa sixty jobs to the county with the intention of increasing to 80+ jobs over the next few years. He stated that discussions had taken place with Council officials on a number of occasions over the past number of months.

*Cllr O’Hanlon proposed that the Council approve the disposal of the site at Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice dated 20 February, 2017. Cllr Campbell and McNally jointly seconded the proposal.*

Cllr Carthy proposed that the Council reject the disposal of the site and defer consideration of the motion to another day. Cllr Keelan seconded Cllr Carthy’s proposal.

Cllr Carthy stated that the Council were selling off the jewel in the crown of Council land. He stated that there were a number of vacant buildings/lands in Carrickmacross that would suffice for this purpose. The company could easily build on another piece of land. He stated that the site in question had been ear-marked for a site for a swimming pool when approval is forthcoming in the future. He was not opposed to the jobs coming to Carrickmacross but he was opposed to the disposal of the prime site. Cllr Keelan concurred with Cllr Carthy that there was other suitable land available in the vicinity for this purpose.

A lengthy debate took place to which a number of members contributed.

The Cathaoirleach put the proposal to the meeting. A recorded vote was taken which resulted as follows:

**For:** Cllrs Aughey, Campbell, Connolly, Coyle, Gilliland, Maxwell, McElvaney, McNally, O’Hanlon and S. Treanor. **Total 10**

**Against:** Cllrs Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Crowe, Keelan, McKenna and P. Treanor. **Total 7**

**Abstentions** - Nil.

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal carried.

The Chief Executive stated that the proposal would not have come before the members unless the Executive believed it was the proper decision for the county. He wanted the message to get out that the County Monaghan was open for business and that the Council would welcome all businesses wanting to invest here.

*On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Carthy, it was agreed that this Council will agree to put together a register of relevant zoned lands, both publicly and privately owned, in each municipal area of County Monaghan with a view to presenting the information to perspective businesses looking to invest, relocate or establish themselves in the County. (Note: The Industrial Sites.)*

## **5. To receive Monaghan County Council Review on the 2015 NOAC Performance Indicators**

The members considered the Council’s Review on the 2015 NOAC Performance Indicators. Mr. A. King, Director of Services outlined the main objectives of the review which set out to compare the Council’s performance (i) against the highest and lowest performers nationally; (ii) against similar indicators in previous years (iii) on the basis of both of these to establish targets for 2017 and against similar size counties classified as level 5 local authorities. He stated that the report indicated a strong performance by the Council with above average performance in most indicators.

Mr. King responded to queries from the members in relation to the indicators.

The members agreed that the report be noted.

**6. To adopt the Monaghan County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan 2017**

The members considered the Council's Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2017 which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The Plan identifies the services to be provide and the standards to which they are to be delivered, monitored and evaluated so as to ensure that the objectives for the optimum delivery of services is achieved. The plan provides a clear focus to enable the elected members and staff of the Council to work together to develop and improve the services that are delivered to our citizens.

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Aughey it was agreed that the Monaghan County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2017 be adopted.*

**7. To receive Audit Committee Annual Review of performance and effectiveness – 2016.**

The members noted the Audit Committee Annual Review of Performance and Effectiveness for 2016 which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting:

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Gilliland agreed that the Report, as circulated, be noted.*

**8. To approve minutes and recommendations from CPG meetings**

- (i) Minutes and recommendations from CPG meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017
- (ii) Minutes and recommendations from CPG meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McKenna it was agreed that the minutes of the CPG meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McKenna it was agreed that the Council accept the invitation from the Fort Augustus Irish Descendents Prince Edward Island to attend the Annual Settlers Day Celebrations from 24<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2017. It was further agreed that the Council would be represented by the Cathaoirleach and an official.*

**9. To approve Museum Policy Documents**

The members considered the following Museum policy documents which had been discussed by the SPC and the CPG and circulated with the agenda for the meeting:

- (i) Disposal Policy
- (ii) Loans Policy
- (iii) Exhibitions Policy
- (iv) Disaster Plan
- (v) Collections Policy

It was noted that the adoption of these policy documents was necessary to meet the standards required to achieve full accreditation status under the Heritage Council's Museum Standards Programme for Ireland.

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that the Museum Policy documents outlined above be approved.*

#### **10. To receive Management Report – February 2017**

The members noted the Management Report for the month of February 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 Campbell, seconded by Cllr Maxwell, it was agreed that the roads safety audit presentation on the N2 Road by Roadplan Consultants be given to all Councillors when fully completed.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the consultation process being facilitated by the Creative Ireland Team is inclusive of public and elected members participation and accordingly notified and advertised.*

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

The members noted the reports from Cllrs Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Crowe, Gilliland, Keelan, McPhillips and O'Hanlon in relation to their attendance at the following conferences/training events:

- Waterways Ireland Conference, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.
- AILG Module 5 2016 (Emergency Planning) Sligo
- AILG Module 1 2017 (National Planning Framework) Cavan.
- AILG Module 1 2017 (National Planning Framework) Waterford
- AILG Module 6 2016 (Regional Assemblies) Ballinasloe

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

Mr E. O'Sullivan, Chief Executive informed the members of the following matters:

**Local Enterprise Week** was taking place from 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> March and a number of events had been organised.

**Brexit** – The EBR is preparing a position paper on the challenges and opportunities arising out of the Brexit in terms of the entire border corridor, which will be presented at a seminar in the near future. The document will be used to lobby the Government.

**Public Sector duty** – Monaghan County Council had been selected as a pilot project. The pilot project will examine current policy and practice in Monaghan County Council in the area of human rights and equality and identify gaps therein.

**New York** – The Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive will visit New York for the St. Patrick's Day celebrations where they had been invited to march with the Monaghan Society of New York. They also had a number of meetings planned with Failte Ireland, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in New York.

**Latlorcan Glen** – The purchase of 17 houses and 20 acres of land at Latlorcan Glen, Monaghan by Monaghan County Council had been finalised the previous week.

**13. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017.**

Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017 were responded to by the relevant officials.

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

The members noted the minutes of the meeting with Minister Heather Humphreys held on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 in relation to the An Bord Pleanála decision on the North-South Interconnector project which were circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

A letter from Ballybay-Clones Municipal District regarding this matter was circulated at the meeting. Also circulated

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council commends Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD, Brendan Smith TD and Niamh Smyth TD, Senators Robbie Gallagher and Diarmuid Wilson on their support of a motion in Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann demanding the government immediately commission an independent report, incorporating international industry expertise to:*

- *Examine the technical feasibility and cost of undergrounding the North-South interconnector, taking into account the most recent developments in technology and experience gained from existing projects abroad.*
- *Evaluate the potential impacts of both undergrounding and over grounding the North-South interconnector on surrounding areas considering such aspects as its impact on local tourism, health, landscape, agriculture, heritage, etc.*
- *Analyse the real costs to date, and estimated future costs of the current proposed overhead pylon project and ensure that no further work is done on the North-South Interconnector until this analysis and a full community consultation are completed and*
- *Implement its commitment in A Programme for a Partnership Government in relation to better engagement and community consultation about energy policy decisions that affect them.*

*This Council demands an unequivocal commitment from the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD, Ministers Denis Naughten TD, Heather Humphreys TD, Regina Doherty TD, Helen McEntee TD, and Damien English TD, that the Oireachtas motion is implemented in full and that all works by Eirgrid/SONI on the North South Interconnector are stopped immediately.*

**15. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project.**

There was no new information available on this project.



**16. To receive briefing from the Northern and Western Regional Assembly on the work of the Assembly and the National Planning Framework.**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Denis Kelly, Senior Planner from the Northern and Western Regional Assembly. Mr. Kelly was deputising for David Minton Director who had another engagement that day.

Mr. Kelly gave a detailed presentation to the members outlining the work of the NWRA which included the following:

- To create better places by ensuring the region adopts effective planning and economic development policies centred on sustainable and resilient growth;
- Enhance its competitiveness by optimising all exchequer and EU funding with local and regional partners to ensure appropriate levels of investment and infrastructure are secured for the region and
- The NWRA acts as a platform for collaboration, knowledge transfer and ultimately regional economic development

He also referred to the National Planning Framework which is currently being developed to succeed the National Spatial Strategy. It will provide a framework for national planning, for the next twenty years, pulling together relevant Government policies and investment on national and regional development. It will have a focus on economic development and investment in housing, water services, transport, communications, energy, health and education infrastructure. Closing date for submissions is 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2017.

Mr. Kelly outlined the challenges facing the region over the next few years. He referred specifically to the need to improve infrastructure to the North and West of the country. The N2/A5 is one of the main priorities for this region. The development of the Ulster Canal would also result in significant economic benefit for County Monaghan in particular.

Following his presentation, Mr. Kelly responded to queries from the elected members.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Kelly for his presentation.

**17. Questions:**

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

1. In view of the fact that INTEREG funding of €4,950,672 has now been confirmed for the Smithboro to Middletown section of the Ulster Canal Greenway

- (a) What steps are being taken to establish ownership of the route along the canal?

***Reply: Monaghan County Council has already carried out extensive research into the ownership of the route, including land searches and site visits. Much of the canal itself is already in Council ownership.***

- (b) An update on efforts to recruit a project manager and finance administrator for the project.

**Reply:** Following discussions with the SEUPB, a Project Manager has been appointed and is due to commence work on the project within the next two weeks. The administrative position will be filled shortly.

- (c) When is it hoped to commence work on the project?

**Reply:** Work has already commenced. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is underway and will go to public consultation shortly. Environmental Impact studies will be commissioned this spring, as will the preliminaries such as topographical surveys, Stage I road safety audit, geophysical studies to assess ground conditions. A preliminary design is due to be completed by end 2017.

- (c) What is the target date to have this project completed?

**Reply:** March 2020

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

2. To ask Monaghan County Council that in view of the recent announcement by the Department of Housing that private developers are to be offered sites controlled by Local Authorities, Offices of Public Works and other State Agencies in a bid to speed up housing output and tackle rising house prices have Monaghan Council County identified any such lands that may be offered to private developers under this scheme?

**Reply:** Any land that Monaghan County Council has in its ownership that is suitable for housing will be developed by Monaghan County Council. Monaghan County Council is in the process of purchasing land for the purpose of providing housing in Monaghan Town and has so far been unsuccessful in a bid to buy land in Carrickmacross. No information has been provided regarding the availability of any other land from other State Agencies.

**Cllr C. Carthy asked:**

3. Has this Council received any update on the rollout of broadband in rural parts of the county considering Co. Monaghan has been noted as the 4<sup>th</sup> worst county for broadband connection in recent reports?

**Reply:** The procurement process for the Rural Broadband Plan is underway, with an outcome not anticipated until late-summer 2017. Procurement commenced on 22 December 2015 and 5 consortia responded to first phase by 31 March 2016. Over 30 companies were involved and 3 consortia were shortlisted for detailed financial and technical negotiation. This procurement competition is a complex and highly competitive process, which must comply with Procurement and State Aid rules, to avoid legal or State Aid challenge.

4. What plans are in place at a national level to increase mobile coverage for phones in rural parts of Co. Monaghan?

**Reply:** The Programme for a Partnership Government gave a commitment to establish a Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce to identify immediate solutions to broadband/mobile phone coverage deficits and to investigate how better services could

be provided to consumers prior to full build and rollout of the network planned under the National Broadband Plan State intervention (NBP).

While the telecommunications industry continues to play a vital role in the economy, it is currently worth over €12 billion annually and employs approximately 120,000 people - the Government identified the need for the Taskforce to examine solutions to address broadband/mobile phone coverage deficits and to identify tangible actions that can be taken to improve the quality of broadband and mobile voice services being provided to citizens across Ireland.

The Taskforce report outlines the issues considered and sets out its recommendations and actions to alleviate barriers to mobile reception and broadband access. The Taskforce recognises that there has been significant progress made to date in this area and that a number of the actions are already in the process of being brought to fruition. However, significant coverage gaps remain which the Taskforce believe can be somewhat mitigated through the timely implementation of the actions contained in the final report.

**Cllr C. Carthy asked:**

5. Would the Local Enterprise Office/Monaghan County Council consider adding an access ramp to the CTek building in Carrickmacross to run in line with the steps that join the site to the Civic Offices site?

**Reply:** There are no plans to provide a ramp at this point. The steps are there to accommodate occasional overflow parking requirements to the C-Tek 1 building.

**Cllr J. Crowe asked:**

6. Will Monaghan County Council address the concerns expressed by the local residents, local farmers, visiting relatives and frequent daily users of the right turn off the N2 for Kinnigin at Carrickagarvan, Castleblayney, who demand that the total lack of any meaningful road markings and appropriate road signage that would take account of the safety of drivers and passengers, having to take a right turn off the N2 at junction L7840 be addressed immediately. While other possible changes to the overall design element of the N2 are under consideration by the relevant authorities. A petition has been left in with 1000 signatures to the roads section Monaghan County Council?

**Reply:** Monaghan County Council has commissioned Roadplan Consulting Engineers to carry out a safety study of the N2 between Castleblayney and Aclint. Part of Roadplan's brief is to review the safety issues at junctions. Roadplan made an interim presentation to the Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February and will be undertaking further work at the Kinnegan location before finalising the study. The outcome of this study along with any recommendations will be brought to the Council Members in due course.

7. How many Council social houses are vacant in the Castleblayney area and how many houses are the Council planning to buy in the same area for 2017?

**Reply:** There are currently 4 houses vacant in the Castleblayney area. Three have been offered to housing applicants. One will be offered next week. Monaghan County Council purchased 9 houses in Castleblayney in 2016 and subject to funding approval and in

response to demand would hope to purchase a similar number in 2017 however the number of houses available on the open market is limited and is reducing and the Department has indicated that priority will be given to funding new build projects ahead of house purchases in 2017 e.g. 8 houses to be constructed at Bree, Castleblayney.

**Cllr J. Crowe asked:**

8. How many people are on the housing list for Castleblayney and what is the waiting time for people to be rehoused?

**Reply:** The number of housing applicants who have selected Castleblayney as an area of choice is 211. The average waiting time of those applicants on the waiting list to date is broken up by household type as follows:

95 applicants – 1 bedroom – 40 months  
77 applicants – 2 bedroom – 43 months  
27 applicants – 3 bedroom – 32 months  
12 applicants – 4 bedroom – 19 months

9. What plans have the Council in regards to Sruth An luir housing estate, Oram in regards to the taking in charge of this unfinished estate?

**Reply:** The Planning Authority has finalised tenders in respect of re-surfacing works to the estate and works are scheduled to be carried out in March 2017. These works are to be funded by the bond.

The Planning Authority does however highlight that no formal request has been made yet from the residents for the estate to be taken in charge; this would need carried out in the first instance by residents so the Planning Authority can formally commence the taking in charge process.

**Cllr R. Aughey asked:**

10. Can Monaghan County Council confirm and outline what plans and actions they will be undertaking to promote Organ Donation Week 1st to 8th of April 2017?

**Reply:** Whilst this is a function of the Irish Kidney Association and the Health Promotion Unit of the HSE, Monaghan County Council will promote awareness of the initiative amongst its staff, elected members and the various Council meeting via the Council's Intranet and social media during this period.

11. Can Monaghan County Council confirm the status and completion date of the consultation review of the safety aspects of the existing N2 between Ardee and Monaghan?

**Reply:** A presentation of the preliminary study was made to the Carrickmacross/ Castleblayney MD on 27th February by Roadplan Consulting Engineers. Following on from this presentation Roadplan were instructed to carry out further analysis at 2 junctions on the Northern end of the study area. This analysis is ongoing but is expected to be completed in March.

**Cllr R. Aughey asked:**

12. Can Monaghan County Council confirm the status and completion date for the N2 Monaghan to Emyvale Improvement Phase 3 scheme of land acquisition and finalisation of tender documentation?

**Reply: The process of land acquisition for this scheme is ongoing. Tender documents have been finalised and Monaghan County Council is ready to go to tender for this project. Monaghan County Council is awaiting approval from T.I.I. to proceed to tender.**

**18. Notices of Motion:**

**Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr Connolly seconded and it was agreed**

1. *That Monaghan County Council demands of the Minister for Health, Simon Harris T.D. the government and the H.S.E., the immediate provision of an "Out of Hours" psychiatric service for children and adolescents, in County Monaghan, who are in severe mental distress, as this is an essential service for the wellbeing of young people, their families and communities.*

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

2. *With the prospect of this local authority being incorporated into a new regional tourism location as per Action Plan 153 of the recently launched Action Plan for Rural Ireland, that this Council establish a Tourism Committee that will ensure the consideration of this action, along with a variety of other actions that encourages Council and stakeholder collaboration with a view to ensuring the voice and input of all relevant parties, including elected members, is included to facilitate optimum outcomes.*

Cllr Conlon noted that the Council had requested a presentation from Failte Ireland at a future meeting.

**Cllr P. Connolly, Cllr B. McKenna seconded, and it was agreed,**

3. *That in view of the impact on the people of Monaghan, Castleblayney and Carrickmacross, particularly morning commuters, that the proposed withdrawal of the Derry/Dublin Express bus will have that Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Transport, Bus Eireann and the NTA to ensure that this service will continue to provide a service on this route and the towns in this part of rural Ireland.*

**Cllr B. McKenna proposed, Cllr P. Connolly seconded and it was agreed,**

4. *For the purpose of protecting the vital Dublin-Derry Bus Eireann transport link with stops in County Monaghan, this Council seeks a meeting with Minister for Transport Shane Ross TD and relevant stakeholders.*

## 19. Votes of sympathy/congratulations.

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

- The family of Ballybay native, Reverend Bill Clarke who died recently in his 93<sup>rd</sup> year.
- Cllr Seamus Treanor, his wife Sheila and extended family on the death of Sheila's sister Marie O'Neill, RIP.

It was agreed that a vote of congratulations would be extended to Cllr Sean Gilliland and his wife Anne on the birth of their baby daughter Grace.

## 20. Conferences/Training

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

| Promoting Authority | Subject/Theme                             | Venue  | Dates  | Members Selected  |
|---------------------|---|--|--|---|
| CCMA                | 'Collaborate Locally to Compete Globally' | The Riverside Park Hotel, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford | 29 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2017 | Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon<br>Cllr. B. McKenna   |
| AILG                | Spring Seminar                            | TBC  | 6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2017   | Cllr. C. Carthy<br>Cllr. B. McKenna<br>Cllr. J. Crowe<br>Cllr. C. Bennett<br>Cllr. N. Keelan<br>Cllr. P. Treanor<br>Cllr. P. McNally<br>Cllr. S. Coyle<br>Cllr. P. Connolly<br>Cllr. D. Maxwell<br>Cllr. S. Gilliland |

### Urgent Business:

#### (i) Cllr. S. Treanor proposed, Cllr. Aughey seconded, and it was resolved:

*That we call on the Dublin North East HSE regional health board to immediately carry out the repairs that are needed on Oriel House, and re-open it to the displaced residents, and also to make available the report which HIQA used to close this facility.*

**Urgent Business (contd):**

**(ii) Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr P. McNally seconded, and it was resolved:**

*That Monaghan County Council demands of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Michael Creed TD, and the relevant government Ministers to intervene to expedite the immediate payment of all outstanding GLAS & AEOS payments to the affected farmers.*

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

\_\_\_\_\_  
Meetings Administrator

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

\_\_\_\_\_