

Municipal District of Monaghan.

Minutes of Meeting of the Municipal District of Monaghan held in the Boardroom, Mtek 1 Building, Knockaconny on Monday, 15th December, 2014 at 3.30pm.

Cllr. Sean Conlon presided.

Present: Cllrs. David Maxwell, Seamus Treanor, Paudge Connolly, Robbie Gallagher and Brian McKenna.

In Attendance: Mr. Donal McElwain, Municipal District Co-Ordinator, Ms. Bernie McElvaney, Senior Staff Officer, Dermot Deeney, Executive Engineer, Ms. Bernie McMahan, Staff Officer.

Apologies : John Murray

Cllr. Conlon welcomed all to the meeting.

It was agreed that urgent business submitted by Cllr. Connolly would be discussed with the motions later in the meeting.

1. Confirmation of minutes:

On the proposal of Cllr. McKenna, seconded by Cllr. Gallagher, it was agreed that the minutes of the Municipal District of Monaghan meeting held on the 17th November, 2014 be confirmed.

2. Matters arising:

Cllr. Conlon advised the meeting that he had received an email from E-Net confirming that the manhole in Dublin Street would be fixed this week. Mr McElwain stated that E-Net may be removing the chamber altogether but, if this cannot be done before Christmas, the surface will be levelled to ensure the noise is gone. In relation to the manhole at McCarron's pub, Irish Water have given their approval for the Water Section to carry out the relevant works which will be carried out this week.

Cllr. Connolly thanked the executive for the full report circulated on 'Cnoc na Greine' housing development, however took issue with the confidentiality clause as requested by the purchaser. Cllr. McKenna suggested that we write to Enda O Carroll, Solicitor, enquiring if the purchaser can be identified and to clarify the position on complying with the Derelict Notice which has been served. This was seconded by Cllr. Sean Conlon. Mr. McElwain advised the members that once the sale has been completed, the Planning Section will be able to obtain a Site Resolution Plan from the new owner.

Cllr. Conlon stated that he requested a report on potential bye-laws, weight limits on the high volume of lorries travelling down Dublin Street and throughout the town. Mr McElwain advised that the Roads Section have met with the Roads Safety Authority and are putting a plan in place in 2015. A discussion took place on the issue of lorries/buses and it was agreed that a letter should be issued to Bus Eireann requesting them to bypass the town if possible.

Cllr. Gallagher asked has there been a date agreed to meet with the IDA. Cllr. Maxwell responded to say that the IDA will meet with the full Council.

Cllr. Treanor queried if the Council were aware of the purchasers of Forest Walk at Cortolvin. Mr McElwain responded that he did not know but stated that the purchaser will be requested to develop it.

Cllr. Gallagher requested the chair to clarify the free parking period for Christmas. Cllr. Conlon clarified that it is from 12 noon every day from Saturday 20th December to Thursday, 1st January 2015.

Cllr. McKenna stated that he had requested a costing on public lighting along the Greenway from Mr. Murray at a previous meeting of the District. Mr. Deeney advised that it would cost approximately €150,000. It was proposed by Cllr. Maxwell and seconded by Cllr. Treanor that a costing is carried out on the strip from Maurice Grahams to Old Cross Square. However, Mr. McElwain advised the meeting that during construction of the Greenway, an Ecological Survey and a bats study had confirmed that bats will be affected by lighting and therefore lighting may not be possible as they are a protected species. He advised members to think about this before proceeding with a costing of same.

Cllr. Connolly requested 'Free Parking' posters to be erected on all entrances to the town and in addition to shop local support a Buy Irish approach should be encouraged by setting up 'Buy Irish' sections in shops. Mr McElwain confirmed that posters are ready to be erected and stickers ready for all pay parking machines. Cllr Conlon welcomed the initiative – 'Love where you live' which was echoed by all members.

Cllr Treanor raised the issue of foreign nationals arriving at Dublin Airport and their ability to go to the Social Welfare office the next day and obtain assistance. A discussion took place on the issue. Cllr. Gallagher proposed that we write to the Minister for Social Protection to query the situation regarding foreign nationals entering Ireland; specifically their entitlement to social welfare benefits on entering the country. This was seconded by Cllr. Treanor.

3. Application by Monaghan Town Country Music Festival for a derogation from the (Regulation and control of the consumption and possession of intoxicating liquor in public spaces) Bye laws 2014, from the 16th-19th July 2015 to facilitate the Country Music Festival:

This application was proposed by Cllr. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr. Connolly and unanimously agreed.

4. Report from Municipal District Co-Ordinator:

Mr McElwain read his report and Mr. Deeney gave a brief update on roads projects in the District.

Cllr. Connolly queried if there was an update on Latlorcan Estate, however as this had already been dealt with at a previous County Council meeting, it was agreed that this had already been dealt with.

Cllr. Treanor praised the film called 'A minute matters' regarding Disabled Parking Spaces and recognised Cllr. Conlon's input to the making of this film which emphasises the importance of the Disabled Parking Spaces. Mr McElwain stated that the link for the video would be forwarded to the Press.

Cllr. Conlon appealed to the media to encourage the public to take a commonsense approach to disabled spaces, to reflect on the service that is provided and to put themselves in a disabled persons' position and that a minute matters.

It was proposed by Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Cllr. Treanor, that CCTV be investigated for Monaghan town. Cllr. Conlon queried if a mobile CCTV unit could be included in the package applied for with the capacity to install at any particular area to identify litter offenders and anti-social behaviour in residential areas.

Cllr. Gallagher asked if there will be public consultation in relation to the CFRAM study. Mr Mc Elwain responded that it would be advertised in the Local Paper.

Mr McElwain congratulated the Monaghan Has It committee on organising the Christmas Lights switch-on ceremony and said it was a great family night.

5. Questions:

Cllr. B McKenna asked:

What is the delay in having the fence along the realigned N2 at Legacurry reinstated? This fence, which was demolished following the landslide of a barn which the contractor had constructed, has remained so for or over 18 months. When will this fence be re-erected as it is an eyesore and is blight on the excellent work carried out to-date on the realignment?

Response: The repair of this earth bund is an item on the contractor's defects list. The completion of all items on the list is being pursued by the Resident Engineer on phase 4 of the Emyvale Road Re-alignment Contract.

Cllr. R Gallagher asked:

Can the Municipal District give a breakdown of all expenses associated with promoting the Christmas season in Monaghan Town i.e. lights, installation of Christmas tree, switch on ceremony etc?

Response:

Christmas Lighting Expenditure 2014

Christmas Lights, switch on Committee	5,500.00
Rossa Lighting - replacement of lighting	12,355.00
Electric costs (estimated bills since start of yr)	8,000.00
Northern Standard (road closures)	196.00
Answer Energy	15,890.00
MCC Plant & Wages (estimated)	7,000.00
<u>Christmas Tree</u>	<u>800.00</u>
	49,741.00

Can the council outline the reasons for the delay with regard to hedge cutting and trimming around Monaghan Town and when can we expect overgrown hedges to be attended to?

Response: The Road works program was prioritised to get completed on time. Traffic Management Plans are being drawn up for each location and it is expected that the hedge cutting will be completed before the end of January 2015. Critical locations to be prioritised

When can we expect the Clontibret roundabout to be re-landscaped?

Response: It is proposed to seek funding next year for safety upgrades which will include landscaping.

Can the council explore the potential for

a. sponsorship of the roundabouts on the Monaghan bypass?

b. welcome signs on the approach roads to the town?

Response: The Municipal District will be working along with Tidy Towns to seek sponsorship of these roundabouts. The Municipal District will be working with local groups to agree the approach signs to Monaghan Town; signage should reflect the branding for the town and county.

Cllr. S Conlon asked:

Following on from several queries I have been making in reference to the loose road surface utility covers and noise disturbance in Dublin St. and various locations around the town, has a work plan been submitted by the responsible utility companies as to when overdue remedial works will commence?

Response: Three covers were reported. One Water valve cover has been repaired in Dublin Street. Monaghan County Council Water Services has assigned a contractor to repair the Sewerage Manhole cover on the Dublin Road at the junction with the Pound Hill.

E-net has investigated the cover in Dublin St and proposed to totally remove this chamber, 4 to 5 car park spaces will be required to complete these works. E-net to forward a start date.

Can 'children crossing' signs (W 142) be erected at locations in Ard Gleann and Woodview Killygoan where car parking occurs on both sides of the narrow roads which results in very limited view for drivers?

Response: This can be reviewed with the survey of housing estates for the introduction of the reduced speed limits next year.

In a query I have been pursuing since last April regarding improving water pressure and supply efficiencies for dwellings along the Mall Rd. and that the Executive of Monaghan County Council have previously expressed a concern for, what is the timescale for the proposed water main pipe replacement works on the Mall Road under the Water Conservation Stage 3 Rehabilitation Contract. A previous response to a query I presented before the abolishment of Monaghan Town Council stated 'tenders for this contract are being assessed at present and approval to award the contract will be sought from Irish Water in May'. Also, is there a budget allocated for the road overlay works required after the water mains replacement is completed?

Response: Irish Water replied as follows:

Monaghan Co Council appointed Ryan Hanley, Consulting Engineer's on the 30th September 2014 Engineers for the provision of consultancy services (Employer's Representative, Detailed Design, Tender, PSDP, and Contract Administration). This consultants contract was novated to Irish Water on the 21st February 2014 under the item no 467 of Water Services (No.2) Act 2013 (transfer of other Liabilities) Order 2014 (S.I. No.96 of 2014), however no construction contract exists.

The Mall road is part of the proposed works package. Asset Management are currently reviewing the initial scope of the project from a technical and overall business objective perspective. Following

this review process the project can then move through the IW governance process if aligned with the Business objectives related directly to Water.

As the project is currently being reviewed by Irish Water, details on budget and timeline will be available in due course. We will ensure to update once this information is available.

Following on from the installation of a new play park at Killygoan, will a handrail be installed to replace one previously in place at the stepped entrance?

Response: It is proposed to replace this handrail. Quotations have been sought to complete these works.

To enhance road safety at Knockroe Gleann where among the estate 12 houses are Council owned, will the Council install ramps and stop signs and lines?

Response: Knockroe Gleann is a private estate which has not yet been Taken in Charge. There are no proposals to install ramps and stop signs and lines at the present time.

A Taking in Charge request has been lodged for this estate, however it is not valid as a plebiscite needs to be signed by the majority of the residents.

6. Notices of Motion:

2 no. urgent motions were proposed by Cllr. Connolly as follows:

“That in view of the fact that there is a backlog of bookings at NCT centres, that the Municipal District of Monaghan calls on the Minister for Justice and Transport to grant a 6 month grace period in order to help drivers comply with the legal changes where drivers automatically incur a 3 point penalty on their driving licence and a €60 ‘on the spot’ fine, thereby giving drivers the opportunity to comply with the law”

A discussion took place on the motion which was unanimously carried.

“ That in view of the recent deaths of two young men in Monaghan town, which have been attributed to the availability and use of psycho-active drugs, the most common one being “clockwork orange”, that Monaghan Municipal District calls on (a) the Minister for Justice to address the loophole which exists and deal with the issue whereby Gardaí cannot prosecute dealers for selling unlisted psycho-active substances/drugs, and (b) calls on the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs to ensure that grant aid for County Monaghan (currently €17.99 per child) from his Department, earmarked for 14-16 year olds, is brought up to the national average per child (€22.31), and to ensure that some of the monies allocated goes towards the Local Drugs Task Force”

A discussion took place on the motion which was unanimously carried.

Cllr. Maxwell left the meeting.

Cllr. Gallagher advised the meeting that he wished to discuss the following motion:

“That this Municipal District calls on the Government to suspend its planned review of the property tax in 2016 until at least 2020 in order to provide some clarity and certainty for hard pressed home owners in the medium term”

Cllr. McKenna expressed the view that instead of suspending the Tax, it should be abolished.

Following a discussion on the motion, a vote took place and resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs. Connolly, Gallagher, Treanor 3

Against: Cllrs. Conlon, McKenna 2

Abstentions: Cllr. Maxwell

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried.

Cllr. Gallagher advised the meeting that he wished to discuss the following motion:

“ That this Municipal District calls on the Government and the Minister for Education and Skills to re-engage with the teacher unions in order to solve the impasse on junior cert assessment with the aim of ensuring fairness for all pupils and to avoid students with important exams ahead of them missing any further school days”

Following a discussion on the motion, a vote took place and all members present voted in favour. Cllr. Maxwell was not present for the vote.

Cllr. Treanor advised the meeting that he wished to discuss the following motion:

“That this Municipal District considers amending our bye laws to prevent outsiders coming into Monaghan town collecting outside retail outlets on a Sunday”

Cllr. McKenna suggested that we write to Enda O Carroll Solicitor to seek advice on how we can amend our bye-laws if the person(s) have a permit. Mr McElwain suggested that we also write to the Gardaí. All members agreed that the Municipal District write to both our solicitor and the Gardaí.

7. Correspondence:

A letter from Department of Health dated 4th December 2014 acknowledging receipt of our letter concerning the Primary Health Care Services in Monaghan and Teach na nDaoine Resource Centre.

A letter from HSE dated 12th December 2104 confirming that a meeting has already been convened to include Local Primary Care Managers, staff from Teach na nDaoine and other agencies.

8. Votes of Sympathy:

A Vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

Brian Finnegan and his family on the passing of his nephew, James Finnegan and Sandra McQuaid on the death of her father-in-law, Sean McQuaid.

9. Congratulations:

Congratulations were extended to Bernie Bradley, Community and Enterprise Development Officer, and the students of Drumlin House Learning centre and Monaghan Latch on Project for the good work in the initiative to raise awareness in the community of the abuse of disabled parking bays.

Cllr. Conlon concluded the meeting by wishing the Councillors, the Executive and the Media a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Dated this the 15th day of December, 2014

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____

Meetings Administrator