

Municipal District of Monaghan

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan Municipal District held in the Boardroom, MTek1 Building, Knockaconny on Monday 17th October, 2016 at 3.00 pm.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell presided.

Present: Cllrs. Sean Conlon, Paudge Connolly, Brian McKenna and Seamus Treanor.

Apologies: Cllr. Raymond Aughey

In Attendance: John Murray, Director of Services, Donal McElwain, Municipal District Co-Ordinator, Dermot Deeney, Municipal District Engineer, Bernie McMahon, Staff Officer Monaghan Municipal District.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Municipal District Meeting

On the proposal of Cllr. Brian McKenna, seconded by Cllr. Paudge McKenna, it was agreed that the minutes of the Municipal District of Monaghan meeting held on 19th September, 2016 be confirmed.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr Maxwell referred to their recent visit to Rossmore Park and welcomed the opportunity to promote the development for the park in the future. Mr. McElwain advised members that last Thursday evening the PPN selected Mr. Eamonn Hackett as their candidate on the Rossmore Park Advisory Group.

Cllr Maxwell advised members that he had attended the recent Foodie Destination Awards in County Clare and requested approval from the members for his attendance. This was proposed by Cllr. Paudge Connolly and seconded by Cllr. Seamus Treanor.

3. Presentation from Town Team

Mr. Alan Johnson, Chairman of the Town Team and Mr. Trevor Connolly, Town Team Co-Ordinator, gave a presentation to the members that provided an update on their achievements to date. They also highlighted ongoing activities and projects to be delivered in the future e.g. upcoming Bats Festival.

They referred to the Town Voucher Scheme that was launched two weeks ago and the excellent results in the recent Foodie Destination competition. Eighty-nine businesses have signed up so far for the Town Voucher Scheme and the team are confident that the target of one hundred will be reached. They also advised members that the Christmas advertising campaign will be beginning shortly.

Cllr Maxwell thanked the Town Team representatives and invited questions from the members. Cllr. Conlon congratulated them and asked if members could be kept in the loop of all current developments. A brief discussion followed regarding the effects of Brexit on the local economy. Cllr. Conlon referred to the recent Canadian visitors to the town and to his previous requests that a souvenir pack be made available to all visitors to the town.

With reference to Mr. Connolly's comments regarding their efforts to reduce the number of vacant properties in the town, Cllr. Conlon referred to the budget speech by the Minister for Finance regarding the introduction of changes to rates. He requested that the Executive write to the Minister's office requesting the need to introduce such measures within the earliest timeframe.

Cllr Maxwell thanked the Town Team representatives for their hard work, particularly in relation to the Foodie Destination Awards, and advised that the footfall figures will be able to give us a better view of visitors in the town.

4. Budget 2017

Cllr Maxwell referred to the draft budgetary plan that was circulated to members. Mr. Murray listed, and gave a brief summary on each item. He answered questions from the members and clarified that while the amount of items listed may seem limited, the major spend for the Municipal District is on roads.

Cllr. Connolly referred to the amount allocated for the Public Toilet and queried if there is still a need for it. Cllr. Maxwell advised members that an agreement had previously been signed by the Town Council and proposed that Town Team consult with the businesses in the town to ascertain its necessity.

5. Report from Municipal District Co-Ordinator

Cllr Maxwell referred to the report from Mr. McElwain and asked members for any comments or questions they had.

September/October 2016

Cllr. Connolly made an enquiry regarding the recent upgrading of traffic lights, particularly in relation to the flow of traffic. Mr. McElwain to check with Roads Section to see if they can clarify if there is any change between the old and new settings on the traffic lights. A brief discussion followed regarding a number of traffic lights in the town. Mr. McElwain replied that these will be looked at.

Cllr. Conlon welcomed the repairs to footpaths. He queried if the road markings could be repainted on the Mall Road, at the Rehab building. He also queried if a disabled space be put there also? Mr. Murray advised that the parking survey/strategy might be able to look at this.

Cllr. McKenna outlined that there is some subsidence on the road at Peter McMahan's pub in Emyvale. Mr. McElwain advised that this could be looked at under next year's road programme.

Cllr. Treanor referred to the retaining wall along the slip road wall at Beech Hill coming into the town and queried if this wall could be examined as it hasn't been repaired since 2008/2009.

Cllr. Treanor also requested if a sign could be put on the greenway regarding dog fouling. Mr. Murray replied that a sign will be put in place.

Actions – a look ahead

Cllr. Connolly welcomed the information plate on the Hive of Knowledge.

Cllr Conlon congratulated the Taste of Monaghan Organisers on a successful event.

Mr. Murray answered queries from members on the car parking strategy and the parking surveys. He also advised that the Aldi planning application is ongoing.

Following a query from Cllr. Treanor regarding the road at Enagh, Mr. Deeney replied that the road was abraded at the beginning of the year, however he will contact the road section to investigate the site.

Cllr. Maxwell advised the members that the Christmas light switch on is Sunday 20th November.

6. Questions and Motions

Cllr Raymond Aughey asked:

1 .Can the council initiate a scheme whereby the public can report all forms of littering via a free text service?

Response: There are no plans for such a service at present. Currently people can report littering by

1. **Contacting Monaghan County Council's Environment Section 042 9661240**
2. **Phoning the litter confidential Freephone 18000 200014**
3. **Email litter@monaghancoco.ie**
4. **fixyourstreet.ie on Monaghan County Council website**
5. **Monaghan County Council Environment Section Facebook page**
6. **"See it, Say it" app for android and iphone (run by Environmental Protection Agency)**
7. **See it Say it complaint hotline number 1850 365 121(run by Environmental Protection Agency)**

For the last two Christmas's the Environment Section offered a text service for people to report full bottle banks in the County. It is likely that this will continue, for this Christmas.

2) Can the council provide extra litter bins at Emylough to accommodate the large number of people using the Walkway facility there?

Response: The Monaghan Municipal District is assisting Donagh Development Association to apply to Leader funding to advance a number of enhancements to this amenity area including provision of litter bins.

3) Can the council look into the provision of a disabled parking bay in the village of Emyvale, particularly in the vicinity of the Credit Union?

Response: The Municipal District will consult with the Gardai in relation to enforcement of a disabled parking bay in Emyvale, and the Municipal District can meet with local development groups to agree a location, for the elected member's approval.

Cllr Sean Conlon asked:

1) Following representations received from a member of the public, with enclosed photographs, will Council Executive engage with the Department of Justice seeking the implementation of a regularly scheduled programme of cleaning and maintenance to the front of the Courthouse?

Response: A letter was issued to the Department of Justice dated 5th October, 2016 in relation to this matter.

2) Can Executive provide explanation why CCTV cameras were removed from the play and skate park at Mullaghmatt? For the purpose of enhancing personal safety and protection of property, will these cameras be reinstalled?

Response: The council are to have these CCTV camera repaired and reinstalled.

3) Further to agreement secured with Lord Rossmore for the Council taking in charge the private road at Tullyherim, what progress has been made towards reaching a conclusive outcome?

Response: The council are awaiting a response from Lord Rossmore's Solicitors.

Cllr Brian McKenna asked:

1) Will this Municipal District please ensure that proper repair works are carried out on the N2 through Emyvale village adjacent to the Post Office rather than throwing a couple of shovelfuls of tarmac into the holes every three or four weeks?

Response: The council will re-surface a section of Emyvale Main Street before year end.

2) Will this Municipal District take steps to address the very dangerous situation at Falkland bridge on the Glaslough/Monaghan road adjacent to the derelict house as you approach the bridge from the Glaslough direction?

Response: The Municipal District will investigate what measures can be taken adjacent to the private property referred to at Falkland Bridge.

Cllr Seamus Treanor asked:

1) If you drive out the Emyvale Road on the N2 and take a right turn at Enagh, road no. L12202, turn right to rejoin the N2 again. At this particular junction, it is very dangerous in the winter time, and some type of anti-skid measures should be taken to prevent shooting out onto the N2. Also, this same roads exits onto the Bog Road going towards Glaslough. I feel the Council should remove part of the embankment and hedges to give a better view to motorists exiting the L12202?

Response: The HRA on the junction referred to with the N2 was abraised recently to improve its skid resistance. The hedges and verges at the junction with the LP1220 were cut recently and the sight visibility is now improved.

2) What is the position regarding derelict premises and sites, and what action is to be taken by Monaghan County council?

Response: Monaghan County Council began a comprehensive review of the Derelict Sites Register in 2016. Since June 2016, 3 properties have been placed on the Derelict Sites Register in the Monaghan Municipal District and been served with a Section 11 Measures Notice, requesting a specific list of works to be undertaken within a certain timeframe. An additional 5 Section 8(2) Notices of Intention have been issued to other properties in the district, signalling the Local Authority's intention to enter the property on the Derelict Sites Register. We have had to recommence the process with some of these properties as new ownership details have emerged. The process of reviewing the Derelict Sites Register remains on-going.

Comments

Cllr Conlon welcomed the fact that a letter has been issued to the Department of Justice and stated that the courthouse should be cleaned on a more regular basis. He also welcomed the response regarding the repair of the CCTV at the skatepark at Mullaghmatt.

Notice of Motions:

Can the Council contact the Department of Communications regarding the poor mobile phone coverage available in many parts of the county to ascertain the reasons for same and the potential actions that may be taken to alleviate the problem.

That this council states its appreciation for the work completed by staff on the Gateway scheme and in particular the work related to the Tidy Towns effort in Monaghan Town

Cllr Raymond Aughey

That we write to the Minister for Finance and Shane Ross TD regarding private pension funds. A lot of people joined these pension schemes in the 70's. Now, when they want to draw down their fund to invest in a property, they are being refused. The UK changed this policy three years ago and has been very successful.

Cllr Seamus Treanor

That we write to the Courts Services regarding the cleanliness of Monaghan Courthouse and also request the removal of the unsightly shutters.

Cllr Seamus Treanor

Ahead of the all-island Civic Dialogue on Brexit holding its first meeting, hosted by the Taoiseach and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on 2 November in Dublin, that concerns are conveyed to this Forum by this Council outlining the difficulties being experienced currently by our constituents, communities and businesses.

Cllr Sean Conlon

Comments

As Cllr. Aughey was unable to attend the meeting, it was agreed that the motions proposed by him be brought to the next meeting of the Municipal District.

Cllr. Treanor referred to the galvanise shutters that have been erected and requested that the MD write to the Department of Justice requesting their removal. Cllr. McKenna also queried if the colonial insignia could also be removed and that this be included in the letter to the Dept. Following a brief discussion, this request was defeated 3-2 in favour of the letter being left as per Cllr. Treanor's original proposal.

Cllr. Treanor referred to his motion that we write to the Minister for Finance and Mr. Shane Ross TD. regarding private pension funds and expressed his anger at the current situation of pension funds in Ireland. Cllr. Connolly seconded this motion.

A brief discussion followed on this and the Chairman clarified for members that Cllr. Treanor was requesting that we write to the Minister and Mr. Ross requesting that they look at changing the law regarding pensions to reflect that of the UK. Following a vote, 3 for (Cllrs Treanor, Connolly and Maxwell) and 2 against (Cllrs. McKenna and Conlon), the motion was carried.

Cllr. Conlon wished to give credit to the Taoiseach for the first All-Island Civil Dialogue on Brexit. He proposed that the Council should be represented at this meeting. Cllr. McKenna seconded this proposal. It was proposed that the Executive investigate if they would be eligible to have our interests represented.

7. Correspondence

Letter dated 27th September, 2016 relating to a funding request for CCTV for Monaghan Town. Members discussed the confusion regarding funding options and the lack of information available on this.

Email from Mary Leech at OPW regarding the use of Custom & Excise Building on the Armagh Rd. Cllr. Connolly queried if the building could be put to better use.

Letter from Heather Humphreys TD acknowledging receipt of recent correspondence.

Request from Monaghan GYDP requesting funding for Halloween Festival 2016.

Proposed by Cllr. McKenna and seconded by Cllr. Connolly, it was agreed that the funding be made available. Cllr. Connolly proposed that we get a full set of accounts and we will ask for the next meeting a breakdown of what they spent last year and this year.

Letter from Christmas Lights Committee requesting funding for Annual Switch on and Temporary Road Closure Request.

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the sum of €5,500 be granted.

Free Parking. It was also agreed that there will be free Christmas Parking from 12th December from 12 daily noon until 9.00 am on Tuesday, 3rd January 2017.

Letter from Mr. Dan McGonnell, Monaghan Order of the Knights of Columbanus.

Cllr Maxwell advised members that he had been in receipt of correspondence from Mr. Dan McGonnell, Grand Knight, Monaghan Order of the Knights of St. Columbanus requesting a contribution for funding for remedial works at the 'Brothers Steps'. Mr Murray advised that this will be referred to the CPG for their consideration.

Cllr. Conlon requested that any responses to questions submitted by him to the Executive on his behalf should be replied to via the Co-Ordinator and not to him personally. He also referred to correspondence he had received from Mr. David Lane during the summer and requested that the Executive contact Bus Eireann for an update at their earliest convenience.

Cllr. Conlon requested if the owners of Alma House could be asked to reinstate the insignia or if this could be done via Tidy Towns and thanked the Museum staff for their good work in engaging with the school population for walking tours.

Cllr Connolly referred to Emy Lake and the issue of ownership which is stopping them from applying for grant aid. Cllr. Maxwell advised the members that Mr. McElwain will bring a report to the next meeting of the MD as he met with the committee last Friday morning at 11.00 am.

8. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations:

Congratulations were extended to Mr. Dermot Sherry, Drumillock, Monaghan on winning a Bord Bia Green Farmers Award and to Ms. Eabha Campbell on winning the Foroige Junior Bakeoff for the second year.

Cllr. Treanor wished Bishop McDaid the best of luck on his retirement. Cllr. Maxwell also associated himself with these sentiments.

Roads Programme

Ballinode Bridge

The Chairperson announced that the Municipal District have agreed that a temporary 3 tonne weight limit be placed on Ballinode Bridge due to the condition of the structure. It is now prioritised for funding in 2017 and when works are complete the weight limit will be lifted.

Cllr. Conlon queried the bridge at the Green Lane and Mr. McElwain advised that he will have it inspected.

The meeting concluded.

Dated this 17th Day of October, 2016

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____

Meetings Administrator