

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Sliabh Beagh Hotel, Knockatallon, Co. Monaghan on Monday 4th December, 2017 at 2.00 p.m.

Chair: Cllr C. Bennett, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs. Aughey, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gilliland, Humphreys, Keelan, Maxwell, McElvaney, McKenna, McNally, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor and S. Treanor.

Mr. E. O'Sullivan, Chief Executive, Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Service, 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, Cllr C. Bennett welcomed everyone to the Sliabh Beagh Hotel and thanked the members for agreeing to have the meeting at this venue.

The Cathaoirleach congratulated the following:

- The Management and staff of Monaghan County Council on winning the Local Authority of the Year Award at the Chambers Ireland, Excellence in Local Government Awards recently.
- The Kavanagh Centre and the Cultural Section of Monaghan County Council on the commemoration ceremony on the 50th Anniversary of the death of Patrick Kavanagh.
- The Environment Section of the Council on the great work being done by staff under the 'Farm to Fork' initiative.
- Monaghan Civil Defence on the presentation of long service awards to volunteers.
- Minister Heather Humphreys, TD on being promoted to the portfolio of Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation.

A number of members joined in the congratulations outlined above, as did the Chief Executive on behalf of the Management and Staff.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

(i) Minutes of Council meeting held on 6th November, 2017

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 6th November, 2017, be confirmed.

2. Correspondence.

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

- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D regarding Brexit.
- Letter from Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Mr. Shane Ross, T.D regarding additional Roads funding.
- Letter from the Office of the Taoiseach regarding the death of Shane O'Farrell.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine, Mr. Michael Creed, T.D regarding the resolution to create a Task Force.

- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Mr. Michael Ring, T.D. regarding Glaslough winning a gold medal at the Entente Florale Ceremony in Podčetrtek, Slovenia.
- Letter from An Garda Síochána regarding to the provision of additional Garda resources for County Monaghan.
- Resolution from the Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones regarding the waiving of all car parking charges of patients attending Beaumont Hospital Dublin for chemotherapy and cancer treatments.
- Resolution from Leitrim County Council regarding a review of the criteria for Community Based CCTV System Installation in towns.
- Email from Brendan Smith, T.D regarding the need to increase substantially the financial allocation to Monaghan County Council for the roadwork's programme in 2018.
- Email from the Office of the Minister for Training, Skills, Innovation, Research and Development, Mr. John Halligan, T.D regarding the School Transport Scheme.
- Resolution from Sligo County Council regarding extra funding for the Alzheimer Society of Ireland in the future health budgets.
- Resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister for Social Protection to reverse the unfair and discriminatory policy of penalising home makers, who took time out to care for family prior to 1994, that was brought in by Government on 6 April 2012.
- Resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Taoiseach to provide for the establishment of a National Housing Co-operative Society with the mandate and powers to acquire, manage, rent or sell distressed mortgages.
- Resolution from Carlow County Council regarding persons with disabilities, who are required to comply with European and national certifications and guidelines, particularly in the agricultural sector.

The following additional correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Response from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine, Mr. Michael Creed, T.D regarding the resolution to create a Task Force.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Health, Simon Harris, T.D regarding Elosulfase Alfa (Vimizim).
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Mr. Michael Ring, T.D. regarding a meeting request to discuss the future of the Post Offices in Rural Ireland.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, Mr. Eoghan Murphy, T.D regarding tenants in Part V built houses.
- Letter from Teagasc regarding the fodder situation in Co Monaghan.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gilliland, it was agreed that the Council accept the offer of a meeting with officials from the Department of Education in relation to the School Transport Scheme. It was further agreed that the following members would form part of the delegation - Cllr C. Bennett, Cathaoirleach, Cllr S. Gilliland, Cllr S. Coyle, Cllr N. Keelan and Cllr S. Treanor.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon seconded by Cllr McNally seconded, and it was agreed that a meeting takes place between the new Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Heather Humphreys TD , our local TD's and Senators and the Minister for Transport to highlight the poor conditions of our roads and to seek further funding as soon as possible.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gilliland it was agreed that the Council support the motion from Ballybay-Clones Municipal District calling on the HSE to immediately waive all car parking charges for patients attending Beaumont Hospital for chemotherapy and cancer treatments, as this is adding great financial cost to patients and their families at an already stressful and difficult time for them.

3. Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000

- (a) To consider granting permission for the construction of a new access point to Lough Muckno for anglers adjacent to South Lodge, Concra, Castleblayney, incorporating a new entrance onto the public road and vehicular access track parallel to the lake shore with 6 no. associated parking lay bys (17/8009).

The members noted the report circulated from the Senior Planner in relation to this application.

On the proposal of Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council approve the granting of planning permission for the construction of a new access point to Lough Muckno for anglers adjacent to South Lodge, Concra, Castleblayney, incorporating a new entrance onto the public road and vehicular access track parallel to the lake shore with 6 no. associated parking lay bys (17/8009) to comply with the report from the Senior Planner, in accordance with Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001 (as amended).

- (b) To consider granting permission to construct 43 dwelling houses comprising semi-detached and terraced units (12 No 3 bedroom 2 storey units; 23 No 2 bedroom 2 storey units; 6 No 2 Bedroom single storey units; 2 No 4 bedroom 2 storey units) plus landscaped open space including relocated playground, new access roads, drainage, street lighting and siteworks at Latlorcan, Monaghan (17/8010).

The members noted the report circulated from the Senior Planner in relation to this application.

On the proposal of Cllr Aughey, seconded by Cllr Conlon, it was agreed that the Council approve the granting of planning permission for the construction of 43 dwelling houses comprising semi-detached and terraced units (12 No 3 bedroom 2 storey units; 23 No 2 bedroom 2 storey units; 6 No 2 Bedroom single storey units; 2 No 4 bedroom 2 storey units) plus landscaped open space including relocated playground, new access roads, drainage, street lighting and siteworks at Latlorcan, Monaghan (17/8010), to comply with the report from the Senior Planner, in accordance with Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001 (as amended).

4. To approve PPN nomination to vacant position on the Environment and Transport Strategic Policy Committee.

The members noted the letter from the Public Participation Network nominating Mr. Shane McKenna to the Environment and Transport SPC.

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the nomination of Mr. Sean McKenna to the Environment and Transport SPC be approved.

5. To approve payment of allowance to Municipal District Members.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon, it was agreed that the Council approve the payment of an allowance of €1,000 per annum to Municipal District members in accordance with Circular LG 07/2017 and SI No. 494 of 2017.

6. To receive the Management Report – November 2017.

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

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

The members noted the reports from Cllrs Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Humphreys, Keelan, McKenna and McNally in relation to their attendance at the following conferences/training events:

- AILG Annual Training Seminar, Sligo
- AILG Elected Members Training, Carrick-on-Shannon
- The Fair Deal Scheme Conference, Clonakilty
- Celtic Conference, Clonakilty

8. Business submitted by the Chief Executive.

There was no business submitted under this item.

9. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 6th November, 2017.

Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 6th November, 2017 were responded to by the relevant officials.

10. To receive update on North South Interconnector project.

The members noted the following correspondence that had been circulated with the agenda

- Letter from Aidan Geoghegan, Project Manager, Eirgrid confirming that the company had spent €36.7 million to date on the North South Interconnector project.
- Letter from Denis Naughten TD Minister for Communications, Climate Action & Environment.
- Letter from the Committee of Public Accounts enclosing copies of correspondence issued to the Council in August 2017.

- Email from Niamh Smyth T.D regarding Eirgrid.
- Email from Garrett O'Brien, T.D in relation to response from Eirgrid regarding Expenditure by Eirgrid on the North South Interconnector.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that this Council invites all the Oireachtas members for the Cavan Monaghan Constituency including Minister Humphreys to the January meeting of the Council.

1. *The purpose of this meeting is to allow the Oireachtas members an opportunity to brief this Council as to what actions have they taken to support, the local communities, their campaigning groups (MAPC) & (NEPP) etc in there efforts to have the N.S Interconnector Undergrounded.*
2. *That this Council would be flexible in terms of time and dates etc, in relation to the Oireachtas members.*

It was agreed that a special meeting for the above purpose would be held at 12.00 on Monday 8th January, 2018.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr McKenna, it was agreed that a meeting be requested for the second week in January between Minister Naughten TD and our local T.D's, local Senators and Minister Humphreys to discuss the North South Interconnector project.

11. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project.

Cllr Treanor gave report to the members arising out of the meeting of the Ulster Canal Advisory Forum held in Monaghan on the 17th November. He outlined the progress that had been made on the stretch of canal from Lough Erne to Castlesaunderson and stated that the bridge at Derrykerrib was due to be completed by Spring 2018. A number of potential funding streams were discussed at the meeting and the importance of the Canal for the re-generation of this area was highlighted.

12. To receive update on Brexit.

Cllr Treanor referred to the letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Simon Coveney TD, in relation to the Council's request for a meeting to discuss Brexit. The letter also acknowledged the Council's contribution in the preparation and publication of the document entitled "Brexit and the border Corridor on the island of Ireland. A number of members commended Mr. Coveney and the Taoiseach for the hard stance being taken during the Brexit negotiations.

13. To receive presentation from Cathal Hand and Gerry Tully, Health Service Executive

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Cathal Hand and Gerry Tully from the Health Service Executive and invited them to address the meeting.

Mr. Hand and Mr. Tully then outlined the current position in relation to the Oriel House/Blackwater House projects; the Monaghan and Carrickmacross Primary Care Centre

projects. Mr. Tully stated that it was hoped that a planning application for the North Monaghan PCC to be located in the Blackwater building would be lodged with the local authority early in 2018. He said he would circulate a copy of initial drawings for the Monaghan PCC to the members.

With regard to the Carrickmacross and Clones Primary Care Centres he said it was the intention to provide these buildings by means of an operational lease, whereby the HSE would engage with interested parties to develop the proposed sites. Mr. Hand stated that each of the three projects would accommodate the core primary care team for each town. The Monaghan and Carrickmacross projects would be network centres where other network bases services would be based in and delivered from these buildings – dentistry, social work, psychology and a dietician.

Following the presentation, Mr. Hand and Mr. Tully responded to queries from the elected members in relation to the three projects.

The Cathaoirleach thanked both officials for attending the meeting and giving an update to the members.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that this Council invites Mr Cathal Hand & Mr Gerry Tully to the June/July meeting of the Council in order to update the Council members as to what progress has been made in relation to the provision of a number of Primary Care Centres across the county etc.

14. Questions:

Cllr C. Carthy asked:

1. How many applications for the 'Repair and Lease' scheme have been initiated with Monaghan County Council since the opening of the scheme and how many have been approved or denied?

Reply: The table below shows the number of applications to date under the Repair and Leasing Scheme. The applications denied were either greater than the cost limit of €40,000 or were for properties that are not deemed suitable for a long term lease as social housing. Properties that require significant structural work do not qualify for the scheme. Given the significant social housing projects that Monaghan County Council has approval for; the Repair & Leasing Scheme will play a small part in contributing to Monaghan County Council's social housing provision going forward under the Rebuilding Ireland programme.

Repair & Leasing Applications	
Approved	5
Applications awaited from property owners	6
On Hold pending Planning Permission	4
Denied	5
Grand Total	20

Cllr C. Carthy asked:

2. How many Derelict Site Notices have been issued by Monaghan County Council since the Act was amended; what is the breakdown in terms of Municipal Districts?

Reply: The number of notices issued under the derelict sites legislation is as follows;

Year	Ballybay/Clones MD	Monaghan MD	Cby-CMX MD	Total issued
2016	15	12	7	34
2017	13	4	4	21

3. Can the executive confirm whether or not each Municipal District can proceed with spending the IPB refunds issued earlier this year?

Reply: No payment has been received from IPB and therefore spending cannot take place. The members will be updated when further communication is received from IPB.

4. Has the housing section considered the building of affordable housing units to try and help those outside the margins for social housing and who do not earn enough to get a mortgage?

Reply: Following the crash in property prices the Affordable Housing Scheme was stood down. There are apartments and houses currently advertised for sale in County Monaghan at the following prices:

2-bedroom apartments €85,000 to €145,000;

2-bedroom houses €145,000

3-bedroom houses €150,000 to €160,000

4-bedroom houses €50,000 to €110,000 (requiring some work) and €165,000 to €185,000 (ready to live in).

Given the current focus on provision of social housing it is unlikely that an Affordable Housing Scheme will be reintroduced in County Monaghan at present.

5. When is it envisaged that works will be completed to the Lough na Glack housing estate, Carrickmacross?

Reply: North & East Housing Association expects to accept handover of 38 houses at Lough na Glack in early 2018. In January 2018 it is expected that 26 of the houses will be handed over with the remainder being made available in March 2018.

Cllr. S. Coyle asked:

6. Can Monaghan County Council outline the conditions and procedures for the burning of cut bushes etc, the dates, the actions a person must take, the process and the responsibilities of the landowner and the local authority?

Reply: An application form for controlled burning, relating to agriculture, must be submitted to the Environmental Services unit notifying them of the parties' intention to burn, and must include the proposed date, duration and location of burning.

Under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976, amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 it is an offence for a person to cut or remove hedgerows or vegetation cover from the 1st March to the 31st August. The landowner should ensure that adequate measures are taken to limit the possibility for endangering human health or causing environmental pollution, and that no accelerants are used in the process.

Cllr. S. Coyle asked:

7. Under the "Rebuilding Ireland "initiatives of Buy and Renewal initiative and Repair and Leasing initiative, can Monaghan County Council, outline the uptake to date in County Monaghan and the town/settlement location of the properties?

Reply:

BUY & RENEW SCHEME

The Buy & Renew Scheme was announced by Minister Coveney in February 2017 and became officially available on 31 July 2017 when application forms and Housing Circular 29/2017 were issued to Local Authorities, including Monaghan County Council. Eighteen months before the Buy & Renew Scheme became officially available Monaghan County Council had already taken the step of identifying houses for purchase that required more than €30,000 worth of work to bring into use as social housing. Monaghan County Council decided to target houses requiring significant renovation work to avoid competing with private house purchasers resulting in some cases in a higher cost than would be potentially affordable to the average private purchaser. Also, in any case where a private house purchaser made an offer on a house targeted by Monaghan County Council the decision was made to withdraw from the potential purchase.

In effect Monaghan County Council has been buying and renewing houses throughout 2016 and 2017, before the Buy & Renew Scheme was introduced, resulting in the acquisitions described in the tables below. In addition Monaghan County Council has received "Approval in Principle" from the Department for 16 properties at Latlorcan, Monaghan to be brought into use under the Buy & Renew Scheme at an estimated cost of €2,342,413 (contracts for the purchase of the 16 houses in question have been in place for 3 years but transfer of the properties was delayed for legal reasons).

Given the significant number of house purchases completed to date and social housing projects that Monaghan County Council has approval for; the Buy & Renewal Scheme will play a relatively small part in contributing to Monaghan County Council's social housing provision going forward under the Rebuilding Ireland programme.

Monaghan County Council: Buy and Renew 2016 single acquisitions – 14 properties at an all-in-cost of €1,837,679

Castleblayney	2
Clones	2
Emyvale	1
Inniskeen	1
Monaghan	7
Tyholland	1

Monaghan County Council: Buy and Renew 2017 single acquisitions – 10 properties at an all-in-cost of €1,704,741

Ardaghey	1
Castleblayney	4
Monaghan	3
Newbliss	1
Scotshouse	1

REPAIR & LEASING SCHEME

The table below shows the number of applications to date under the Repair and Leasing Scheme. The Repair & Leasing Scheme will play a small part in contributing to Monaghan County Council's social housing provision in the Rebuilding Ireland programme. The applications received to date have been in relation to properties that are mostly in the main towns with breakdown by Municipal District as follows:

Ballybay-Clones Municipal District	8
Monaghan Municipal District	8
Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District	4

Repair & Leasing Applications	
Approved	5
Applications awaited from property owners	6
On Hold pending Planning Permission	4
Denied	5
Grand Total	20

8. Will Monaghan County Council outline the numbers of Planning Applications to the Planning Section it total, to date for 2017, under the following –
- One off Houses
 - Multi Housing Developments
 - Extensions to existing dwellings
 - Agricultural/Poultry developments
 - Commercial properties
 - Other

Reply:

Application Type	Number
Single Dwellings	228
Housing Developments	11
Agriculture	92
Extensions	70
Commercial	64
Other	100
Total applications at 30 th November	565

Cllr. N. Keelan asked:

9. How many complaints have been made to the ombudsman's office in relation to Monaghan County Council and the three other district councils in the last two years, what was the nature of these complaints and what was the outcome?

Reply: Four complaints relevant to Monaghan County Council were received by the Ombudsman in 2016 and 2017 – a summary of the complaints and the decision of the Ombudsman are set out below.

Year	Nature of complaint received by Ombudsman	Ombudsman decision
2016	Anti Social behaviour – Council estate	Case closed – complaint not upheld
2016	Anti Social behaviour – Council estate	Case closed – complaint not upheld
2016	NPPR charge	Case closed – complaint not upheld
2017	Unauthorised entrance	Decision awaited

10. In relation to the Sliabh Dubh, Corduff, Carrickmacross, what is the up to date position in relation to this estate been taken in charge by Monaghan County Council?

Reply: No request has been made by the residents for this estate to be taken in charge.

11. Will Monaghan County Council look at the possibility of purchasing a portion of land in Inniskeen village with a view building a small number of social and affordable housing units to address the housing need in the village and surrounding area?

Reply: Over the years Monaghan County Council has provided 90 houses in Inniskeen, which is the vast majority of the houses in the village. At present Monaghan County Council owns 24 houses in Inniskeen and has purchased houses when necessary to provide for the housing need in Inniskeen. There are no plans to purchase land in Inniskeen village to provide additional social housing and following the crash in property prices the Affordable Housing Scheme was stood down. There are apartments and houses currently advertised for sale in County Monaghan at the following prices:

2-bedroom apartments €85,000 to €145,000;

2-bedroom houses €145,000

3-bedroom houses €150,000 to €160,000

4-bedroom houses €50,000 to €110,000 (requiring some work) and €165,000 to €185,000 (ready to live in).

Given the current focus on provision of social housing it is unlikely that an Affordable Housing Scheme will be reintroduced in County Monaghan at present and, given the numbers provided to date, it is unlikely that land will be purchased for additional social housing provision in Inniskeen.

12. In acknowledging the good work been done by this Council around social inclusion, and disability issues, how many people with a disability are currently employed by the Council including the districts councils, how will this figure compare with national guidelines and other similar Councils?

Reply: At 31-12-16, 25 staff employed by Monaghan Council declared that they have a disability, under the definition in the Disability Act 2005. The percentage of employees with a disability at that date was 5.36% which exceeds the national target of 3%.

Cllr. N. Keelan asked:

13. How many new employees have Monaghan County Council taken on in the last two years including the district councils, what plans has the Council to employ extra staff in the next two years?

Reply: The Council recruited 63 new staff over the last two years. This includes 8 new retained Fire Fighters. The Council will continue to recruit new staff to fill vacancies arising in the next two years.

15. Notices of Motion:

Cllr P. Connolly proposed, Cllr O’Hanlon seconded, and it was agreed

1. In view of the fact that water charges have been effectively scrapped and those households that have paid their water charges are to be refunded that Monaghan County Council calls on the Government to:

- (a) Re-instate the state grant to group water schemes which was cut from €145 per household to €90 per household when water charges were brought in and
- (b) To give an appropriate tax credit to households who provide water via their own private wells, thus ensuring equity of treatment and equivalent financial support for all our citizens.

Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr McNally seconded and it was agreed

2. That Monaghan County Council demands of the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., the Minister for Employment Affairs & Social Protection, Regina Doherty T.D. and the Government, the immediate correction of pension inequities, which are clearly discriminatory and unequal to women. Of the 36,000 people affected, 62% are women, most of whom, were involved in caring and childminding duties, now being severely impacted by the disastrous budget decision of Fine Gael and Labour in 2012, which leaves those receiving full state Contributory Pension, 84% are men.

It was agreed that this motion would be circulated to all local authorities.

Cllr S. Conlon requested that Notice of Motion 15(c) be deferred. This was agreed.

16. Votes of sympathy/congratulations.

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

- The Treanor family, Ballinode on the death of Josie Treanor, RIP
- The Stirrat family Scotstown on the death of Liam Stirrat RIP

- The Moyna family Scotstown on the death of Mackie Moyna, RIP
- Cllr Noel Keelan and the relatives of Peter Brennan RIP
- The family of the late Fr. Joseph McCluskey, PE Killanny, RIP

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

- Minister Heather Humphreys TD on being promoted to the position of Minister for Business Enterprise and Innovation
- Ballybay Pearse Brothers GFC on winning the 2017 Monaghan Senior Football League – the Owen Ward Cup
- The 5th year students in the Economics Class at Our Lady’s Secondary School, Castleblayney on winning the European Parliaments competition on “*Why young people should vote*” and their teacher Paddy Mulroe.

17. Conferences/Training

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, 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
Celtic Conferences	A Practical Guide to Budget 2018	The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty Co. Cork	8 th , 9 th & 10 December 2017	Cllr. E. Humphreys
AILG Training	Recent Experience of Local Authorities in Severe Weather	The Shirley Arms Hotel, Carrickmacross	23 rd November 2017	Cllr. A. Campbell Cllr. D. Maxwell Cllr. PJ O’Hanlon

The Cathaoirleach wished the members, Chief Executive and officials of the Council and members of the media a very happy Christmas and New Year 2018.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____
