

COMHAIRLE BHAILE MHUINEACHÁIN
MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 21st January 2013 at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, No. 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Seamus Treanor

Present: Cllrs. Mary Carroll, Seán Conlon, Robbie Gallagher, David Maxwell, Paul McGeown, Donal Sherry and Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha.

In Attendance: David Fallon, Acting County Manager, Dermot Deeney, Town Engineer, Jonathan Condell, Assistant Engineer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Aisling Greenan, Clerical Officer.

At the outset, the Members sent good wishes to Cllr. Thomas Hagan who is hospitalised at present.

Presentation by James Gallagher and Eamon Doherty from URS Consultants – Greenway to facilitate cycling and walking

The Members welcomed James Gallagher and Eamon Doherty from URS Consultants who gave a detailed presentation to the Members on the proposed Monaghan Cycle Greenway. The Consultants circulated drawings numbered 47065349-00 – 47065349-09 inclusive, together with a copy of their presentation. It was noted that the concept of a Greenway is to bring disused former transportation infrastructure back into use for sustainable travel purposes such as walking and cycling. It was noted that funding of €471,000 at a 90% grant rate has been secured from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. The Members expressed disappointment that the Greenway Project will not incorporate public lighting or kerbing due to financial constraints. It was noted that the Department of Transport require the entire project to be completed in one phase. It was noted that the new pathway will be 3.0 – 3.5 metres wide and where Greenway utilises existing footpaths these widened to accommodate. The new path will have a bitmac surface.

Jonathan Condell, Assistant Engineer informed the Members that carparking spaces will be removed in Rooskey carpark and Canal Road to facilitate the Greenway Project.

It was noted that the planning stage will begin on the 8th February 2013 and construction on site should begin in July 2013 with a completion date of November 2013. It was also noted that plans will be on view to the public in the Market House in Monaghan Town from 6pm to 9pm on Thursday 7th February 2013.

On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to write to the Department of Transport relaying the Members genuine concerns regarding the lack of will to provide adequate lighting and kerbing on the route and to call on the Department to provide additional funding to enable the route to be adequately lit. The Members agreed to proceed to the next stage of the project.

On the proposal of Cllr. Seamus Treanor seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to approve of a Section 85 Agreement under the Local Government Act 2001 authorising Monaghan County Council to be the lead authority in the project.

The Members noted e-mail from Carol Lambe, Community and Enterprise Section, Monaghan County Council stating that the Department of Transport intends to re-open for funding applications to their Active Travel Towns measures shortly. It was agreed that the Planning Sub-Committee meet to agree a programme of work which could then form the basis of an application for funding.

James Gallagher and Eamon Doherty from URS and Jonathan Condell, Assistant Engineer left the Meeting Room.

1. Confirmation of December Monthly Meeting held on 17th December 2012

On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the December Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 17th December 2012.

2. Confirmation of Annual Statutory Budget Meeting held on 17th December 2012

On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Annual Statutory Budget Meeting held on Monday 17th December 2012.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Cllr. Donal Sherry expressed disappointment that the Council has not yet received a response from the Returning Officer to the proposal that unemployed people be afforded the opportunity to work at polling stations when elections are held.

Cllr. Donal Sherry reiterated his request for the relocation of a loading bay in Glaslough Street.

Cllr. Mary Carroll undertook to speak to the Chief Executive Officer of County Monaghan VEC in relation to the erection of road signs in the Irish language at the new Education Campus at Knockaconny.

Cllr. Donal Sherry stated that he did not attend the Clare Tourist Council/Clare County Council National Tourism Conference in Ennistymon, Co. Clare.

Marie Deighan, Town Clerk informed the Members that Bridget Clarke, General Manager of the HSE will attend the March Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council and will be in a position to give an update on the hospital group structure in Cavan/Monaghan and on budgets. On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Paul McGeown it was agreed to proceed with the meeting in March.

David Fallon, Acting County Manager stated that the property tax was discussed at a recent meeting of the City and County Managers Association. Mr. Fallon stated that Local Authorities are liable for property tax but have not yet been advised of exemptions and there has been no discussion on ability to pay. The Acting County Manager stated that Department of Finance and the Department of the Environment are meeting this week to discuss the matter.

The Members stated that the property tax would have grave implications for a considerable number of local authority tenants along with those people in the private housing sector with substantial mortgages. Cllr. Seán Conlon appealed to Members to use their political influence to try to bring about a reverse of the property tax.

Cllr. Donal Sherry called again for maximum access to Dublin Street once the site of the Mixed Use Development is restored as a car park. Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha referred to a number of complaints which she has received from residents in the area who cannot sleep because of anti-social behaviour in the area. It was agreed to discuss the matter in more detail at the February Monthly Meeting.

The Acting County Manager stated that negotiations are still underway in relation to the purchase of lands at Latlurcan for future housing development or development purposes. It was also noted that there is land available for housing at in Rooskey.

The Town Engineer informed the Members that there are 2 no. disabled parking bays in the car park adjoining St. Joseph's Church, Park Street to facilitate those attending the Church. The Members noted this response and were satisfied that there are an adequate number of disabled car parking spaces in the area.

4. Manager's Orders

The Members noted Manager's Orders numbered 183/12 – 09/13.

5. Correspondence

The Members noted the following correspondence:

- Letter dated 14th January 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Housing and Planning regarding the height of the trees. The Members welcomed this correspondence.
 - Letter dated the 18th December 2012 from the Office of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation concerning supports to Monaghan Town and County Council to enable the Local Authorities to engage in job creation and economic stimulus activities.
- On the proposal of Cllr Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to adopt the following “that we seek practical support from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Finance that will enable realistic and tangible implementation by our local authority of measures recently announced by Government to develop targeted local strategies for economic development and enterprise support. We assert the acquisition of the former revenue commissioners building by the Local Authority would enable job creation and enterprise support initiatives”.
- Letter dated 9th January 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding the possibility of introducing legislation to ensure that all restaurants and takeaways display the details of country of origin of their chicken products. Cllr. Robbie Gallagher called on all consumers to take time to read the labels on all products which they purchase which shows the country of origin and the contents of the products.
 - Letter dated 8th January 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government regarding a proposal to hold all elections/referenda on a Saturday.
 - Acknowledgement letter dated 10th January 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Social and Family Affairs regarding cuts to carers and child benefit in the budget.
 - Acknowledgement letter dated 8th January 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Social and Family Affairs regarding the respite care grant.

- Letter dated 19th December 2012 from the National Roads Authority regarding walking and cycling activities on the Monaghan Town by-pass. The Members expressed disappointment with the contents of the letter and on the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to forward a copy of same to Monaghan County Council for their attention. It was also agreed to discuss the matter further at the next Town Council meeting.
- E-mail dated 14th January 2013 from the Canadian Ambassador thanking the Members for their invitation to attend the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The Members noted that the Ambassador will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day in his hometown, Renew's, Newfoundland.
- Letter dated 11th January 2013 from the Chairman of Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) setting out the latest An Taisce Litter Report for Monaghan whose final overall rating for the year 2012 is "Clean to European norms". The Members complimented all those involved in keeping the town clean.
- Letter dated 14th January 2013 from the Manager of Veritas, Park Street thanking the Town Council for the lovely Christmas lighting display and the free parking during the busy Christmas season. The Members welcomed the correspondence and noted that Monaghan Town had a successful Christmas trading period.
- Acknowledgement letter dated 18th January 2013 from the Department of Health regarding Paediatric Cardiac Services. On the proposal of Cllr. Paul McGeown seconded by Cllr. Seán Conlon it was agreed to include this item on the agenda for the meeting with the HSE Officials in March.
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities regarding Notices of Motion adopted by the Members at meetings held on the 16th July 2012 and the 17th September 2012.

6. Planning Applications

The Members noted Planning Applications numbered MT12/23 – MT12/801.

7. Business Submitted by An Cathaoirleach

No business was submitted by An Cathaoirleach.

8. Consideration of Reports of Committees

The Members noted the Minutes of the Budget Sub-Committee meeting held on Monday 17th December 2012.

It was agreed to hold a St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee Meeting following the Town Council meeting.

9. Roads/Housing

A number of matters were noted for the attention of the Town Engineer:

- North Road – disabled bay – pinch in road to be removed
- Mill Street – pedestrian lights in need of repair

The Acting County Manager undertook to speak to the Planners in Monaghan County Council regarding the erection of fences in front of dwellings in housing estates which currently have open spaces rather than an enclosed garden. This request was made by Cllr. Uí Mhurchadha in order to provide safe clean areas for children.

The Members welcomed the installation of new parking bays at Rooskey Vale.

The Members requested that a letter be sent to Coillte calling on them to lift the barrier at Rossmore Forest Park after 6pm in the evening to allow access for people who wish to go for a walk in the park.

10. Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan

The Members look forward to the removal of the telecommunication mast at Killygoan.

11. Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme

The Members welcomed the Part 8 Planning Application for permission for Phase 3 of the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme which will comprise of improvement works to exterior and interior designated houses within the Mullaghmatt housing estate, alterations to boundary details of specified houses, access road improvement and re-alignment and upgrade to services where necessary. On the proposal of Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed to write to the Minister for Housing and Planning, Jan O'Sullivan TD requesting her to have the project pushed forward.

12. Report on Mixed Use Development at Rooskey

David Fallon, Acting County Manager stated that the restoration of the carpark area at Rooskey was proceeding on target. It was noted that a meeting is taking place on Friday between the Contractors and Town Council staff at which a progress report will be given.

13. Consideration of Statutory Audit Report of Monaghan Town Council for year ended 31st December 2011

The Members noted the Statutory Audit Report of Monaghan Town Council for the year ended 31st December 2011. The Acting County Manager confirmed that there will be no additional cost to the Town Council for an increased internal audit presence in the Town Council.

It was agreed that the Engineering Department prepare an inventory of lands in the Town Councils possession.

It was noted that the Executive are continuing to correspond with their Solicitor regarding the registration of lands at Corcaghan in order to bring closure to this matter.

It was noted that negotiations are underway with developers who owe financial contributions.

14. Consideration of Section 183 Notices of the Local Government Act 2001

On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Mary Carroll it was agreed to approve of a Section 183 Notice of the Local Government Act 2001 dated 10th January 2013 to dispose of the Council's interest in plots of ground at Annahagh, Monaghan to Monaghan County Council for a Fire Station Headquarters and Civil Defence Headquarters. Drawing number FA13-01 refers.

15. Consideration of Taking-In-Charge and Declaration of Public Roads

The Members noted maps numbered TIC12-01 and TIC12-02 and noted that there were no submissions/observations received during the public consultation period. On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. Mary Carroll it was agreed to approve of the taking-in-charge of the following estates and Declaration of Public Roads under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010 and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993:

- Old Park Court, Clones Road, Monaghan
- Mullaghcroghery Housing Estate, Clones Road, Monaghan

16. Notices of Motion:-

- (a) “That this Council write to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government asking for emergency funding to purchase or lease housing due to the large number of families on the housing list in the Monaghan Town/North Monaghan area”.

Cllr. Treanor

On the proposal of Cllr. Seamus Treanor seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion.

- (b) “Due to the announcement by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government that money is to be made available to small sewage schemes, we as a Council request that money be made available for the Clones/Scotstown Road area to include Woodlands estate and the Milltown area”.

Cllr. Treanor

On the proposal of Cllr. Seamus Treanor seconded by Cllr. Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion.

Cllr. Robbie Gallagher left the Council Chamber.

17. Ceisteanna/Questions

Cllrs. Uí Mhurchadha, Conlon, Sherry and McGeown asked:-

- (a) The recent collapse of security fencing at the Latlorcan Housing Development on the Castleblayney Road highlights again the urgent need for permanent resolution to site safety and remediation issues at this location. Has a definitive schedule of works and timeline in addressing outstanding unfinished housing development issues been agreed with the relevant agencies?

On the 11/12/12, Planning met with Ulster Bank officials in Belfast in order to expedite matters. Consequently, an engineer has been appointed by the bank to manage the site resolution process (delay attributed to the convoluted nature of the administration process). Planning met with said engineer (Pearse Sutton, Cronin & Sutton Consulting, Dublin) on the 17/01/13. He is now working to an end of the month deadline, re the preparation of a first draft of a Site Resolution Plan.

- (b) Regarding the unfinished housing development at Forest Walk, Cortolvin have negotiations taken place between Council's Planning or Housing Section and NAMA, and if so what potential outcomes are being considered/pursued?

The developer's engineer (Denis Williams Consulting, Dundalk) at the behest of NAMA (appointment confirmed on the 6/12/12), has submitted a public safety report (11/01/13) to planning for comment. Said report has been considered and planning issued a response to Denis Williams Consulting today (21/01/13). In summary, it has been proposed to secure and "tidy" the site.

However, as per the Derelict Sites Notice that was issued in late 2012, "clearance" (demolition, restoration of land, etc) of the site is still Planning's principal site resolution option.

- (c) Given the considerable costs associated with operation of public street lighting in Monaghan and throughout all urban and village areas, in excess of €0.5 million annually, is our local authority executive giving consideration to the use of alternative technology, i.e. LED lighting that has the potential to create substantial savings on limited Council resources?

Given that public lighting is unmetered Monaghan County Council have no plans at present to use LED bulbs. Currently the Sustainable Energy Ireland has a Local Authority working group on unmetered public lighting and issues such as a replacement bulb technology and energy performance contracting are being discussed with a view to running a number of pilot programmes nationally. To minimize costs for unmetered lighting Monaghan Local Authorities participated in the National Procurement Service Energy Tender in 2012, Monaghan Local Authorities have now a fixed price per kwh for the next three years which represents very good value for money. On the metered electricity side Monaghan County Council recently completed a retro fit of bulbs in the Swimming Pool and County Museum using in some cases LED technology.

18. Resolutions from Other Local Authorities

- (a) "That this Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to instruct all County Registrars, in future elections to take unemployed people of the dole on election day to carry out the duties required in polling stations, as there are many young people with the skills to do the work, and would be grateful for a few extra euro, also saving the State on welfare for the day. The practice of using people who are already in employment and retired civil servants with good pensions are already in employment and retired civil servants with good pensions, is wrong when so many of our people are on the breadline".

Clones Town Council

It was agreed to mark the above Resolution read.

- (b) "That Waterford City Council rejects the proposed amalgamation of Waterford City and County Councils as proposed in "Putting People First" by the Minister for Environment".

Waterford City Council

It was agreed to mark the above Resolution read.

- (c) “The Members of Donegal County Council express concern in relation to the value for money aspect of registering for the following Conference on the evening of the 17th January, 2013:- “Tourism in Recessionary Times”, a National Tourism Conference to be held from Thursday 17th January to Saturday 19th January 2013 in the Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare. It was noted that registration was also scheduled to take place on the afternoon of the 18th January 2013 and thus having considered the financial implications involved, to approve attendance for the 18th and 19th January 2013 only.

Donegal County Council

It was agreed to mark the above Resolution read.

19. Conferences :-

- (a) Celtic Conferences – “Debt Solutions – The New Personal Insolvency Legislation” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Cork – 25th- 27th January 2013 – (approx. cost €880).
- (b) TGR Seminars – “Domestic Water Meters for Ireland: Implications for Irish Communities and Businesses” - Bunratty Castle Hotel, Co. Clare – 1st- 3rd February 2013 – (approx. cost €700).
- (c) Ace Training – “Tourism Seminar – Making the Difference” – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth – 8th- 10th February 2013 – (approx. cost €370).
- (d) Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland Spring Seminar 2013 – Brandon House Hotel, New Ross – 15th- 16th February 2013 – (approx. cost €700).

It was agreed that the two representatives to the AMAI, ie Cllr. David Maxwell and Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha attend conference (d). On the proposal of Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed that Cllr. Seán Conlon attend conference (d). It was agreed that if any Member of the Town Council wishes to attend the AMAI Conference that they submit their name to the Town Clerk.

The Members were circulated with a report under Section 142 (5)(f) of the Local Government Act 2001 in respect of the following:
Colmcille Winter School Conference attended by Cllr. Robbie Gallagher.

20. Any Other Business

It was noted that a Rugby Team from Miramichi will be guests of honour at the St. Patrick’s Day Parade in Monaghan. It was also noted that Peter Murphy, Tourism Officer for Miramichi is visiting Monaghan and it was agreed that the Cathaoirleach and Acting County Manager meet with him during his visit.

21. Sympathy / Congratulations

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Sinead Tibby-Tracey, Staff Member of Monaghan Town Council on the death of her mother, Ann Tibby, Dr. McKenna Terrace, Monaghan.
- The McDermott family, Corlea, Dunraymond on the death of Patsy McDermott
- The Smith family, Ballybay on the death of Philip Smith, former Ballybay Town Councillor
- The Treanor family, Derrykinnighmore, Emyvale on the death of Francie Treanor
- The Parents and brothers of Jason McGovern, Tydavnet who died as a result of an assault in Omagh.

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:

- Fearghal McMahon, Monaghan Harps Football Club on achieving the Danske Bank Ulster Colleges Football All Star Award 2012/2013
- Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn, Monaghan on receiving the Seán Ó Riada Gold Medal in the Uilleann Pipes competition.

The Members wished the Monaghan County Senior Football Team good luck in the next round of the Dr. McKenna Cup.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this the 18th day of February 2013.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

