

## **Comhairle Baile Mhuineacháin Monaghan Town Council**

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010 at 5.45pm in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

**Cathaoirleach:** Cllr. Seán Conlon

**Present:** Cllrs. Mary Carroll, Robbie Gallagher, Thomas Hagan, David Maxwell, Paul McGeown, Donal Sherry, Seamus Treanor and Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha.

**In Attendance:** Declan Nelson, County Manager, Gareth Mc Mahon, Town Engineer, Adrian Hughes, Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Miriam Mc Mahon, Assistant Staff Officer.

At the outset the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seán Conlon welcomed the Members to the January Monthly Meeting and wished everyone present a Happy New Year.

### **Proposed Works at Old Cross Square, Monaghan.**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seán Conlon stated that plans are underway to carry out a major programme of improvement works to Old Cross Square, Monaghan which will be funded from the Gateways and Hubs ERDF Grants Scheme awarded by the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly. Cllr. Conlon stated that the Town Council Members had met with the Residents of the area on a number of occasions in relation to the works and was confident that the majority of issues raised by them had now been resolved. Declan Nelson, County Manager stated that the Town Council's proposed works will include (a) the reconfiguration of Old Cross Square in order to address the traffic management situation and (b) the relocation of the Monument. Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer outlined the history attached to the Monument. Cllr. Uí Mhurchadha suggested that an explanatory plaque be added to the Monument. Gareth McMahan, Town Engineer informed the Members that he had consulted with all stakeholders in the area and confirmed that the Part V111 Planning process will be underway within a few weeks. Shirley Clerkin and Adrian Hughes left the Council Chamber.

#### **1. Confirmation of December Monthly Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.**

On the proposal of Cllr Paul McGeown seconded by Cllr Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the December Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

#### **2. Confirmation of Statutory Annual Budget Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.**

On the proposal of Cllr Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Statutory Annual Budget Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

### **3. Confirmation of Meeting held in Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2009.**

On the proposal of Cllr Paul McGeown seconded by Cllr Mary Carroll it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Meeting held in committee with the applicants for casual trading licences on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

### **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

It was agreed to issue a reminder letter to John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion 13(a) adopted by the Members at the December Monthly Meeting.

As no reply had been received regarding a motion passed by the Members at the Annual Budget Meeting of the Town Council concerning the Non-Principal Private Residence Charge it was agreed to renew the Town Councils call to John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

On the proposal of Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded by Cllr Mary Carroll it was agreed to investigate the possibility of making the Chilean Ambassador to Ireland, Cecelia McKenna an honorary citizen of Monaghan town at a civic reception to be arranged following the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

It was noted that the Part V111 Planning Application for the proposed new roadway, as part of the phase 2 works for the N54-R188 Monaghan Town link road, linking the Cortolvin Road with the Cootehill Road has been withdrawn as there was a problem with the wording of the public notice. It was noted that when the application is re-lodged that the plans will be put on public display in Teach Na nDaoine Family Resource Centre.

### **5. Manager's Orders**

Manager's Orders numbered 273/09 – 291/09 were noted by the Members.

Cllr. Robbie Gallagher welcomed the correspondence sent to businesses in the town by the Town Clerk outlining the flexibility with regard to payment of rates, whereby payment could be spread over a 10 month period.

Cllr. Uí Mhurchadha referred to 2 no. Convenience Stores in the town which closed recently and which provided an important service to the people of the town through their extended opening hours. Cllr. Uí Mhurchadha stated that she believed that Rates were a contributing factor in the closure of these outlets. Declan Nelson, County Manager referred to a recent National Survey which showed that rates represent 3% of a businesses costs and that other higher costs include wages, rent, energy, insurances.

### **6. Correspondence**

The Members noted the following correspondence:-

- Letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009 from M.P. Clancy, Superintendent, An Garda Síochána regarding poor television reception experienced by householders in Monaghan Town. The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seán Conlon stated that a meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010 in the Clones Town Council offices in relation to various issues relating to masts. Cllr. Conlon stated that as the Monaghan Town Joint Policing Committee meeting is taking place at the same time he had expressed an apology on behalf of the Town Council Members for their inability to attend.

- Circular letter LG 26/09 dated 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2009 regarding revised Representational Payment for Councillors effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010.
- Details of Monaghan County Council's Award Scheme 2009.
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities regarding Notice of Motion circulated to all Local Authorities in connection with ESB Meter Readers.
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities regarding Notice of Motion circulated to all Local Authorities in connection with the McCarthy report.

## **7. Business submitted by An Cathaoirleach**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seán Conlon praised Monaghan Town Council staff on the work carried out by them during the severe weather conditions. It was noted that the staff had worked long hours to deal with frozen pipes, heating problems, etc. The Members and the County Manager concurred with the Cathaoirleach's sentiments.

## **8. Planning Applications**

Planning Applications numbered 09/33 – 09/37 were noted by the Members.

## **9. Consideration of Reports of Committees:**

The Members noted Minutes of a Budget sub-committee meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Cllr Seán Conlon proposed an amendment to the Minutes as follows "That provision for painting of all dwellings in the Mullaghmatt Housing Estate be undertaken in the Remedial Scheme to bring the houses in line with the remainder of the housing estate and thus providing uniformity to the entire estate". This was seconded by Cllr Robbie Gallagher. Following a discussion and on the proposal of Cllr David Maxwell seconded by Cllr Mary Carroll it was agreed to place the matter on the agenda for the February Monthly Meeting and to have all documentation in relation to the subject made available at the Meeting in order to arrive at a resolution on the matter.

Cllr Mary Carroll stated that she attended a meeting of Coiste Gaeilge recently and that a draft plan is being prepared for Seachtain na nGaeilge. Cllr. Carroll encouraged the Members to speak "cupla focal" at the Town Council Meetings. Cllr Carroll expressed disappointment that the funding granted in the 2010 Budget by Monaghan County Council to An Coiste Gaeilge had been reduced.

## **10. Roads/Housing**

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

- Illegal Dumping – Mullaghmatt
- Condition of gullies/back lanes – housing estates
- Footpaths/steps in bad condition – Mullaghmatt
- Road markings at junctions to be improved
- Provision of extra car parking spaces – St. Patrick's Tce
- Ramps to be examined – Rope Walk area
- Public light out of order at entrance to Park Lane from Dawson Street.
- Extend parking area – St. Patricks Terrace
- Entry off Dublin Street – littered – land search to be carried out

It was noted that the Contractor appointed to carry out the works to the doors/windows in the Killygoan area will be returning to complete the works in the near future.

It was noted that Monaghan Town were placed 37<sup>th</sup> position in the recent IBAL League Table. A discussion took place on the littered condition of some parts of the town.

Gareth Mc Mahon, Town Engineer undertook to have a sign erected indicating the location of a number of business premises off Dublin Street.

Cllr David Maxwell left the Council Chamber.

#### **11. Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan**

It was agreed to request all Telecommunication Companies carrying out works to the Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan to inform the Town Clerk as to when they have completed the works.

#### **12. Mullaghmatt Remedial Scheme**

It was noted that works are continuing to take place to Phase 2 of the Remedial Works Scheme.

#### **13. Consideration of Proposal to make a one-way traffic system in Mill Street, Monaghan Town**

The Members noted a report from the Town Engineer on the proposal to make Mill Street a one-way system. The Members noted the submissions received following public consultation and it was agreed to introduce the one-way system on a trial basis for a three month period. It was also agreed that further consultation take place after the three month period with those who made submissions.

#### **14. Notices of Motion**

- (a) "That this Council extends the supply of central heating to all Local Authority houses".

Clls. Uí Mhurchadha, Conlon, Sherry, McGeown

On the proposal of Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded by Cllr Paul McGeown it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion. The Town Engineer stated that it is proposed to apply to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for permission to carry out an advance works contract to install oil fired central heating into the houses as part of the remedial scheme.

Cllr Seán Conlon vacated the chair and Cllr Robbie Gallagher, Leas Cathaoirleach took the chair.

- (b) "That this Council increases the number of car parking spaces and broaden the existing spaces starting at No. 29 Devin Reilly Terrace, Connolly Park".

Cllrs. Uí Mhurchadha, Conlon, Sherry, McGeown

On the proposal of Cllr Donal Sherry seconded by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion. Gareth Mc Mahon, Town Engineer stated that the matter would be examined as part of the Road Works Programme 2010.

Cllr Robbie Gallagher, Leas Cathaoirleach vacated the chair and the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seán Conlon took the chair.

- © “That this Council, through the Town Hall, make available the “Keep Well and Warm” booklet published by CAMCAS and that we invite a representative to give a presentation to the February Monthly Meeting”.

Cllrs. Uí Mhurchadha, Conlon, Sherry, McGeown

On the proposal of Cllr Donal Sherry seconded by Cllr Seán Conlon it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion.

- (d) “That this Council call on the Government to increase the fuel allowance in light of the severe weather conditions of the past few weeks”.

Cllrs. Carroll, Hagan, Maxwell

On the proposal of Cllr Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr Thomas Hagan it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion. Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha called for an instant and immediate payment from the Government as people have been out of pocket trying to keep warm during the severe weather conditions.

- (e) “That this Council consider the possibilities of making containers of salt and/or grit available in housing estates during winter months to enable local communities to make footpaths safe and passable”.

Cllrs. Carroll, Hagan, Maxwell

On the proposal of Cllr Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr Thomas Hagan it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion.

## **15. Questions**

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

- (a) To seek information from the ESB regarding the lack of repair/replacement of faulty lighting in the town over recent months and to query when will the 4 new lamp posts installed on the approach road to Gallinagh/Milltown be commissioned?

*All of the paperwork regarding the connections of the 4 no. new lights on the Milltown Road has been completed and submitted to the ESB for some time. Kevin Campbell ESB/Airtricity will investigate why there is a delay in getting the light activated.*

*As there has been a transition period for Airtricity to take control of the functions previously carried out by ESB and there are now new operatives working on the ground in the maintenance of public lights, there has been a slight deficit in the thoroughness of the public lighting patrols. This has been exacerbated by the poor weather conditions. A patrol is planned for this week which will incorporate the entire area of public lights under the control of Monaghan Town Council.*

*All outstanding work that this patrol reveals will be dealt with in the coming weeks. The light that is out at the Dawson Street/Broad Road junction has a fault in the cable feeding it. This light requires new ducting and cables to be brought to the light. This work will be carried out in the coming weeks when ESB provide Monaghan Town Council with details of the location and specification of the ducting required.*

- (b) Has Monaghan Town Council any responsibility for the gritting or clearing of footpaths in housing estates during inclement weather?

*Monaghan Town Council has responsibility for gritting those estates that are in the charge of the Council. A priority system is in place to determine what areas are gritted and when. With regard to roads, the first priority is to the main roads and thoroughfares through the town. The next priority is to the roads through the housing estates in the charge of the Council, in addition the entrance roads to private estates may be gritted if the road poses an obvious danger. With regard to footpaths, priority is given to town centre paths and pedestrian routes. When the town centre footpaths have been dealt with the outlying footpaths and footpaths within Council housing estates are gritted.*

Cllr. Robbie Gallagher asked:-

- (c) Would the Council investigate the possibility of erecting a bus shelter near the library on the North Road?

*There is a small area adjacent to the YWCA building which may be suitable for locating a small bus shelter. The Council is examining the proposal to provide a bus shelter at this location. A further report will be made at the February Monthly Meeting.*

- (d) Can the Council confirm that external painting of privately owned houses is included in the Remedial Works in Mullaghmat?

*As per the instruction received from the DOEHLG it is not permitted for Monaghan Town Council to use its internal capital receipts to cover the 50% of costs not covered within the contract. Monaghan Town Council does not have any other budget allocation to cover these costs. Monaghan Town Council are asking the private residents of Mullaghmat to cover the additional 50% of costs for the external painting. Due to the nature of the works in this phase the cost of other curtilage works – works to the boundary walls and drives, etc will be covered under the scheme and funded 100% by the DOEHLG.*

- (e) I would like to compliment the Council and the Council's outdoor staff for their work during the festive period during a time of difficult weather conditions. In light of the experience of these unprecedented conditions would the Council consider the review of its response to extreme weather conditions generally for the future?

*The County Council's Director of Roads, David Fallon is carrying out a review of procedures and processes regarding emergency response in times of severe weather conditions. When this review is completed it will inform the future operations of Monaghan Town Council.*

#### **16. Resolutions from other Local Authorities:-**

- (a) "This Council propose that in light of the recent flooding, the Government should form one National Body to oversee the upkeep and maintenance of all the rivers and lakes in the country and that plans are put in place to deal with future flooding disasters. It was further proposed and agreed to forward this Motion to all Local Authorities"

Ballybay Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (b) "That this Council call on the Minister for Finance, Brian Lenihan and the Government to reduce the VAT rate in order to help trading difficulties being experienced in the Border Region and to call on all political opinion to renew determination to end partition."

Clones Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

## **17. Conferences**

- (a) Antrim Tourism Conference – “Tourism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – A Challenge for All” - Dunadry Hotel, Dunadry, Co. Antrim – 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January 2010- (approx. cost €500).
- (b) Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland Spring Seminar 2010 – Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo – 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February 2010 – (approx. cost €500)

It was agreed that the two delegates to the AMAI, Cllrs Uí Mhurchadha and Maxwell attend Conference (b).

## **18. Any other Business**

Cllr Paul McGeown requested that a letter be issued to the HSE asking them to clarify the extent of the availability of the Doctor on Call service in the Monaghan Town area and to furnish statistics as to how many times they have responded to requests made to the Doctor on Call service from Monaghan. It was also agreed to issue the letter to Mary Harney, T.D., Minister for Health and Children.

Cllr Donal Sherry appealed to all Town Council tenants to ensure that they have their house contents insured.

Cllr. Treanor referred to a letter he had received which contained complaints about a food premises in the town which was opening late and causing disturbance to residents in the area. The Town Engineer stated that a survey is being carried out at present on all food outlets. It was noted that a warning letter had already being issued to the outlet which Cllr. Treanor had referred to and that an enforcement notice will be issued in the near future if necessary.

## **19. Sympathy/Congratulations**

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:

- Monaghan Training Workshop, Rooskey on the performance of their Christmas Drama Production
- Drumlin Players who will perform Brian Friels Play “The London Vertigo” at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Theatre Festival in Barielly, India

The Members passed sympathy with the victims of the Haiti Earthquake disaster. A minutes silence was held.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of February 2010

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**Cathaoirleach**