

COMHAIRLE BAILE MHUINEACHÁIN
MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 18th March 2014 at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, No. 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Paul McGeown

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

In Attendance: Paul Clifford, Director of Services, Dermot Deeney, Town Engineer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Sinead Tibby-Tracey, Clerical Officer.

Presentation of Prizes to St. Patrick's Day Parade Winners

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Paul McGeown welcomed and congratulated the winners of each category in the St. Patrick's Day Parade Competition. The Cathaoirleach presented a trophy for the Best Marching Band in the Parade to the representatives from the Monaghan Community Brass Band. A plaque for the Best Commercial Float was presented by the Cathaoirleach to Monaghan Leisure Centre and the Best Community Float was won by the Monaghan Special Olympics.

The Prizewinners left the Council Chamber.

1. Confirmation of February Monthly Meeting held on 17th February 2014

On the proposal of Cllr. Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr. Seán Conlon it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the February Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 17th February 2014.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Members welcomed the recent works carried out to manhole covers in the town.

On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed to write to the National Asset Management Agency calling for a meeting to discuss the delays in having works required at the Knockroe Glen housing estate in the town attended to.

In relation to a previous request to improve access to the Dublin Street area of the town, Paul Clifford, Director of Services stated that an environmental improvement scheme is being planned for the area and that preliminary discussions have been entered into with landowners.

The Town Engineer stated that he would follow up the matter of the introduction of traffic calming measures on the Castleblayney road into Monaghan town with the Area Engineer.

3. Manager's Orders

The Members noted Managers Orders numbered 16/14 – 25/14.

4. Correspondence

The Members noted the following correspondence:

- Letter dated 21st February 2014 from the Department of Justice & Equality regarding Ms. Margaretta D'Arcy.
- Letter 26th February 2014 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government regarding the 2014 Budget.
- Letter of acknowledgement dated 6th March 2014 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in connection with the Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland Seminar.
- Letter of acknowledgement dated 17th February 2014 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the European Charter of Local Self-Government.
- Letter dated 10th March 2014 from the Department of Social Protection regarding the Rent Supplement Scheme. On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed to request the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton TD to consider Monaghan town as a special case and to increase the Rent Supplement limits applying to the town.
- Acknowledgement letter dated 24th February 2014 from Irish Water.
- Letter dated 3rd March 2014 from the Justice for the Forgotten in relation to the 40th Anniversary of the Dublin-Monaghan bombings. On the proposal of Cllr Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to provide refreshments after a ceremony to be held in Monaghan on the 18th May 2014. It was also agreed to provide an outdoor PA system for the event.
- E-mail dated 27th February 2014 from The Fort Augustus Irish Descendants Association extending an invitation to the Members of the Town Council to attend the 24th Annual Irish Settlers Day from the 21st – 26th May 2014. It was agreed that the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Paul McGeown attend this event.
- E-mail dated 25th February 2014 from Monaghan County Council regarding a meeting of Coiste Gaeilge and the Irish Language competition “Comortas na bhfuinneog” which is run during the week of Seachtain na Gaeilge. Cllr. Mary Carroll stated that there is no competition planned for this year.
- Letter dated 12th March 2014 from Chambers Ireland in relation to the Excellence in Local Government Awards 2014.
- Correspondence from Monaghan County Council in relation to the changes to administration of the Housing Grants Scheme to be implemented as of the 1st January 2014.
- E-mail dated 4th March 2014 in relation to the Taste of Monaghan Festival which will take place from the 3rd to the 5th October 2014.
- E-mail dated 11th March 2014 in relation to a Press Conference been hosted by the Former Local Authority Members Eire in Tipperary on the 21st March 2014.
- E-mail dated 25th February 2014 from Special Olympics Ulster.

Cllr. Seán Conlon circulated correspondence from Teach na nDaoine Family Resource Centre in relation to having an entry closed in the estate due to anti-social behaviour issues. On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Seán Conlon it was agreed to refer the correspondence to the Planning Sub-Committee of Monaghan Town Council.

5. Planning Applications

The Members noted Planning Applications numbered MT14/30002 – MT1/30004.

6. Business Submitted by An Cathaoirleach

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Paul McGeown congratulated everyone involved in the organisation of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Monaghan Town on the 17th March 2014. Cllr. McGeown also thanked the Monaghan Motor Club who assisted in the marshalling of the Parade. The Members pledged to continue with their work on a voluntary capacity to ensure that there will be a parade in Monaghan in years to come and urged the people of the town to become involved as it is a great family day and draws many people to the town.

7. Consideration of Reports of Committees

On the proposal of Cllr Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr. Seán Conlon it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Thursday 20th February 2014.

It was agreed to:-

- Erect a bench with a plaque on the Greenway in honour of the late Seamus Cadden and Dr. Michael O’Gorman and to seek a location towards the Tullyherim end of the Greenway where there would be a less risk of anti-social behaviour.
- Grant permission to the Monaghan Motor Club for the use of the Upper and Lower Courthouse Carparks for their annual rally in April.

On the proposal of Cllr. Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr. Paul McGeown it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 12th March 2014. Cllr. Mary Carroll commended and praised the work of the Monaghan Tidy Towns Committee and their passion and commitment towards their plans for the future enhancement of the town. In relation to a train sculpture planned for the green area near to the Model School it was agreed that the Tidy Towns Committee be advised to liaise with the School Board. The Members also agreed to the Tree Planting Scheme planned for Glaslough Street Car Park.

The Members were not in favour of a request from Eircom to replace two telephone boxes in the town. The Members expressed the opinion that the proposed kiosks are too big and inappropriate for the areas concerned.

Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha stated that she attended a meeting of the Social, Cultural, Voluntary and Community Strategic Policy Committee of Monaghan County Council on the 5th March 2014 and commended all involved on the work that they do. On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. Seán Conlon it was agreed to congratulate the Management and Staff of the Monaghan County Museum on their programme of events planned to celebrate their 40 years in existence.

Cllr. Mary Carroll stated that she attended a Coiste Gaeilge Meeting recently. It was agreed to write to the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht seeking funding for the provision of an Irish Language Officer for Monaghan County Council.

8. Roads / Housing

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

- Effluent in the Shambles river along the Greenway (It was agreed to write to the EPA and the Environment Section of Monaghan County Council)
- Potholes/road surfaces – very poor throughout town
- Canal Walk/Highfield Close – public lighting out of order
- Signage on Ballybay Road – requires cleaning
- Belgian Square – Public Lighting improvements
- Fence - Belgium Park requires painting
- Measures to enhance pedestrian safety required – Roundabout, Park Street.
- Mall Road alleyway (walkway) to be monitored – parked cars blocking entry.
- Hoarding on public footpath collapsed – Mall Road Area.
- High shrubs on Corlatt Roundabout - blocking view of traffic – Members stated that the shrubs act as a means of reducing the speed of traffic.

It was noted that legal advice has been taken in relation to the dangerous condition of a wall at Ard Glas which indicates that the Local Authority has no direct responsibility for the wall.

On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to write to the Superintendent, Monaghan Garda Station regarding a number of recent sightings of gatherings of young men in various areas of the town who seem to be under the influence of alcohol/drugs and who are causing public disruptive behaviour in the town. It was also agreed to inform the Superintendent of complaints received about cycling on the footpaths in the town.

It was noted that there are people parking on the Greenway path in Rooskey Vale. Paul Clifford pointed out that the Council still have to put down relevant markings on the cycle path which might help the situation. Cllr. Seamus Treanor proposed that a letter be written to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government asking them to consider putting funding in place for the provision of a footbridge from the Monaghan Harps GFC grounds to the Greenway. This was seconded by Cllr. Seán Conlon. Cllr. Robbie Gallagher proposed that signs be put in place stating that parking is available to the users of the Greenway at the Monaghan Harps grounds. This was seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell.

9. Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan

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

10. Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme

The Members noted the following report in relation to the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme: “Subsequent to receipt of legal advice, Monaghan Town Council has notified the contractor that was previously identified as being the most economically advantageous tenderer that its tender is not compliant with the requirement of the Invitation to Tender.

Subject to receipt of required information from the next placed tenderer and there being no legal challenges, it is the Councils intention to award the contract to the next placed tenderer.

The next placed contractor is required to submit all required information by 24th March 2014.”

11. Report on Vacant Apartments at Drumbear

The Town Engineer stated that snagging works are being undertaken in the vacant apartments at Drumbear at present.

12. Consideration of adoption of the Monaghan Town Council (Regulation and Control of the Consumption and Possession of Intoxicating Liquor in Public Places) Bye-Laws 2014

On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Mary Carroll it was agreed to adopt the Monaghan Town Council (Regulation and Control of the Consumption and Possession of Intoxicating Liquor in Public Places) Bye-Laws 2014 and it was also agreed to seek a derogation from the Bye-Laws for the Monaghan Town Country Music Festival to be held in Monaghan from the 17th to the 20th July 2014.

13. Consideration of Sale of Fee Simple Interest on the following dwellings.

On the proposal of Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded by Cllr. Mary Carroll it was agreed to approve of the sale of the fee simple interest on 41 Killyconnigan, Monaghan as per notice dated 24th February 2014.

On the proposal of Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded by Cllr. Mary Carroll it was agreed to approve of the sale of the fee simple interest on 11 Belgium Park, Monaghan as per notice dated 24th February 2014.

14. Notices of Motion:-

- (a) “That the Council investigate the cost and logistics of providing free Wi-Fi in the centre of the town to make the town centre more attractive for consumers, visitors and businesses”.

Cllr. Gallagher

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

- (b) “That the Monaghan Town Council calls on the Government to introduce a temporary moratorium on State owned bodies re-employing those already in receipt of Public Sector Pensions in respect of previous State employment. We also call on responsible employers in the private sector to do likewise”.

Cllrs. Sherry, Conlon, Uí Mhurchadha, McGeown

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

15. Ceisteanna/Questions

Cllr. Gallagher asked:-

- (a) Can the Council take action to address the poor surface of the road on Dawson Street where pedestrians cross from Dunnes to the shopping centre?

The Area Engineer has investigated the issue and intends to complete repair works within the month.

- (b) The Glen Road entrance to McNallys Carpark is persistently flooded – can any measures be taken to alleviate the problem?

Repair works at the entrance have been completed.

- (c) Can the Council investigate any measures that would encourage a greater flow of pedestrian traffic through the alleyways to Dublin Street from the Carpark?

Monaghan Town Council is contacting all private owners along the alleyway to request them to tidy up all areas visible from the public alleyway. Monaghan Tidy Towns are also considering painting murals on the hoarding along one side of the alleyway subject to agreement with the owner.

16. Resolutions from Other Local Authorities

- (a) “That Ennis Town Council request the Minister for Finance to reverse the increase in Medical card holders prescription charge of Euro 2.50 per item. This increase is resulting in many people who require multiple prescriptions forfeiting essential prescription items as they can no longer afford them”.

Ennis Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (b) “In light of the recent revelation regarding Irish Water, this Council calls on the Government and the Minister for the Environment to disband Irish Water and revert back to the Status Quo of the service being delivered by Local Authorities”.

Donegal County Council

Following a discussion a vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

In favour of the Resolution – Cllrs. Conlon, Gallagher, Hagan, McGeown, Sherry, Treanor, Uí Mhurchadha (7).

Against the Resolution – Carroll, Maxwell (2).

The Resolution was carried.

- (c) “We call on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan, T.D. to abolish the extra charge people are forced to pay as a result of taxing their car for a three month period as opposed to a twelve-month period”.

Clones Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

17. Conferences:-

- (a) Ace Training – “Meeting Management – Principles and Best Practice” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork 21st- 23rd March 2014 (approx. Cost €880)
- (b) BGSeminarz Ltd – “Making Communities Heart Safe” – Gleeson’s Town House, Roscommon – 21st- 23rd March 2014 - (approx. cost €510).
- (c) Ace Training – “Changes to the Construction Contracts Act 2013 for Local Authorities” – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford – 21st- 23rd March 2014 – (approx. cost €370).
- (d) TJK Conferences Ltd – “Role of Ombudsman Conference” - Scotts, Limerick - 21st- 23rd March 2014 – (approx. cost €620).

- (e) Ace Training – “Retirement Entitlements and Taxation Benefits for Councillors” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – 28th – 30th March 2014 – (approx. cost €880).
- (f) BGSEminarz Ltd - “Water Fluoridation in Ireland, The Facts” – The Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise – 28th- 30th March 2014– (approx. cost €620).
- (g) Carlow Tourism National Conference – “Developing the Potential of Irelands Natural Environment – The Importance of Adventure Tourism” – The Talbot Hotel, Portlaoise Road, Carlow 3rd- 5th April 2014 – (approx. cost €640).
- (h) Superior Training – “Retirement Planning for Councillors” – The Fairways Hotel, Dundalk – 4th- 5th April 2014– (approx. cost €250).
- (i) Celtic Conferences – “West Cork Tourism Seminar on Internet Marketing” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery – 4th- 6th April 2014 – (approx. cost €880).
- (j) BGSEminarz – “Planning is more that Policy – Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise – 4th- 6th April 2014 – (approx. cost €620).
- (k) Dundalk Chamber Cross Border Tourism Conference – “Greenway Forward for Tourism, Health and Sport” – Ballymascanlon House Hotel, Dundalk – 9th April 2014 - (approx. cost €65).
- (l) Irish Planning Institute National Planning Conference 2014 – “50 years of Planning: time to lead change and plan for growth” – Limerick Strand Hotel, Limerick City – 10th- 11th April 2014 - (approx. cost €820).
- (m) Ace Training – “MABS and the Insolvency Service of Ireland” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – 11th - 13th April 2014 – (Approx. Cost €820).
- (n) BGSEminarz Ltd – “Environment and Cost Effective Solutions to Waste Water Treatment” Ramada Viking Hotel, Waterford – 11th- 13th April 2014 - (approx. cost €485).

The Town Clerk circulated details of a Conference organised by the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) – “Local Government by Local People” to be held on 3rd April 2014 in Dublin Castle. On the proposal of Cllr. Donal Sherry seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed that Cllr. Seán Conlon attend the Conference.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2001 Section 142(5)(f) the Members were circulated with reports on proceedings in relation to attendance at the following conferences:-

- Association of Irish Region Seminar – attended by Cllr. Seán Conlon
- The Local Government Landscape from 2014 onwards - attended by Cllr. Seán Conlon
- AMAI Spring Seminar 2014 - attended by Cllr. Donal Sherry

18. Any Other Business

Cllr. Seamus Treanor referred to overcrowding in nearby hospitals Cavan and Drogheda and called for a meeting with the Minister for Health to seek some form of emergency medical service to be reinstated at Monaghan Hospital so that patients could have their condition stabilised before being moved onto other hospitals for treatment. Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded Cllr. Treanor's proposal. Cllr. Thomas Hagan referred to delays in ambulances attending emergencies and the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Paul McGeown stated that the Ambulance Crews are doing excellent work but are been stretched to the limit and are getting no support from the Government.

Cllr. Seamus Treanor called for a letter to be sent to RTE informing them of complaints about poor reception for Saorview or Digital Television services in parts of Monaghan town.

Cllr. Seán Conlon proposed that the Town Council consider reducing pay parking charges or introducing free parking on Saturdays for a trial period of three months. Cllr. Conlon raised concerns about how the monies from pay parking would be disseminated following the changes to be implemented under Local Government Reform in June 2014 when Town Councils will be abolished and the town will become part of the North Monaghan Municipal District. Paul Clifford, Director of Services stated that the Members of the Council adopted the Budget with a reduced commercial rate for the town two months ago and that Monaghan Town has the lowest pay parking charge in the country. It was noted that Cllr. Conlon's proposal would result in a loss of revenue to the Council amounting to approx. €94k in a year. Paul Clifford stated that it may be better to increase activity in the town on a Saturday, i.e. music events, etc in the Diamond to draw more people into the town.

Cllr. Donal Sherry seconded Cllr. Conlon's proposal and it was agreed to refer the matter to the Planning Sub-Committee of the Town Council for further discussion.

Cllr. Seán Conlon referred to correspondence received from Teach na nDaoine Family Resource Centre regarding a request to close off an entry between two houses in the Mullaghmatt Estate as it has become an area of anti-social behaviour. It was noted that a survey has been carried out by the Resource Centre and that Members are in favour of the closure of the alleyway. It was agreed to refer the matter to the Planning Sub-Committee of the Town Council on the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell and seconded by Cllr. Robbie Gallagher.

Cllr. Seán Conlon stated that at a recent CPG Meeting of Monaghan County Council it was agreed that consideration be given to organising a function/event to commemorate the dissolution of the five Town Council's in the County. Suggestions included the erection of a plaque, tree planting, formal photographs, etc and Cllr. Conlon asked the Members to come forward with appropriate ideas as to how the occasion may be marked.

19. Sympathy/Congratulations

A vote of sympathy was extended to Cllr. Gary Carville on the death of his father, Arthur Carville, Annyalla, former Chairman and Member of Monaghan County Council.

Best wishes were extended to Mrs Mary Clerkin, Tully following a recent road accident in the town.

A vote of congratulations was extended to the Tullycorbett Instrumental Group who won an All-Ireland Scór Title recently.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this the 15th day of April 2014.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

