

COMHAIRLE BAILE MHUINEACHÁIN
MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 20th May 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, Thomas Hagan, Donal Sherry and Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha.

In Attendance: David Fallon, County Manager, Dermot Deeney, Town Engineer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Mary Mc Coy, Clerical Officer.

An apology for inability to attend was received from Cllr. Paul McGeown.

1. Confirmation of April Monthly Meeting held on 15th April 2013

On the proposal of Cllr. Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr Donal Sherry it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the April Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 15th April 2013.

2. Confirmation of Meeting held in Committee on 15th April 2013

On the proposal of Cllr Thomas Hagan seconded by Cllr Mary Carroll it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held in committee on 15th April 2013.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes.

Cllr David Maxwell entered the meeting room.

Cllr. Seán Conlon commended the Town Council Executive for assisting the Monaghan Allotment Society in completing the final stages of the provision of allotments at Killygoan. It was noted that there has been a full uptake of the allotments from members of the public.

The Members paid compliments to the Town Council Gardener and the outdoor staff on the beautiful display of flowers and planting of trees in various areas of the town.

Cllr. Donal Sherry requested that a reminder letter be issued to the Local Returning Officer seeking an exact percentage breakdown of students, retired people and unemployed who were afforded the opportunity to work at the Polling Stations at the Children's Referendum in November 2012.

The Members noted that plans are underway for the Monaghan Town Country Music Festival planned for July 2013. It was noted that the request for road closures from the Committee will go to public consultation in the near future.

4. Manager's Orders

The Members noted Manager's Orders Numbered 56/13 – 71/13.

5. Correspondence

The Members noted the following correspondence:-

- Letter dated 8th May 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in relation to a call from Monaghan Town Council to give consideration to the establishment of an Enterprise Centre at the now vacant Revenue Commissioners building at Tullyherim, Monaghan.
- Acknowledgment letter dated 1st May 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Small Business in relation to the possible establishment of an Enterprise Centre at Tullyherim.
- Acknowledgement letter dated 29th April 2013 from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the establishment of an Enterprise Centre at Tullyherim, Monaghan.
- Letter dated 2nd May 2013 from the Office of Public Works regarding the establishment of an Enterprise Centre at the vacant Revenue Commissioners building at Tullyherim, Monaghan.
- Letter dated 30th April 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Housing and Planning regarding Local Authority Rents. Cllr. Seán Conlon stated that it should be a condition of Local Authorities Rent Schemes that income from JobBridge and similar schemes should not be reckonable income for rent purposes. David Fallon, County Manager stated that Monaghan Town Council currently have two tenants on JobBridge Schemes and that this income has not been taken into account for rent purposes. The County Manager also stated that there will be a new national differential rent scheme brought in shortly.
- Letter dated 25th April 2013 from the Department of Justice and Equality regarding a Notice of Motion adopted by Monaghan Town Council in relation to the sentencing of those who flee the scene of fatal motor accidents. The correspondence stated that the matter is more appropriate to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. The Members expressed dismay at how this matter is not a case for the Minister for Justice and requested the Town Clerk to return it to the Department of Justice highlighting this fact.
- Acknowledgement letter dated 29th April 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Social and Family Affairs regarding job seeker payments to part-time firemen. It was noted that part-time firemen will be entitled to job seekers payments but that this matter has not yet been enacted into law. On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to write to the Minister asking her to liaise with the local employment offices requesting them to use their discretion with those affected by this matter until such time the legislation has been put in place.

- Acknowledgement letter dated 1st May 2013 from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport regarding a Motion adopted by Monaghan Town Council calling for a maximum 10 year sentence and a minimum of 5 years for any person involved in a fatal motor accident who leaves the scene.
- Expression of interest form for events and public spaces from Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann Baile Mhuineacháin. The Members supported this event.
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities in relation to two Motions adopted by Monaghan Town Council in November 2012.
- Acknowledgement Card from the wife and family of the late Celestine Macklin, Latlurcan House, Monaghan thanking the Members for their kind expression of sympathy at the time of his death.

6. Planning Applications

The Members noted Planning Applications numbered M.T. 13/8 – M.T. 13/10.

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 Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 16th April 2013 in relation to the Active Travel Towns Programme.

The Members noted the Minutes of the Budget Sub-Committee Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 23rd April 2013. It was agreed to make a contribution of €500 to the North Monaghan Cancer Support Group from the proceeds of pay parking on Good Friday. It was also agreed that stickers be affixed to the pay parking machines the day before holiday periods to avoid confusion to the public as to whether or not pay parking is in operation. It was agreed to make a contribution of €400 to the Monaghan Immigrant Support Group as agreed in Budget 2013.

It was agreed to place the following two items on the Agenda for the June Monthly Meeting of the Town Council:-

- (a) Consideration of correspondence from Clogher Historical Society
- (b) Consideration of request for financial contribution for the Taste of Monaghan Festival 2013.

The Members noted the Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 23rd April 2013. It was agreed to speak to the Management of the Family Resource Centre at Mullaghmat to ask them to carry out some monitoring of the Skateboard Park area to ensure that the area is kept clean.

The Town Clerk informed the Members that the Staff in the County Library are confident that they will be able to research suitable wording from their documentary evidence for a Famine Memorial for the town.

9. Roads/Housing

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

- Clones Road - dip in road at traffic island
- St. Louis Infant School – pot holes in footpath
- Park Road – Water flowing down road
- N2 (off Old Cross Square) – loose manhole cover. The Members welcomed the repair of the manhole cover on Dublin Street.
- Plantation Road – road surface needs repair
- North Road – Traffic lights.

Cllr. Donal Sherry welcomed the erection of new signage throughout the town in relation to Dog Fouling.

The Town Clerk stated that she will check with Monaghan County Council's Environmental Awareness Officer, Nial O' Connor to ascertain if there is a facility for the collection of plastic bottles.

The Town Engineer stated there has been an improvement in the illegal dumping situation since the erection of cameras.

Cllr. Donal Sherry referred to a recent incident at Knockroe Glen Housing Estate where a young boy suffered a shock when he touched exposed wires on an electrical unit. The Town Engineer stated that the wires were bare because of vandalism and that repair work had been carried out but the area was vandalized again. The Members welcomed the news that necessary remedial works in the housing estate will commence shortly as progress has been made in discussions between the developer and NAMA.

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 noted the following report in relation to the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme:- An open tender process is being used to procure the Contractor for the construction of Mullaghmatt, Phase 3. The Contractor was required to complete and submit a Suitability Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) in conjunction with the submission of pricing for the project. It was noted that, when preparing their submissions, tenderers placed their completed SAQ and Pricing information for the project in separate envelopes and that initially only the SAQ was opened and reviewed by the Council. Only those companies that passed the requirement of the SAQ then proceeded to the next stage, that is review and assessment of pricing. Subsequent to the placing of advertisements in the local press and on the Government procurement website three tenders were received prior to the closing date of 19th April 2013. The Council's design team, the Housing Agency have now completed the assessment of the SAQ's and have provided Monaghan Town Council with their report on 17th May 2013.

Following advice from the Council's legal advisor, the Housing Agency recommended exclusion of one of the tenders. Monaghan Town Council is now in the process of making arrangements to have the envelopes containing the pricing for the remaining two tenders opened.

12. Report on Mixed Use Developments at Rooskey

It was noted that works are still progressing on the Mixed Use Development at Rooskey.

13. Report on Vacant Apartments at Drumbear.

Dermot Deeney, Town Engineer stated that quotations are being sought at present to carry out repair works to the vacant apartments in Drumbear. It is intended to carry out work to one of the apartments and have it tested before the remaining apartments are repaired.

14. Consideration of approval to dispose of the Freehold Interest in Council dwelling

On the proposal of Cllr Donal Sherry seconded by Cllr Seán Conlon it was agreed to dispose of the freehold interest in number 7 St. Macartans Tce, Connolly Park, Monaghan in accordance with Section 183 Notice of the Local Government Act 2001 dated 10th May 2013.

15. Rehab Group – People of the Year Awards 2013

On the proposal of Cllr Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to nominate the late Donal Walsh, Tralee, Co. Kerry for the Rehab People of the Year Awards 2013. Mr. Walsh, a 16 year old anti-suicide campaigner made appeals to his peers not to take their own lives. These appeals are already having an impact and will hopefully help to prevent suicide in the future.

16. Notices of Motion

- (a) "That this Council write to the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton to rescind her intention to make people of retirement age (65) sign on at the dole office for one year in order to obtain their state pension which will be reduced by €42.30 per week".

Cllr Treanor

On the proposal of Cllr Seamus Treanor seconded by Cllr Mary Carroll it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion and to circulate it to all other Local Authorities.

- (b) “That this Council calls on the Minister for Justice to review the criteria involved in assessing applicants wishing to enter the State to live to ensure that they do not have criminal record in the country of origin or any other country”.

Cllr Gallagher

On the proposal of Cllr Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr Seamus Treanor it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion and to circulate it to all other Local Authorities.

- © “That this Council calls on the Government to put in place a thorough inquiry into the collapse of the banks in Ireland”.

Cllr Gallagher

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

17. Ceisteanna/Questions:-

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

- (a) As per the proposal forwarded by the Sinn Féin members last August for pedestrian and vehicle safety improvement measures at the entrance to St. Mary’s Boys School, Clones Road, will these works be undertaken and completed during the summer months while schools are on break?

Similarly, considering regular traffic delays on the Clones Road during school term, will the proposed junction improvement works at Oriel Way and Clones Road be undertaken during the summer months?

Pedestrian and vehicle safety improvement measures at the entrance to St. Mary’s Boys School, Clones Road will be undertaken and completed during the summer months while schools are on break.

The Clones Road is under the remit of the County Council (N54) and Monaghan Town Council is not aware of any proposed junction improvement works at Oriel Way and Clones Road

- (b) Are there plans to replace the damaged pedestrian safety railings located along the footpath on upper Mill Street?

The damaged pedestrian safety railings located along the footpath on Upper Mill Street will be repaired or replaced as required.

Cllr. Gallagher asked:-

- © Can the Council investigate the timing of the lights at the pedestrian crossing at Old Cross Square?

The pedestrian crossing at Old Cross Square is situated on the N54 and the County Council will investigate the timing of the lights.

- (d) With regard to traffic management at the junction at Flacks Garage (North Road/Glaslough Street) what investigations have been made with regard to making the traffic lanes clearer and safer for motorists?

Traffic Management at the junction at Flack's Garage (North Road/Glaslough Street) is a County Council issue. At Flack's Garage road markings were put down as recently as two years ago. The County Council have no plans at present to provide more traffic islands or markings at this location.

Cllr. Gallagher stated that traffic lanes in this area need to be made safer and clearer for motorists.

- (e) When does the Council intend to forward an application to the Department for the refurbishment of the remaining houses in the Mullaghmat Remedial Works Scheme?

Once the Department have approved appointment of a contractor for Phase 3, it is our intention to then request the Housing Agency to prepare plans for further phases. Hopefully an application will be made in late Autumn.

- (f) What action can the Council take with regard to the increase in graffiti vandalism in the town over recent months?

Monaghan Town Council requested assistance from the Gardaí in relation to the increased graffiti vandalism in the town. A recent reply states that no persons have been made amenable for the damage but the Gardaí are continuing to monitor the affected areas and Monaghan Town Council will be informed of any developments.

18. Resolutions from Other Local Authorities:-

- (a) "Ballyshannon Town Council call on Minister Alan Shatter, TD to withdraw the harsh and unfair proposed pay cuts to An Garda Síochana and other frontline services".

Ballyshannon Town Council

It was agreed to mark the above Resolution read.

- (b) As the Principle of Subsidiarity, as detailed in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Unions and in a protocol in the Treaty of Amsterdam, is a central tenet of European Union policy, that this Council calls on the E.U. to critically examine the Irish Government's proposal to abolish all Town Councils as such abolition is disenfranchising many at the most basic level of the democratic process".

Killarney Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (c) “That Skibbereen Town Council calls for immediate cessation of the practice of fluoridation of the public water supply. Only 2% of Europe continues this practice and that is made up of the Republic of Ireland and a few cities in the UK. The “benefits” given for continuing the process carry no weight when considered against the wide variety of major health concerns validated by countless volumes of research, studies and data to the contrary. This risks involved to public health by this mass medication of the population are proven and are too great to continue to ignore. We need immediate action! The Members noted additional correspondence from Skibbereen Town Council in relation to this Resolution.

Skibbereen Town Council

It was agreed to mark the above Resolution read.

- (d) The Members noted correspondence containing the following Resolutions from Middleton Town Council:-
- (a) “This Council demands that the Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland challenge and reject the proposal/strategy for the abolition of Town Councils “Putting People First – Action Programme for Effective Local Government”.
 - (b) “This Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to reconsider the proposal/strategy for the abolition of Town Councils in the “Putting People First – Action Programme for Effective Local Government”.

Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha proposed the adoption of (a) and (b) as outlined above and Cllr Robbie Gallagher seconded the Resolutions. Cllr David Maxwell stated that he would not be supporting the Resolutions as Resolution (a) is critical of the Association of Municipal Authorities who have done everything possible to prevent the abolition of the Town Councils. Cllr Maxwell called on Cllr Uí Mhurchadha to withdraw her proposal of supporting the Resolution. Following a discussion it was agreed to reject Resolution (a) and to adopt Resolution (b).

19. Conferences

- (a) Cork County Mayor’s Conference – “Strategies for Maximising the Positive Impacts of Tourism” – Walter Raleigh Hotel, Youghal – 24th -25th May 2013 – (approx. cost €715).
- (b) Celtic Conferences – “West Cork Tourism Seminar” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery – 24th – 26th May 2013 – (approx. cost €880)
- (c) Donegal County Council – “SAM (Sport Aiding Mental Health) – National Conference on Sport and Mental Health” – Jacksons Hotel, Ballybofey, Co. Donegal – 30th – 31st May 2013 (approx. cost €380).
- (d) Rattoo Heritage Society Annual Environmental and Heritage Conference – Golf Hotel, Ballybunnion – 29th May – 1st June 2013 – (approx. cost €900)
- (e) Chartered Institute of Housing in Northern Ireland – “Risk and Resilience: the Future of Housing Finance and Investment” – The Merchant Hotel, Belfast – 5th June 2013 – (approx. cost €300)

- (f) TGR Seminars – “How Councillors can successfully access funding to aid community projects”- Bunratty Castle Hotel, Co. Clare - 7th - 8th June 2013 – (approx. cost €410)
- (g) Ace Training - “European Legislation and Local Authorities”- Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford - 7th - 9th June 2013 – (approx. cost €360)
- (h) Tgr Seminars -“Putting People First, Electoral Boundary Shake Up & Local Government Reform”- Bunratty Castle Hotel, Co. Clare – 14th – 15th June 2013 – (approx. cost €400)

No attendance is to take place to the above Conferences.

20. Any Other Business

It was agreed to extend an invitation to the Nelson Doyle Dancers from Newbrunswick, Canada to visit Ireland to attend some traditional events in the Country.

Cllr Robbie Gallagher left the meeting room.

Cllr David Maxwell welcomed the HSE announcement of €9.5m investment for a Primary Care Centre at Monaghan Hospital. The Members noted that the involvement of General Practitioner’s buying into the project was imperative for the facility to get up and running. Cllr. Maxwell stated that the facility is designed so that 10 no. G.P. ’s could locate to it but that it could make a start with 2 G.P. ’s.

The Members stated that the deadline for registering property for the local Property Tax is the 28th May 2013. Cllr. Seán Conlon referred to a Property Valuation Guidance document for County Monaghan available from the Revenue Commissioners website which provides a guide to the average market values of properties in a given locality and offers an indicative valuation band for properties depending on type, age and location.

21. Sympathy/Congratulations

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:-

- Cllr Paul McGeown on the death of his brother-in-law’s brother, Michael McGuinness, Trillick, Co. Tyrone.
- Geraldine MacCormack and family, Castleblayney on the death of her husband, Macartan MacCormack, former Chairman of Monaghan County Council.

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:-

- The organising committee of the Blackwater 10K event
- Shuffling Boots Line Dancing Club who took part in the World Dancing Championships
- Monaghan Minor Football Team on winning the Ulster Minor League
- Monaghan Senior Football Team on winning Division 3 of the National Football League.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Dated this the 17th day of June 2013

Signed: _____

Cathairleach