

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

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 5.30pm in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

**Cathaoirleach:** Cllr. Lorcan McAdam

**Present:** Cllrs. Mary Carroll, Sean Conlon, Sheila Connolly, David Maxwell, Donal Sherry, Malachy Toal and Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha.

**In Attendance:** Declan Nelson, County Manager, Jonathon Condell, Assistant Engineer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Sinead Tibby, Clerical Officer.

### **Attendance of Representatives from Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg**

The Members welcomed Fiona Mc Entee, Youth Development Officer, Monaghan County Council and Nicola Thornton, Christina Kelly and Colin Nutley representing Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg. The representatives gave a report of findings and suggestions from a meeting facilitated and hosted by Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg with Student Council representatives from secondary schools in Monaghan Town in relation to establishing a Youth Café in Monaghan Town, which would be similar to the one which has been established in Castleblayney offering young people a safe and supervised recreational environment in which to meet up, have a cup of tea or coffee, play games/watch television or access the internet. Nicola Thornton stated that links had been established with the YWCA's Y-Zone group on the North Road, Monaghan town which offered some excellent activities and facilities but it was felt however that Monaghan Town needed a separate facility with longer opening hours than could be obtained at the commendable Y-Zone centre. Ms Thornton enquired from the Members if there was a current building in the Town Council's area that could be converted into a Youth Café and she also enquired about funding and staffing for the facility.

The Members commended the representatives from Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg on their work to date and it was agreed that the incoming Council set up a sub-committee following the Local Elections on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009 to work alongside Comhairle na nÓg and other interested youth clubs in progressing the issue and with the aim of obtaining funding for such a facility.

Nicola Thornton stated that as a Member of Dail na nÓg she was calling on the Members to support them in lobbying the Department of Health and Children to overturn it's decision not to proceed with the administering of the cervical cancer vaccine to 12-15 year old girls. On the proposal of Cllr Sean Conlon seconded by Cllr David Maxwell it was unanimously agreed that a letter be forwarded to Mary Harney TD, Minister for Health and Children calling for a change in policy on this issue.

The Members also congratulated Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg on their successful organising of the "Battle of the Bands" held recently in the Garage Theatre.

Fiona Mc Entee and the Representatives from Comhairle na nÓg thanked the Members for meeting with them and they left the Council Chamber.

## **Attendance of Representatives from Oaklee Housing Trust**

The Members welcomed Ursula Maye, Housing Manager and Niall Sheridan from the Oaklee Housing Trust which is a voluntary housing provider which has provided 24 apartments in Monaghan Town (Rowantree Court).

Concerns were expressed regarding the current service charge levy on tenants of Rowantree Court of €6 per week and where tenants are also required to make good the revenue lost when apartments are vacant in the Complex by way of additional charges. Ursula Maye stated that service charges are in place to offset the costs associated with running the development – co-ordinator’s salary, lighting of communal areas, telephone lines, stationary, ground maintenance, etc and that these service charges are reviewed annually. Ms. Maye also stated that every tenant has the right to bring complaints/issues to the Manager of the Complex and that procedures are in place for doing so. It was noted that no tenant has come forward with any issue relating to the service charges.

Cllr Conlon suggested that the Town Council explore the possibility of taking the public lighting in the estate in charge.

Ms Maye stated that the selection process for tenants had been agreed with the Town Council staff and that the age limit was lowered to people over 50. Ms. Maye also stated that they try and maintain full occupancy at all times.

The Members thanked Ms Maye and Mr Sheridan for attending the meeting and they left the Council Chamber.

On the proposal of Cllr Sean Conlon and seconded by Cllr Malachy Toal it was agreed that a letter be issued to the Irish Council for Social Housing sending them a copy of Rowantree Court’s Income and Expenditure Account from June 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and the proposed budget for the period 2009/2010 and to enquire from them, if in their views, the service charge is a just levy for those who enter into tenancy with voluntary housing providers.

### **1. Confirmation of April Monthly Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

On the proposal of Cllr David Maxwell seconded by Cllr Sean Conlon it was agreed to amend item no. 10 of the Minutes to read as follows “The Members look forward to the eventual removal of the telecommunication mast at Killygoan”. On the proposal of Cllr Malachy Toal seconded by Cllr Lorcan Mc Adam it was agreed to adopt the amended Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

### **2. Confirmation of Meeting held in committee on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

On the proposal of Cllr Malachy Toal seconded by Cllr Lorcan Mc Adam it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Meeting held in committee on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009 with Joey Burns, Wood Sculpture, Finea, Co. Westmeath.

### **3. Matters arising from the Minutes**

It was noted that works to the Golden Road will commence on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 and that works are being currently carried out to footpaths in the Killyconnigan area.

Cllr Donal Sherry stated that eight no. public lights are out of order on the walkway through St. Davnet’s Hospital.

#### **4. Manager's Orders**

The Members noted Manager's Orders numbered 88/09 – 119/09 and welcomed the appointment of a Contractor to prune trees at Peter's Lake.

Cllr Robbie Gallagher entered the Council Chamber.

#### **5. Correspondence**

The Members noted the following correspondence:-

- Letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> April 2009 from Tom Gallagher, Private Secretary, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- Letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 2009 from Eddie Kiernan, Private Secretary, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in connection with service charges for voluntary housing tenants.
- Letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 from Dr. Rory O' Hanlon T.D. in relation to the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme.
- Letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 from Brendan Smith T.D. Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in relation to the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme.
- Letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2009 from Thomas V. O'Brien, Superintendent, An Garda Síochána, Letterkenny thanking the Members for their kinds words in relation to the passing of Garda Robert Mc Callion.
- Letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009 from P.J. Mc Morrow, Inspector for Supt., An Garda Síochána, Monaghan thanking the Members for their kinds words in relation to the passing of Garda Robert Mc Callion.
- Letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> May 2009 from Tom Gallagher, Private Secretary, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the proposed new fire station in Monaghan Town.
- Circular letter N6/2009 dated 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009 in relation to the Social Housing Investment Programme allocations for 2009 for Monaghan Town Council. It was noted that €1,875,000 has been set aside for the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme and it was agreed to enquire on a start date for this scheme.
- Letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2009 from Caoimhghín O' Caolain T.D. urging Monaghan Town Council to back the appeal by Monaghan Town Football Club for access to, under an appropriate arrangement, the sports field at the former Military Barracks at Knockaconny. On the proposal of Cllr David Maxwell seconded by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to forward a letter to the Minister for Defence in support of Monaghan Town Football Club having access to the sports field at the former Monaghan Military Barracks at Knockaconny.
- Details of the Polling Stations for Monaghan Town for the upcoming Local Elections.
- Letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009 from Ann Watterson, Town Retail/Marketing, Monaghan Chamber suggesting that the Council help to sponsor the community diary on Northern Sound Radio. On the proposal of Cllr David Maxwell seconded by Cllr Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to refer the matter to a meeting of the Budget Sub-Committee of the Town Council which will take place following the Local Elections on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009.
- Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2008 for Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd.

- Letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009 from Kieran Fitzpatrick, St. Macartan's College, Monaghan, committee member in relation to the organising of a petition requesting that the football court in Killygoan be named in the memory of the late Michael Hughes who died tragically in a drowning accident in Rossmore Park in February 2009. It was agreed to refer the matter to the Planning Sub-Committee of the Town Council following the Local Elections in June 2009.
- Acknowledgement from the family of the late Fiona Ann Murphy thanking the Members most sincerely for their kind expression of sympathy in their recent sad bereavement.
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities in relation to three no. Notices of Motion adopted by the Members of Monaghan Town Council.

## 6. **Planning Applications**

The Members noted Planning Applications numbered 09/12 – 09/13

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

No business was submitted by An Cathaoirleach

## 8. **Consideration of Reports of Committees**

There were no report of Committees

## 9. **Roads/Housing**

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

- Signage required for new housing estates - Knockroe Glen, Latlurcan Glen, Latlurcan Court, etc.
- Potholes – Cathedral View, Broad Road/Dawson Street
- Belgium Square – Public lighting required in the vicinity of no. 21 Belgium Square
- Additional lighting required in Back lanes – St. Macartans Tce/Cathedral View
- Park Street – flooding outside Parish Office
- Upgrading of Public Lighting in Ashgrove Lawns.

The Members noted a copy of all Minutes of Meetings held by the Council from December 2005-June 2008 in relation to the proposed housing development at Tirkeenan.

The Town Engineer was requested to bring a Programme for the Upgrading of Public Lighting to the next meeting of the Town Council.

## 10. **Pedestrian Safety**

It was noted that a new sign has been erected on Mill Street prohibiting vehicles from turning left onto North Road. It was noted that the sign had been erected for the safety of people using the new pedestrian crossing on the North Road. Following a discussion it was agreed that the Engineer would monitor the crossing and that the matter would be discussed again at the next meeting of the Town Council.

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

The Members look forward to the eventual removal of the Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan.

**12. Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme**

It was agreed to follow up on a start date for Phase 2 of the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme.

**13. People of the Year Awards 2009**

On the proposal of Cllr Donal Sherry seconded by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to nominate the Management and Staff of Monaghan General Hospital for the People of the Year Awards 2009.

**14. Notices of Motion:-**

- (a) “That this Town Council calls on the Minister for Finance to intervene with the banks on behalf of people with fixed rate mortgages”

Cllrs. Gallagher, Connolly, Mc Adam

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

- (b) “That Monaghan Town Council when awarding contracts that cause traffic disruption around Monaghan town, that Contractors would be required to have in place at said works signs informing the public of the nature of the works, time of day when road works are due to finish and a completion date of said works”.

Cllrs Maxwell, Carroll

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

**15. Questions:-**

Cllrs. Gallagher, Connolly and Mc Adam asked:-

- (a) What is the position regarding the erection of a nameplate for Ashgrove Lawns as requested at previous meetings?

*This sign has now been received by Monaghan Town Council and will be erected in the coming days.*

- (b) In order to ensure that the Councils housing stock is maintained to acceptable standards what actions can the Council take?

*The Council implement an annual planned maintenance programme to ensure that the structure of the houses and services within the houses are achieving the highest possible standards.*

*Over the last 6 years Monaghan Town Council have installed oil fired central heating throughout our housing stock. We have installed double glazed windows and new front and back doors in all houses that required them. We have upgraded the insulation in the attics of our houses to meet current building regulations. An electrical upgrade programme, which sees the electrical services within our houses modernised, is ongoing and all houses will have received this upgrade by the end of 2009.*

*We have a kitchen replacement programme in operation also and a number of houses will have their kitchens replaced this year.*

*We also have a programme of installation for dual heating that installs solid fuel heating alongside oil fired central heating where it did not previously exist. In addition, Monaghan Town Council has an extensive pre-letting programme which sees all houses that have been made vacant brought up to the highest standard before re-letting. We operate a painting scheme to maintain the exteriors of our houses. We also implement a gutter cleaning programme to maintain the fascia boards and eaves of the houses. The Mullaghmatt Remedial Scheme will also see a large number of our houses brought up to a modern specification. Finally Monaghan Town Council have a team of craftsman and labourers who are dedicated to responding to repair requests from our tenants. All requests are assessed within 24 hours of receipt. The repair work is then scheduled based on the level of urgency of the work – emergency, urgent or routine. All of the above actions will ensure that our housing stock is maintained to the highest possible standards.*

- © If the space available could permit it would the Council consider the development of a roundabout instead of the traffic lights? Could the Council investigate the possibility of creating a roundabout at the traffic lights at the junction beside Dunnes Stores in the interests of easing the flow of traffic at peak hours?

*There are a number of issues that need to be considered here.*

*Firstly before a roundabout could be attempted extensive traffic modelling and traffic analysis is required to determine a range of design considerations, including the sizing of the roundabout. The smaller the inscribed circle diameter (ICD) of the roundabout, the more difficult it will be for vehicles to get onto the roundabout. Therefore we might create a worse situation than exists already – for example, traffic on the Cootehill Road may not be able to get onto the roundabout because it is unable to merge with the high volumes of traffic coming from the Dublin Road. It is most likely that the analysis will show that a large ICD will be required to overcome this problem.*

*The required ICD will most likely necessitating additional landtake to facilitate the roundabouts construction. In addition, to facilitate pedestrians the roundabout would need to be constructed with one arm only in each direction (no facility for a secondary slip lane), compounding the problems of merging traffic. Further on this point, pedestrian protection at the junction would be compromised unless we incorporated lights into the roundabout. Much of the problem in this area is created by capacity issues, not just at this junction, but at adjacent junctions also, particularly the roundabout at Park Street. During the peak flow periods, this roundabout is not capable of dealing with the volumes of traffic using it. This causes the Broad Road traffic to back up to the traffic lights, and often when the lights turn green there is no space on the Broad Road for the vehicles to move into, thus reducing the capacity across the traffic light junction. In conclusion, a roundabout at this location may improve the traffic flow in this area (and it may not). Detailed analysis of this junction and adjoining junctions is necessary to determine what is most suitable here. Procurement of the type of traffic modelling system required has been explored by Monaghan Town and County Council and specifications and proposals have been received from suppliers of the modelling software. The price is prohibitive however (in the region of €75,000 plus additional traffic surveying costs) and to date no decision has been made to acquire the system.*

Cllrs. Maxwell and Carroll asked:-

- (d) What is the expected timeframe for the overlay of bitumen on Monaghan Town Centre this summer and can businesses and the new Chamber of Commerce be communicated with about the times and dates officially?

*Resulting from the changed economic circumstances, all bitumen contractors were afforded the opportunity to resubmit tenders to LA Quotes, the Local Government tendering facility. Revised quotes have now been received (11<sup>th</sup> May). We will now negotiate with the lowest tenderer to carry out the work in as timely a manner as is possible. We anticipate that the work will be completed not later than the builders holidays in August.*

- (e) How many Part V Houses do Monaghan Town Council expect to take in charge for the rest of this year?

*It is expected that the Town Council will receive the following Part V dwellings in 2009:-*

*Lime Grove, Plantation – 2 x 2 bedroom dwellings*

*Cluain Lorcan, Monaghan (Dolans) – 20 x 3 bedroom dwellings + 4 x 4 bedroom dwellings .*

*Fowlers, Rope Walk – 3 x 3 bedroom dwellings.*

*Knockroe, Clones Road – 10 x 3 bedroom dwellings*

- (f) Have the Town Council any houses vacant at the moment due to the poor state of repair of said houses and if so what is the timeframe for the repairs to take place?

Monaghan Town Council has one house that is vacant and awaiting re-letting. This house will have extensive pre-letting work carried out to it to bring it up to the necessary standard.

In addition Monaghan Town Council are retaining a number of vacant houses to facilitate the Mullaghmat Remedial Works Scheme which is scheduled to commence in the coming weeks

- (g) How many people are currently on the housing waiting list in Monaghan Town?

*There are 295 people on the current housing list:-*

*O.P.D.s - 14*

*Small Family – 72*

*Family – 84*

*Single U55 – 95*

*Supported housing – 30*

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

- (h) What is the commencement date for the resumption of the Mullaghmat Remedial Works Scheme?

*When we receive confirmation that we can commence by the Department a letter of intent will be issued to the winning tenderer. Commencement on-site is feasible within a 4 to 6 week period of issuing of this letter.*

- (i) In an effort to correct planning irregularities that have occurred due to non compliance by developers of the Woodlands development on the Scotstown Road, is there a liability bond in place that the Council can activate and ensure these works are undertaken?

*Planning Permission was granted under Planning Reference MT 27/03 for the demolition of an existing dwelling, construction of 23 no. dwellings consisting of 7 no. two storey 4 bedroom with integral garage, 16 no. two storey 4 bedroom with detached garage, pumping station, treatment works for foul sewer with associated site works and new site entrance. Granted 30/3/04.*

*Condition 10 of that permission required the following:-*

*“Before any work is commenced on this development, a security by way of an approved Insurance Bond, letter of guarantee issued by a body approved by the Planning Authority for the purpose, in respect of the proposed development or a cash deposit in the sum of €35,000 index linked, to be given to the Planning Authority by the developer to ensure satisfactory completion of all roads, footpaths, services and open space in the development in accordance with the lodged plans.”*

*A security bond was put in place by the developers but expired on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007. There have been subsequently a number of relatively minor amendments to the scheme under planning permissions reference MT 05/67 (change of house type on two plots), MT 06/73 (retention of retaining wall).*

*Further to complaints received by residents in relation to the development an inspection was carried out and warning letter issued on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008. A response was received from the applicant on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2008. A planning application was submitted under planning reference MT08/46 to regularise the situation for the retention of works including the existing estate road and provision of additional open space, the retention of existing sewerage treatment plant and revised percolation area, amendment of sight distance and repositioning of 5 no. dwellings no. 11 to 15. Further information was requested from the applicant on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and the Planning Authority are awaiting a response to the request.*

*It should be noted that the overall development remains under constant monitoring and in the absence of a response by the applicants by 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009 in relation to the further information request enforcement proceedings will be progressed.*

*Whilst not pre-empting any determination of a planning application, in the event of a favourable determination of the planning application, conditions relating to a definitive timetable for the completion of the roadway would be put in place and a further bond security will be applied.*

- (j) In conjunction with the Environmental Section of Monaghan County Council and the Environmental Protection Agency, will this Council seek to determine the origins of an offensive odour that is occasionally present in the Montfort/Coolshannagh/Ballyalbany area and initiate a course of action that will remediate this ongoing annoyance to nearby residential communities”  
*This issue will be referred to the Environment Section of Monaghan County Council for their attention.*

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

- (a) “That Killarney Town Council call on the Government to have a “National Carers Day” to sit alongside other National Days”.

Killarney Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (b) “That this Town Council write to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and asks them to scrap the Homebuyers Grant and to transfer the €500 million put aside for that grant into building new council houses thereby helping the many many people unable to buy their own houses.”

Nenagh Town Council

It was agreed to mark the above Resolution read.



- © “That Mullingar Town Council urges the Health Service to provide more support for dementia sufferers and their carers”.

Mullingar Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

#### **17. Sympathy/Congratulations**

The Members congratulated the organisers of the Blackwater 10K event held recently in Monaghan Town. Congratulations was also extended to Shane Lowry who won the Irish Open at Baltray outside Drogheda recently.

Cllr. Sheila Connolly left the Council Chamber.

The Members congratulated the Cathaoirleach, Cllr Lorcan Mc Adam and wished him well in his decision not to run in the Local Elections 2009. In reply, Cllr Mc Adam thanked the Members for allowing him have the opportunity and privilege of being Cathaoirleach of Monaghan Town Council. He also paid tribute to Cllr Mary Carroll, Leas Cathaoirleach of Monaghan Town Council, the Members for their support and the Management and Staff for their work during his term of office and to all those groups who work voluntarily for the town – Tidy Towns Group, St. Patricks Day Parade Committee, Youth Groups, Feile Oriel Festival Committee, Blackwater 10K Challenge Committee, etc. Cllr Mc Adam wished all the candidates every success on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009 in the Local Elections.

Declan Nelson, County Manager acknowledged the work and loyalty of the Members of Monaghan Town Council and thanked them for their commitment and dedication to the town over the past five years.

#### **18. Any other Business**

The Members were circulated with Reports complying with Section 142(5)(f) of the Local Government Act 2001 in relation to the following Conferences:-

- LAMA Annual Spring Conference, Portlaoise – attended by Cllr. Uí Mhurchadha
- Enniscorthy Town Council - “Women in 1916”, Enniscorthy – attended by Cllr. Uí Mhurchadha

This Concluded the Business of the Meeting.

Dated this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of June 2009

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**Cathaoirleach**