

COMHAIRLE BAILE MHUINEACHÁIN

MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 16th May 2011 at 5pm in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, No. 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Robbie Gallagher

Present: Cllrs. Mary Carroll, Seán Conlon, Thomas Hagan, Donal Sherry, Seamus Treanor and Padraigín Uí Mhurchadha.

In Attendance: David Fallon, Acting County Manager, Gareth McMahon, Town Engineer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Janice Eardley, Clerical Officer.

An apology for inability to attend was received from Cllr. David Maxwell.

1. Confirmation of April Monthly Meeting held on 18/04/2011

On the proposal of Cllr. Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha. it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the April Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 18th April 2011.

2. Confirmation of Special Meeting held in committee on 10/05/2011

On the proposal of Cllr. Thomas Hagan seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 10th May 2011 in relation to the possible closure of the FÁS Office in Monaghan Town.

Cllr. Seán Conlon stated that there has been great praise for Monaghan Town Council for highlighting the issue of the proposed closure of the FÁS Office in Monaghan town.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Members congratulated the organisers on the success of the 4th Annual Blackwater 10k event which took place in the town on Sunday last.

Tribute was paid to the organisers of the Féile Oriel Festival which was also very successful.

David Fallon, Acting County Manager stated that he has had a number of meetings with Staff Members on the Mixed Use Development at Rooskey and that he has briefed Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, TD and Seán Conlan TD on the matter. The A/County Manager stated that the priority now was to get the site reinstated to its former condition and that correspondence has been sent to the Developers raising a number of issues including planning permission, timescale for commencement and completion of the project, etc.

4. Manager's Orders

The Members noted Manager's Orders numbered 55/11 – 62/11.

5. Correspondence

The Members noted the following correspondence:-

- Acknowledgement dated 26th April 2011 from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government regarding Notice of Motion adopted by the Members of the Town Council in relation to the crippling cost of rates on commercial properties.
- Letter dated 29th April 2011 from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in connection with a resolution of Monaghan Town Council regarding voting by Irish citizens abroad in Irish elections.
- Letter dated 29th April 2011 from the OPW, Dublin in relation to the former Revenue Commissioners Office at Coolshannagh, Monaghan.
- Acknowledgement dated 19th April 2011 from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in connection with the funding for Phase 3 of the Mullaghmat Remedial Works Scheme.
- Letter dated March 2011 from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd. regarding developments which are taking place in IPB in 2011.
- Letter dated 28th April 2011 from Margaret Urwin, Justice for the Forgotten inviting the Cathaoirleach, Cllr Robbie Gallagher to lay a wreath at the Commemorative Ceremony at the Memorial in Talbot Street on 17th May 2011.
- Email dated 3rd May 2011 from Eoghan MacGabhan regarding a new wall which has been erected outside a newly constructed dwelling on the Clones Road. Gareth McMahon, Town Engineer stated that the planning permission on this development allows for a rendered wall of 1.7 metres high plus capping and that the wall is constructed in approximate compliance to this requirement.
- Letter dated 5th May 2011 from Monaghan Allotment Society thanking the Members for the contribution under the Community Grants Scheme.
- Letter dated 27th April 2011 from the Monaghan Immigrant Support Group thanking the Members for the contribution under the Community Grants Scheme.
- Letter dated 26th April 2011 from Monaghan Harps GAA Club thanking the Members for the contribution under the Community Grants Scheme.

- Letter dated 3rd May 2011 from Mickey Bradley, Staff Member of Monaghan Town Council requesting that the Town Council donate the scrap cars that are currently in their compound so that he can have them scrapped and converted to cash for the “Building of Hope Foundation.” It was noted that Monaghan Town Council are in the process of selling the scrap cars and it was agreed that the monies received from the sale of the cars be donated to Mr. Bradley.
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities regarding Notice of Motion which was adopted at the Town Council meeting on the 15th November 2010 regarding the fuel allowance.
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities regarding Notice of Motion adopted at the Town Council meeting on the 20th December 2010 regarding LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas).
- Letters of support from various Local Authorities regarding Notice of Motion adopted at the Town Council meeting on the 15th November 2010 regarding the postal service.
- Acknowledgement dated the 10th May 2011 from the Minister for Housing and Planning to Deputy Seán Conlan, TD regarding funding for Phase 3 of the Remedial Works Scheme.
- Letter dated 12th May 2011 from Deputy Heather Humpreys, TD regarding the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme.
- Letter dated 10th May 2011 from the Minister for Housing and Planning regarding funding for Phase 3 of the Remedial Works Scheme.
- Letter received on the 19th April 2011 from a fast food operator in the town noting with interest the ongoing campaign to relocate the casual trading to the Diamond Area and pointing out that the fixed traders are at a disadvantage by this process. The Town Engineer informed the Members that he is unable to find alternative suitable locations for a casual trading area. Following a discussion and on the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon and seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed that the Town Engineer examine splitting the taxi area in front of the Courthouse (50% Taxis, 50% Casual Trading) and bring a report to the next meeting of the Town Council.

6. Planning Application

The Members noted Planning Application number MT 11/5. Cllr. Seán Conlon referred to development contributions levied recently by the Planners in respect of a planning application for a smoking area. The A/County Manager agreed to check the position.

7. Business Submitted by An Cathaoirleach

On the proposal of the Cathaoirleach, Cllr Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr Padraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to host a civic reception for Gaelscoil Ultain prior to the June monthly meeting of the Town Council to mark the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the school in Monaghan Town. It was noted that the school was formed by Brendan O’ Dufaigh and a number of parents in September 1986 and was granted independent status in 1989. 23 students attended in the first year and there are now 240 students on roll.

8. Consideration of Reports of Committees

The Members noted the following reports of Committees:

- Minutes of a Budget Sub-Committee Meeting held on 18th April 2011 in relation to the consideration of additional applications for funding under the Community Grant Scheme 2011 and the consideration of a contribution to the Féile Oriel Festival Committee.
- Minutes of a Budget Sub-Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 10th May 2011 in relation to the opening of tenders for the supply and installation of play equipment in two locations in Monaghan Town.

The Members expressed concern regarding the lack of play facilities in some housing estates in the town. It was agreed that the Town Council make the following condition in its Development Plan – “that open spaces in housing estates should have childrens playing facilities and that this condition should form part of the planning application in future housing developments.”

9. Roads / Housing

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

- Potholes – at entrance to Knockroe Glen/Back lanes at Killygoan
- Skate-boarding/Diamond Area – It was noted that the Town Engineer is undertaking to examine measures introduced in an area of Dublin to combat the problem.
- Footpaths at Mullaghmat/Killyconnigan require repair
- Public Lighting out of order – Mullaghmat
- Footpath – Church Square requires repair
- Remove Summer Seat from Church Square
- Wall at Dr. McKenna Tce – replace with railings/liaise with the residents of the area.
- Bolts sticking out of footpath – Beech Hill Area.
- Loose bricks in footpath on North Road
- Loose stones in car park (off Roundabout on Clones Road)
- Fire damage to fence at Belgium Park
- Fence to be repaired – Ard Gleann area to Beech Hill
- Signage required for Monaghan General Hospital – The Town Engineer informed the Members that the National Roads Authority are due to roll out a number of signs in the area which includes signs for the Hospital.

A discussion took place regarding the painting of murals on the hoarding erected around the Mixed Use Development in the Lower Courthouse Car Park. David Fallon, A/County Manager stated that he would mention this proposal to the developer at their next meeting.

The Town Clerk informed the Members that the paint scheme which was in operation many years ago for tenants to paint the exterior of their homes is no longer in place.

10. Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan

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

11. Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme

David Fallon, A/County Manager stated that Monaghan County Council's Director of Services, Adge King has spoken to the Housing Section of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government who have given a commitment to cover the cost of bringing Phase 3 of the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme to tender stage. It was noted that no clarity on the funding for the remaining phases of the scheme has been received from the Department. Cllr. Robbie Gallagher proposed sending a letter again to Minister Willie Penrose T.D. seeking clarity on the funding that was previously indicated for the continuation of the scheme. This was seconded by Cllr. Thomas Hagan and agreed.

12. Gateways and Hubs ERDF Grant Scheme – Works at the Diamond/Dublin Street/Old Cross Square and Provision of Recreational Facilities.

The Members were informed by the Town Engineer that an extension of time has been received to the 31st December 2011 to facilitate the completion of the works for the Town Centre Regeneration project at Old Cross Square. It was noted that the land ownership in Old Cross Square was contested by an adjoining property owner which made it problematic to include this area in the original tender documents. The Members noted that the CPO has now been confirmed and re-tendering for the works will be carried out within the next few weeks.

13. Progress on Windows/Doors – Killygoan Area

The Town Engineer informed the Members that works to the windows/doors in the Killygoan area is substantially complete. The Contractor has been asked to carry out an inspection of houses in the earlier phases. It was noted that the approximate costs for the carrying out of remedial works to these dwellings is €65k. Tendering for these works will take place in the near future.

14. Consideration of Annual Financial Statement for Year Ended 31/12/2010

The Members noted the unaudited Annual Financial Statement for Year Ended 31/12/2010.

15. Consideration of approval of Over-Expenditure for year ended 31/12/2010

On the proposal of Cllr Mary Carroll seconded by Cllr Seán Conlon it was agreed to approve of the over-expenditure for year ended 31/12/2010 as outlined in Note 17 of the Annual Financial Statement. The Members also noted the transfers to/from reserves in the sum of €223,226.

16. Consideration of Introduction of Long Term Parking Permit System

Gareth McMahon, Town Engineer stated that the proposal to introduce a Long Term Parking Permit System in the town arose from requests from local General Practitioners who have a requirement to have their vehicles close to their premises because they are on-call. The Members agreed with the proposal to consider introducing a long term parking permit system on street for those who wish to avail of it. It was noted that the cost for a five day permit is €7 per month plus administrative charge of €3 – Total €10. The cost for a six day permit is €17 per month plus administrative charge of €3 – Total €20. It was agreed to implement the scheme on a trial basis and to review its progress after a three month period.

17. People of the Year Awards 2011

On the proposal of Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha seconded by Cllr Donal Sherry it was agreed to nominate the Monaghan/Cavan Hospital Group for the Rehab People of the Year Awards 2011.

18. Consideration of Draft Monaghan Local Authorities Allocations Scheme determining the order of priorities to be accorded in the allocation of dwellings

The Members noted the Draft Monaghan Local Authorities Allocations Scheme determining the order of priorities to be accorded in the allocation of dwellings together with Statutory Instrument S.I. No. 198 of 2011 (Social Housing Allocation Regulations 2011). The Members adopted the Scheme, as presented.

19. Notices of Motion:-

- (a) “That Monaghan Town Council acknowledges the former Government establishing a National Memorial Day to commemorate An Gorta Mór, The Great Hunger, held in May each year since 2008 and that we ask of the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs why no such co-ordinated national event has been scheduled for the month of May this year and that we commend the efforts of the Irish Diaspora who will be commemorating this landmark event internationally over the coming weeks”.

Cllrs. Conlon, Uí Mhurchadha, Sherry, Mc Geown

On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion and to forward the Motion to the Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs. It was also agreed to send a letter to the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America congratulating them on their efforts to perpetuate this event.

Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha referred to €25,000 which the Town Council have ringfenced to erect a Great Hunger Memorial at Peters Lake and it was agreed that this initiative be now progressed. It was agreed to liaise with Liam Bradley, Curator of Monaghan County Museum, Somhairle MacConghail, Arts Officer, Monaghan County Council and Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer, Monaghan County Council.

- (b) “That Planning and Engineering Staff of Monaghan Town and County Councils engage with the Residents of Woodlands, Scotstown Road with a view to the Local Authority “taking in charge” this estate.”

Cllrs. Conlon, Uí Mhurchadha, Sherry, McGeown.

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

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Robbie Gallagher stated that an application has been made by the Residents to the Town Council to take the Woodlands Estate in charge. Cllr. Gallagher proposed that as there is a problem with the Treatment System in the estate that the Town Council empty the tanks to allow the pumps to function properly. This was seconded by Cllr. Thomas Hagan. David Fallon, A/County Manager stated that the Water Services Staff have assessed the situation and that they will be in contact with the Liquidator of the Development about it. The A/County Manager stated that there are no health issues at present on the site.

- (c) “That this Council write to the Minister for Environment seeking funding for a Sewage Scheme to be extended to the Scotstown Road and Clones Road as these two areas are within the town boundary. At present we have an ultra modern sewage system which is working at only 50% of its capacity”.

Cllr. Treanor

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

20. Ceisteanna/Questions

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

- (a) Can the Executive Staff that have been negotiating with WJ Dolan and their creditor’s give an update as to what further steps have been taken that will result in remedial measures for the Latlurcan Estates on the Castleblayney Road?
This development has been the subject of ongoing discussions between the Planning Section of the Council, the developer and his financial institution. The financial institution has advised at the last meeting that it intended to prepare a schedule of works, detailing how and when the development would be completed. Despite the institution being contacted on a number of occasions this information has not yet been submitted. In the event that the development is not satisfactorily completed the planning authority shall seek the surrender of the development bond to facilitate remedial works.

(7)

- (b) In an effort to enhance the appearance of the busy location at the traffic lights in the town, will the Council Executive correspond with Dunnes Stores asking them to paint the side of the building that is in a state of disrepair?

Yes, the Town Council will correspond with the Company asking them to paint the side of the building that is in a state of disrepair.

- (c) In an effort to improve the appearance along the most travelled gateway points on the outskirts of Monaghan Town, can the Council executive implore the County Council to adopt a more attentive approach to the landscaping requirements along the By-Pass and connecting roundabouts?

Yes, the Town Council will correspond with the County Council regarding landscaping requirements along the By-Pass and connecting roundabouts.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Robbie Gallagher suggested that the Council consider financing the upkeep of roundabouts through sponsorship from local businesses - "Adopt a Road" Scheme. Cllr. Gallagher stated that this Scheme seems to be working well in other counties.

21. Resolution from Other Local Authorities:-

- (a) "That this Local Authority, in light of the potentially catastrophic danger to public health posed by various nuclear power plant reactors in Japan; renews its opposition to Westminster's plans to build 5 new nuclear power stations along the Irish Sea in Britain and calls on the new Government in Dublin to voice these concerns to Westminster in the strongest possible terms as well as calling on Dublin to take further legal steps confirming Ireland's status as a Nuclear Free State."

Carrickmacross Town Council

On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to adopt the above Resolution.

- (b) "That Ardee Town Council in light of the catastrophic danger to public health posed by Nuclear power plants in Japan
- (i) Renew its opposition to Westminster's plans to build 5 new nuclear power stations along the Irish Sea coast in Britain.
 - (ii) Calls on the Irish Government to voice these concerns to the English Government in the strongest possible terms
 - (iii) Calls on the Dáil to ensure that legal measures are put in place to prevent the building of nuclear power stations in Ireland."

Ardee Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (c) "Calling on all Councils to ask Seminar/Conference providers to provide value for money Seminars/Conferences as it is felt that the cost of most Seminars/Conferences is excessive."

Kilrush Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

(8)

- (d) “That this Council calls on the incoming Taoisigh to please take into account the views of the Town Councils regarding any Reform of Local Government in the future.”

Kilkee Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (e) “That this Council recognises that:-
- The Universal Social Charge is an unjust and regressive tax, bearing down most heavily on those least able to afford it;
 - The Universal Social Charge affects people earning as little as €77 per week;
 - The Universal Social Charge is indiscriminate and affects someone earning €100,000 at the same rate as someone earning €6,016;
 - Low income workers, including medical card holders, working lone parents and working widows, who were exempt from the health and income levies which the Universal Social Charge replaced, are no longer exempt;
 - Coupled with the changes to tax credits and bands introduced in Budget 2011, the Universal Social Charge has increased the burden of taxation on the working poor;
 - And calls on the Government to abolish the Universal Social Charge.”

Bandon Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (f) “That this Council recognizes that the Universal Social Charge is an unjust and regressive tax, bearing down most heavily on those least able to afford it and calls on the Government to abolish the Universal Social Charge.”

Donegal County Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

22. Conferences

- (a) Housing Practitioners Conference 2011 – Mullingar Park Hotel – 16th – 17th June 2011 – (approx. cost €540)
- (b) TGR Seminars – “Performance Management for Councillors” – Castlecourt Hotel, Westport – 24th – 26th June 2011 (approx. cost €660)

No attendance is to take place to the above Conferences.

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 Spring Seminar 2011, Dundalk – attended by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha
- AMAI Conference, Bantry – attended by Cllr David Maxwell

(9)

23. Any Other Business

The Members welcomed the news that James Reilly, TD, Minister for Health and Children confirmed that he will meet with the Members of the Town Council on issues surrounding Monaghan General Hospital.

The Members expressed disappointment at recent works carried out by the Monaghan Tidy Towns Group which involved the powerhosing of a vacant private property in the town.

On the proposal of the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed to request the GAA to re-examine their pricing structure to Championship games as the excessive admission charges are preventing people from attending the football matches.

24. Sympathy/Congratulations

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Carol Lambe, Staff member of Monaghan County Council on the death of her mother, Nora Lambe, Latlurcan.
- Paul Clarke, Staff member of Monaghan County Council on the death of his mother, Maureen
- The Devine family, Dublin Street on the death of Ann Devine

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:

- Tom Cloonan, Castleshane on obtaining a 1st place Rosette in the Dressage section of a riding for the disabled event.
- Ryan Cooney, Mullaghmat on his success in a Snooker Championship Competition held recently in Carrickmacross
- RTE Sports Commentator, Seán Óg Ó Ceallacháin on his retirement from broadcasting.
- The organisers of the Christian Brothers School Reunion which was a great success.
- Tullycorbett Community Centre Committee on the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of their Community Centre.

The Members complimented former Town and County Councillor, Willie McKenna on the ongoing work which he is doing in fostering links between Monaghan and Canada.

Cllr. Seán Conlon requested that the Town Council send a formal invitation to the Nelson Doyle Dancers from New Brunswick, Canada who are coming to Ireland in August 2012. It was noted that the invitation would assist the group in obtaining funding for their visit.

The Members wished success to the Students in the area who are sitting their Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations.

(10)

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Robbie Gallagher reminded the Members that the laying of a wreath at the Bombing Memorial in Church Square to commemorate those who died as a result of the Monaghan Bombing in 1974 will take place at 8.45a.m. tomorrow morning.

This Concluded the Business of the Meeting.

Dated this the 20th day of June 2011

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

(11)