

**COMHAIRLE BAILE MHUINEACHÁIN  
MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of Special Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at 5.00p.m. in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

Cathaoirleach: Cllr. David Maxwell

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

In attendance: David Fallon, A/County Manager, Gareth McMahon, Town Engineer, Dympna Condra, Tourism and Marketing Officer, Monaghan County Council and Marie Deighan, Town Clerk.

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

**Proposal for Funding under Interreg IVA Programme**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell welcomed everyone to the Meeting to discuss a proposal for funding for Monaghan Town under the Interreg IVA Programme. Cllr. Maxwell informed the Members that Monaghan Town Council and Armagh City Council were putting together an application for funding which has to be submitted before the closing date of the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and, if successful €m-€2.5m. could be available to the town.

David Fallon, A/County Manager stated that the opportunity for funding arose at short notice and that there is a possibility of accessing €5.5m between Monaghan and Armagh. David Fallon stated that the project aims to establish links between underdeveloped and developed areas of the town.

Dympna Condra, Tourism and Marketing Officer outlined to the Members the details of the Interreg IVA Programme and the following timescales involved:-

- Stage One of the application process is open from Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2012 – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012.
- If successful, applicants will be invited to make Stage Two submissions (full detailed Business Plan) between Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 – Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2012.
- Letters of offer will be issued in December 2012 to successful applicants.
- The successful projects will have to be completed by mid 2015.

Dympna Condra stated that Interreg are looking for plans that are well worked through, with substantial back-up documentation and where public consultation has taken place.

The Members noted that the funding is open to public sector bodies only.

The Cathaoirleach then asked Gareth McMahon, Town Engineer to give a presentation to the Members on the proposed project. The Members noted the following from the presentation:-

“The tract of lands to the East of Monaghan Town comprising the Dublin Street Backlands – disused urban gardens, and the green field site owned by Monaghan Town Council that adjoins these backlands has been identified as a suitable location for the development of a new public space in Monaghan to be known as the “Cultural Quarter”. It is intended that the “Cultural Quarter” shall be the focal point in Monaghan for all future festivals and public events and performances.

The infrastructure layout and landscaping of the space shall be set out to be sympathetic to and supportive of this aim, providing new performance areas; public art displays; a new urban garden and a primary location for organised events in the town. In addition the space shall facilitate the towns existing Farmers Market providing canopied stalls and car-parking, thus providing this very successful project with the space it requires to grow”.

Gareth McMahon stated that Armagh and Monaghan towns are struggling to retain life and vibrancy after 6p.m. The plan is to extend the town centre economy from an 8 hour to a 12 hour economy which would require a buy-in from different groups including local businesses, taxi services, etc.

It was noted that the development of this area as the new “Cultural Quarter” of Monaghan is in keeping with the vision set out in the Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) which was adopted by the Members in 2011 and which involved extensive public consultation on the backlands of Dublin Street.

The Members welcomed the proposed project but stressed the need for further public consultation with the Residents and Stakeholders in the area. It was agreed that when the design of the new public space commences that consideration be given to not creating nooks and crannies which could lead to anti-social behaviour. The Members noted that the project will free up lands that are currently landlocked. The Acting County Manager stated that the Town Council would have to commit its own resources to land acquisition.

The Members unanimously agreed to proceed with the application for funding to the Special EU Programmes Body.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Dated this the 20<sup>th</sup> day of March 2012.

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Cathaoirleach