

COMHAIRLE BAILE MHUINEACHÁIN
MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 20th March 2012 at 5.00p.m. in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, No. 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

- Cathaoirleach:** Cllr. David Maxwell
- Present:** Cllrs Mary Carroll, Seán Conlon, Robbie Gallagher, Thomas Hagan, Paul McGeown, Donal Sherry and Seamus Treanor
- In Attendance:** David Fallon, Acting County Manager, Gareth Mc Mahon, Town Engineer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Mary Hughes, Staff Officer.

An apology for inability to attend was received from Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha. The Members wished Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha a speedy recovery following her recent accident. The Members welcomed Aaron McNicholas, Journalism Student at Dublin City University to the Meeting as an observer.

1. Confirmation of February Monthly Meeting held on 20/02/2012

On the proposal of Cllr. Seamus Treanor seconded by Cllr Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the February Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 20th February 2012.

2. Confirmation of Special Meeting held on 15/02/2012.

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 Wednesday 15th February 2012 regarding an application for funding under the Interreg IVA Programme.

3. Confirmation of Meeting held in Committee on 12/3/2012

On the proposal of Cllr David Maxwell seconded by Cllr Seán Conlon it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the Meeting held in Committee on Monday 12th March 2012 regarding the preparation of the County Monaghan Development Plan 2013 – 2019.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

It was noted that signs indicating the location of Hotels in the town have been ordered. It was also noted that “No drinking” signs are on order and should be received in the near future.

The Members welcomed the recent road line markings carried out recently throughout the town.

It was noted that repair work has been carried out to handrails on the Pound Hill area but more handrails are now damaged.

The Members noted that the Town Council are in the process of arranging works to be carried out to the road at the entrance to Knockroe Glen Housing Estate.

The Members welcomed the work carried out to a road sign at the front of St. Macartans Cathedral and noted that the sign is now more suited to its location.

The Members noted that illegal dumping in the Mullaghmatt/Cortolvin area will be cleaned up within the next week.

The Members congratulated Seán Ó Murchadha and the organizers of “Rith 2012” and commended all those who took part in the national fun run with the aim of heightening awareness of the Irish language in a fun family way.

Gareth McMahon, Town Engineer stated that the Council are still developing a design for an alternative access from the Clones Road into Town Council lands at Mullaghcroghery.

5. Manager’s Orders

The Members noted Manager’s Orders numbered 15/12 – 43/12.

6. Correspondence

The Members noted the following correspondence:-

- Letter dated 7th March 2012 with enclosures from Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD in relation to the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme
- Letter dated 15th February 2012 with enclosures from Seán Conlan TD regarding the Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme.
- Letter dated 5th March 2012 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding a recent Motion adopted by Monaghan Town Council regarding plans by the Department to sell Coillte.
- Letter dated 5th March 2012 from Monaghan County Council regarding the removal of road signage L1400.
- Acknowledgement letter dated 28th February 2012 from the Office of the Minister for Social and Family Affairs regarding cuts to State pensions.
- Letters of objections from Residents in Belgium Square regarding an extension of a yellow box road marking in the area. It was agreed that the Planning Sub-Committee meet with the Residents of the area to discuss the matter.
- Email dated 21st February 2012 from Electro Automation Limited in reply to a complaint received in relation to the pay parking machines installed in the town. The Members expressed disappointment with the response.
- Letter dated 27th February 2012 from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht regarding Regeneration works to the Old Cross Square Monument.
- Report dated 20th February 2011 by Dermot Nolan and Associates, Wicklow on the Restoration of the Sundial Monument at Market Square, Monaghan.

- Letter of request dated 3rd March 2012 from the County Monaghan Motor Club Ltd applying for the use of Glaslough Street Car Park for their Annual Stages Rally on Sunday 22nd April 2012. The Members had no objection to this request.
- Letter dated 21st February 2012 from the Branch Manager of the Bank of Ireland regarding Casual Trading.
- Letter of thanks dated 12th March 2012 from Fr. Sean Clerkin, Treasurer of Monaghan Immigrant Support Group in relation to grant of €500 received from the Town Council.
- Invitation from the Board of Management, Staff and Pupils of Monaghan Model School inviting the Members to a Service of Thanksgiving to mark their 150th Anniversary on Saturday 24th March 2012.
- Email dated 16th February 2012 from Dermot Kirwan, Friends of the Elderly Ireland. Cllr. Robbie Gallagher called on members of the public who know an elderly person to contact the Charity which brings friendship to the elderly who live alone and are isolated.
- Letter dated 2nd March 2012 from Waterford City Council regarding a fund raising event in conjunction with LAMA.
- Letter dated 12th March 2012 from the National Roads Authority regarding Litter Awareness. The Members expressed disappointment with the tone of the letter. On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. Seamus Treanor it was agreed to write to the National Roads Authority again calling on them to reconsider the erection of signage on National Roads as a means of tackling the problem of litter. The Members were of the opinion that the signage could show a freephone telephone number that people could use in the event of witnessing rubbish being thrown from vehicles.
- Letter dated 13th March 2012 from the National Roads Authority regarding signage at the Cathedral in Monaghan Town.
- Letter dated 12th March 2012 from Lorcan Ronaghan, Latlurcan regarding Rossmore Castle.
- Letter received on the 20th March 2012 from Seamus McKenna, Dublin Street expressing concern about the declaration of an Alleyway from Dublin Street to the Diamond Centre Car Park. David Fallon, A/County Manager stated that Mr. McKenna's concerns will be taken on board and that the family will be accommodated as much as possible.

7. Planning Applications

The Members noted Planning Applications numbered 12/2 – 12/3.

8. Business Submitted by An Cathaoirleach

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell praised all those who organized and worked to make the 30th Anniversary of St. Patricks Day Parade in Monaghan town a great success. Cllr. Maxwell paid special tribute to Julie and Louise Brannigan, Joe Corr, Monaghan Town Council Outdoor staff and the Gardaí for the work that they devoted to this years event and also thanked His Excellency Loyola Hearn, Ambassador of Canada to Ireland who came to Monaghan for the Parade.

The Members of the Council and the A/County Manager concurred with the Cathaoirleach's sentiments. It was noted that the Canadian Ambassador and his wife are visiting Monaghan for two days at the end of April. It was agreed to hold a small reception for them on their arrival.

9. Consideration of Reports of Committees

The Members noted the Minutes of the Budget Sub-Committee Meeting held on Monday 12th March 2012 and agreed to the payment of the following Community Grants:-

Milltown Residents Association	€250
Killygoan Residents Association	€1,000
Cluain Lorcáin Residents Association	€250
Corran Residents Association	€150
Coolshannagh Walk Residents Association	€250
Glencove Manor Residents Association (50)	€100
Mullaghdun Residents Group 1-15 (15)	€150
Kilnacloy/St. Patrick's Tce Residents Association (115)	€500
Mullaghmatt/Cortolvin Community Development Ltd	€900
Beechgrove Lawns Residents Association (180)	€750
Tully Residents Association (82)	€400
Latlurcan Residents Association (85)	€700
Monaghan Allotment Society	€350
Shuffling Boots Line Dancing Club	€250
2 nd Monaghan Scout Group	€700
Monaghan Community Brass Band	€700
Monaghan Town Community Games	€700
Monaghan Harps GAA Club	€1000
Fergal O' Hanlon GFC	€900
Monaghan United Football Club	€1000
Monaghan Town Football Club	€750
An Cumann Gaelach	€700
Lithuanian Community of Monaghan	€350
MSPCA	€500
Ardaghey Games Committee	€150
St. Macartans Snooker Club	€250
Flower Festival in Ballyalbany Church	€250
Master Irelands Strongman Proposal for Monaghan	€250 (provisional)
Irish Federation of Pike Angling Clubs	€250

Overall Total **€14,450**

It was agreed that the Budget Sub-Committee meet to consider the setting up of a "Disaster Fund" which members of the public could avail of when experiencing an unexpected difficulty.

The Members noted the Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee Meeting held on Monday 12th March 2012.

10. Roads/Housing.

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

- Mill Street – dumping of rubbish
- North Road – Loose bricks on footpath
- Castleblayney Road – loose manhole cover
- Fencing broken on Glen Road

Cllr. Robbie Gallagher proposed that the Town Council write to Phil Hogan TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government calling on him to suspend the Household Charge of €100 until such time as there is total clarity on it. Cllr. Gallagher stated that the introduction of the Charge is rushed and has led to a series of problems including unfairness of the flat rate method chosen, households still had not received the information leaflet, the Post Office could have been used to allow people to pay, etc. This was seconded by Cllr. Seamus Treanor.

A vote was taken on the proposal which resulted as follows:-

In favour of the proposal:- Gallagher, Treanor, Conlon, McGeown, Sherry (5)

Abstentions:- Maxwell, Carroll, Hagan (3)

The Cathaoirleach declared the Motion carried.

Cllr. Seán Conlon proposed that the Council do not use the powers given to them to access household information via utility bills for the purpose of implementing the Charge. This was seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry. Cllr. Mary Carroll stated that she could not support the proposal.

David Fallon, A/County Manager stated that the Members of the Council could not direct him, as Manager not to use the law available. David Fallon stated that the offices of the Monaghan Local Authorities will be open on Saturday 31st March 2012 from 10a.m. to 4p.m. to facilitate the payment of the Household Charge.

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

In favour of the Motion:- Conlon, McGeown, Sherry (3)

Against the Motion:- Carroll, Hagan, Maxwell (3)

Abstentions:- Gallagher, Treanor (2)

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell used his casting vote which resulted as follows:-

In favour of the Motion (3)

Against the Motion (4)

Abstentions (2)

The Cathaoirleach declared the Motion lost.

Cllr. Donal Sherry referred to anti-social behaviour in the Canal Walk/Mall Road areas of the town and stated that residents of the area are concerned and fearful. It was noted that it would not be feasible to close off the area but that the Gardaí should be informed and requested to patrol the area and investigate the matter.

11. Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan

The Members look forward to the removal of the Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan. It was noted that works are currently taking place to the Mast which will improve broadband services to help those who are in business in the town.

12. Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme

It was noted that no date has yet been received for the visit of Minister Jan O' Sullivan TD to view the Remedial Works in Mullaghmatt.

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

Gareth Mc Mahon, Town Engineer reported that all works in relation to the grant scheme will be completed by the end of March. It was noted that works are underway in the Alleyway off Dublin Street to The Diamond Centre car park.

14. Progress on Windows/Doors – Killygoan area.

Cllr. Donal Sherry stated that there are still two houses outstanding in the estate where works to the windows/doors have not yet been resolved to the satisfaction of the tenants. The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell called for a speedy resolution to the problems. It was agreed that the Town Engineer and the Clerk of Works meet with the concerned residents.

15. Report on Mixed Use Development

It was noted that a planning application has been received to re-instate the Mixed Use Development at Roosky – creation of 239 car parking spaces, public lighting, trolley bays, parking meters, bring-bank facility incorporating receptacles for the collection of recyclable materials and all associated signage and ancillary site works.

16. Consideration of Schedule of Uncollected Rates as at the 31st December 2011 as per Article 40(a) of the Local Government (Financial Procedures and Audit) Regulations 2002

The Members noted the following details of the Schedule of Uncollected Rates as at 31st December 2011:-

Rates Warrant for 2011 (including arrears)	€4,128,433
Paid in 2011	€2,198,350
Arrears at 31st December 2011	€1,930,083

Analysis of Uncollected Rates at 31st December 2011.

Write-offs

Businesses closed all year or part of year	€31,669
Businesses (non- profitable, Charitable Status,etc)	€1,247

Carried forward

Rate Accounts with Solicitor	€64,854
Uncollected Rates at 31/12/2011 (carried forward to 2012)	*€1,082,375
Credits at 31 st December 2011	€10,062

*€38,596 was paid in January 2012 in respect of 2011
Collection Rate 2011 – 62%
Collection Rate 2010 – 76%

On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to write to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government renewing the appeal for the introduction of a new method of determining and levying rates on commercial premises.

17. Consideration of Approval of Newspapers for use in accordance with Local Government Planning and Development Regulations 2001

On the proposal of Cllr David Maxwell seconded by Cllr Seán Conlon it was agreed to approve of the following list of newspapers for use in accordance with the Local Government Planning and Development Regulations 2001:-

National Newspapers

Irish Independent, Irish Star, Irish Times and Evening Herald

Local/Regional Newspapers

Northern Standard and Anglo Celt

18. Notices of Motion

- (a) “I would ask that we write to Sisk & Co to ascertain how many local tradesmen are currently employed at the V.E.C. Campus on the Armagh Road”.

Cllr. Treanor

Cllr. Seamus Treanor proposed the Notice of Motion and Cllr. Thomas Hagan seconded the Motion. Cllr. Seamus Treanor stated that the Contractor has failed to deliver on promises they made about employing local people on the development at Knockaconny. The Members noted correspondence dated the 13th February 2012 from County Monaghan VEC regarding the number of locals employed at the new campus on the Old Armagh Road, Monaghan. The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell stated that the CEO of the VEC is in the process of organising a meeting with the Contractor and that every effort has been made by County Monaghan VEC to get local people involved in the works but that there is no onus on the Contractor to employ Monaghan people. Following a discussion a vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

In favour of the Motion:- Treanor (1)

Against the Motion:- Carroll, Conlon, Hagan, Maxwell, McGeown, Sherry (6)

Abstentions:- Gallagher (1)

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell declared the Motion lost.

The Members encouraged people interested in obtaining employment on the site to submit their C.V. to the Company.

- (b) “That this Council write to the Financial Regulator, Mathew Elderfield and request he call on the banking sector to withdraw their intention to pursue parents of young couples who found it necessary to seek their financial help”.

Cllr. Treanor

On the proposal of Cllr Seamus Treanor seconded by Cllr Mary Carroll it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion. It was also agreed to refer the Motion to Michael Noonan TD, Minister for Finance.

- © “That this Council, in light of the revelations regarding the broadcasting of questionable material and in the interests of balance and fairness in public service broadcasting calls for a thorough but speedy inquiry into practices at RTE which have led to two incidents recently which have caused the public to question the impartiality of the taxpayer funded service”.

Cllr. Gallagher

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

- (d) “That Monaghan Town Council calls on the Government to address the backlog in the processing of Family Income Supplement applications”

Cllr. Gallagher

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

19. Questions

Cllr. Seamus Treanor asked:-

- (a) Are there any plans by this Council to introduce bye-laws to prohibit skate boarding and cycling on our footpaths and Diamond Area?

Draft bye-laws will be brought before the Members at the April Monthly Meeting of the Town Council.

Cllr. Seamus Treanor referred to a recent incident which had occurred in the Diamond area when a visitor to the town had been struck by a skateboard. It was agreed to consider a proposal to place large floral displays in the Diamond area to prevent Skateboarders from using the area which is posing a danger to pedestrians.

It was also agreed to insert a provision in the bye-laws regarding the removal and killing of fish from Peters Lake.

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

- (b) Post completion of the most recent phase of the Mullaghmatt Remedial Scheme several new street light fixtures in place at the location of the central car park area have yet to function and several more that were previously working now do not light. Is this issue of commissioning and repair of these lights the responsibility of the Remedial Scheme Contractor or the Town Council? Are plans in place to have all lights functioning within a short period of time?

There are a number of new lights which require an ESB metered connection. This connection was not applied for initially under the contract. An application is now with ESB and it's expected that the connection will take place in the coming weeks.

- © Since the signing of the contracts with JC Decaux and installation of the public toilet facility located beside the Courthouse what is:-
- (i) the total value payments made by the Council to JC Decaux?
 - (ii) the total income generated by the toilet facility?
 - (iii) the length of period of contract and how many years remaining on this Contract?

An agreement was signed with JC Decaux on the 21st February 2003 in respect of the supply, delivery, installation and maintenance of a Universal Superloo which was installed on the 13th December 2002.

The total value payments made by the Council to JC Decaux to the 31st December 2011 total €253,720.

The total income generated by the Superloo facility to the 31st December 2011 total €9135.

The term of the maintenance agreement shall be 20 years from the date of the Agreement or the date of commissioning of the Superloo, whichever is the later.

It was agreed that the Town Engineer and Town Clerk meet with the Company to negotiate the rates of payment.

- (d) Will the Executive provide a detailed drawing, including details of acreage and accessibility, of Town Council owned property at Annahagh and along the N2 bypass that remains available for development post completion of the new Fire Station?

The Members noted a drawing prepared by the Town Engineer. On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to inform IDA Ireland of the availability of Town Council land for development purposes at Annahagh, Monaghan along the N2 bypass.

Cllr. Robbie Gallagher asked:-

(e) What plans do the Town Council have:-

- (i) for this years "Spring Clean" campaign and when will it commence?
- (ii) Has the Council made any progress with regard to the clean-up of the area around the Ulster Canal mentioned unfavourably in the IBAL report and has the Council received any reply from private landowners in the area who were also mentioned in that report?

Registration forms have been circulated by Town Council Officials to all Town Council Housing Estates. Each area has been asked to organise the clean-up of their estate and to inform the Town Council of the date of their Clean-up. The Town Council will arrange for the collection of the refuse bags from the areas who have participated in the clean-up. A photocall to launch Spring Clean in the County has been organised by Monaghan County Council and will take place on Wednesday 21st March 2012 at Monaghan Swimming Pool. The Cathaoirleach of the Town Council has been invited to attend. €4000 was provided in Budget 2012 towards a clean-up of the Canal at the rear of the Mall Road which the Members of the Council nominated as a project in RTE's second series of the programme "Dirty Old Towns". A copy of the IBAL report was circulated to the landowners in 2012. No reply has been received.

(f) Can the Council ask the OPW to expedite their report and investigations into the causes of the recent flooding in an around Monaghan town?

The OPW's Flood Data Collection Programme is a long-term plan to map in detail flood risk throughout the Country. A Meeting is scheduled for 21st March between OPW and Council Engineers to discuss this programme. A further report will be available after this meeting.

The OPW Minor Works Grant is available for small works and Council Engineers are exploring possible schemes which may help alleviate some of the flooding problems.

(g) What plans does the Council have to replace the trees which had to be felled between Rope Walk and the Belgium Park area?

The Town Gardener has developed a detailed plan for planting new trees in 2012. Approximately 70 semi-mature trees will be planted in various locations throughout the town.

(h) In relation to the planning applications to fill in the "hole in the ground" what is the expected decision date?

The Planning Application was lodged on the 15th February 2012 and the due decision date is the 10th April 2012.

20. Resolutions from Other Local Authorities:-

- (a) “That we the Members of Kerry County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection not to make any cuts on Community Employment Schemes in County Kerry and to reverse cuts already made”.

Kerry County Council

It was agreed to mark the above Resolution read.

- (b) “That this Council, being extremely concerned for the future of community based and voluntary activity in the County so vital to the well being of our residents, fully supports the current campaigns against the cuts in the Community Employment Scheme and Community Safety Forums and calls on the Government to restore the funding for these important initiatives so critical to the quality of life of so many communities. Furthermore, this Council requests that the Government publish a White Paper on the Community and Voluntary Sector so that a debate can take place on how this sector can be supported and funded in the context of the rationalization that is taking place across the disbursement and allocation of public funds. That this Motion if approved be copied to all other Local Authorities”.

South Dublin County Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- © “That a request be made to the Minister of Justice and to the Government to introduce legislation regulating the activities of those businesses involved in the gold buying industry”.

Muinebheag Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

21. Conferences:-

- (a) Celtic Conferences – “Media Social Media and Effective Time Management” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – 23rd – 25th March 2012 – (approx. cost €80).
- (b) LAMA Spring Seminar 2012 – “The Role of Local Authorities in Enabling Economic Development and Local Government Reform” – The Tower Hotel, Waterford – 13th – 14th April 2012 – (approx. cost €730)
On the proposal of Cllr Paul McGeown seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed that Cllr Seán Conlon attend Conference (b)
- © Celtic Conferences – “Modern Alternatives to the disappearance of Fossil Fuels” – Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork – 13th – 15th April 2012 – (approx. cost €80).
- (d) TGR Seminars – “The 2012 EPA Urban Wastewater Discharges Report – Environmental and Financial Consequences for your Local Authority” – Kilmurry Lodge Hotel, Kilmurry, Limerick – 20th- 22nd April 2012 – (approx. cost €60).

- (e) Irish Planning Institute National Planning Conference 2012 – “Planning to lead the Way: Embracing Challenges and Creating Opportunities” – Kilkenny Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny – 26th – 27th April 2012 (approx. cost €1020).

The Members were circulated with a report complying with Section 142(5)(f) of the Local Government Act 2001 in relation to the following Conference:-
23rd Colmcille Winter School Conference, Letterkenny – attended by Cllr. Seán Conlon.

22. Any Other Business

As the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell will be in Prince Edward Island from the 23rd – 28th May 2012 it was agreed to hold the May Monthly Meeting of the Town Council on Tuesday 15th May 2012 at 5pm.

Cllr. Donal Sherry expressed disappointment about comments on RTE about the poor condition of the Soccer pitch at Gortakeegan and the small attendance at the match between Monaghan United and Dundalk Football Club.

23. Sympathy/Congratulations

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:-

- Cllr. Paul McGeown on the death of his father-in-law, Liam O’ Donoghue, Glaslough Street, Monaghan
- Ann Clancy on the death of her mother, Mrs Annie Callan, Tully
- Martha Williamson–Hunter, Principal of Beechhill College on the death of her mother, Gretta Williamson, Smithboro.
- The Ambassador of Belgium to Ireland on the tragic death of Belgian school children who lost their lives in a recent coach crash in Switzerland.

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:-

- Sister Máire Cannon, Deputy Principal of St. Louis Girls National School on her recent retirement. Sr. Máire is the last Sister of the St. Louis Order to retire from teaching in Ireland.
- Beechhill College on their successful involvement in the Comenius Project

It was also agreed to congratulate the residents of the Killygoan Estate on the establishment of their Junior Tidy Towns Committee.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Dated this the 16th day of April 2012

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach