

**Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Monaghan, on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr D. Maxwell, Cathaoirleach

**Present:** Cllrs. Aughey, Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gilliland, Keelan, McElvaney, McKenna, McNally, O’Hanlon, P. Treanor, S. Treanor and R. Truell.

Mr. E. O’Sullivan, Chief Executive, Mr. A. King, Mr. P. Clifford Ms. P. Monahan, Directors of Services and Mr. C. Flynn, A/Director of Services, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner, Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner, and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

**Urgent Business:**

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that he had received 3 notices of urgent business as follows:

**Notice 1 – Cllr P. Connolly**

*In view of the fact that the on-going nurses industrial action is set to intensify in the coming days and that the number of services hit will increase from 82 to 240 and the fact that this increase will mainly affect day respite services for people with an intellectual disability that Monaghan County Council calls on the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD and Minister for Health Simon Harris TD to take immediate steps to resolve the ongoing industrial unrest within the nursing grades in General, Psychiatric and Intellectual Disability by entering into meaningful negotiations with the nurses and resolving this industrial dispute as a matter of urgency.*

**Notice 2 – Sinn Fein Members**

*That this Council supports the nurses and midwives who have balloted for strike action in their demand for a safe, fully staff, functioning health service that values and pays them as essential skilled workers.*

**Notice 3 – Fianna Fail Members**

*That Monaghan County Council demand a commitment from An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed TD and the European Commissioner for Agriculture, Phil Hogan, to immediately implement supports for beef farmers, who are currently in a crisis situation, unable to have animals slaughtered, price reductions in excess of 20% in recent weeks and facing “WIPE OUT”, as detailed in a confidential briefing to Cabinet of last week in a “No Deal Brexit”, with the Agri Food Sector facing €1.7bn in tariffs.*

*We demand a commitment from the above, to the immediate implementation of exceptional response measures, especially in a “No Deal Brexit” i.e. Intervention and Aid to Private Storage and Expert Refunds, to restore some confidence in the Agricultural Section and it’s 174,000 persons working directly in farming, especially in County Monaghan, with all economic activity, very heavily dependent on agricultural activity and food production.*

*On the proposal of Cllr McKenna, seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed to go 'Into Committee' to discuss whether to accept the motions submitted as urgent business.*

It was agreed to take all three motions as urgent business at the end of the meeting and that the two motions relating to the Nurses strike would be taken together.

*On the proposal of Cllr McKenna, seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed that the Council revert to public session.*

## **1. Confirmation of Minutes**

### **(i) Minutes of Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2019**

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr P. Connolly, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019, be confirmed.*

## **2. Correspondence.**

**The following additional correspondence was circulated with the agenda for the meeting:**

- Letter from Lucia O'Farrell regarding the Council's decision to allow her address the Council in committee and not to in public session.
- County of Monaghan Local Electoral Areas and Municipal Districts Order - S.I. No. 629 of 2018.
- Letter from TII regarding confirming the National Road Allocations for 2019.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport confirming the 2019 Regional and Local Road Grant Allocations.

## **3. To consider Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000**

### **(i) Proposal for realignment of N54 Clones Road (Tullygrimes to Annaghervy)**

Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner explained that the proposed works consist of the upgrade of the N54 from approximately 0.5km to the west of the Monaghan town boundary and 3.8km to the east of Smithborough. The scheme is approximately 3.15km in length and will comprise:

- A 7.3 metre carriageway (3.65 metre wide lanes in each direction) with 2.5 metre hard shoulders and 3 metre verges.
- A ghost island junction at the junction of the N54 with the regional road R187.
- Roads will be realigned to provide a staggered junction alignment in order to improve the safety of local roads L16004, L21803, L1600 and L1605.
- Attenuation ponds at drainage outfall locations.
- Associated accommodation and fencing works, landscaping works and drainage works.

Mr. Hughes stated that following public notice of the proposed scheme, three objection letters were received and that Mr. G. McCarthy, Roads Section would deal with the Consultants response to the objections.

Mr. Gearoid McCarthy, Executive Engineer Roads Design gave a presentation to the members during which he outlined in detail the proposed design for the reconstruction of the stretch of the N54, the objections received and how the issues raised by the objectors might be addressed and the timeframe for the project. He responded to queries from the members.

Mr. Hughes stated that, having considered the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, it was recommended that the members proceed to grant permission for the development as proposed subject to a number of conditions.

*On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that the that the Council approve the granting of planning permission for the proposed realignment of the N54 Clones Road (Tullygrimes to Annaghervy) (Ref 17/8012) to comply with the report from the Senior Planner, in accordance with Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001 (as amended).*

**4. To consider Material Contravention to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019**

Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner referred to the report prepared in accordance with Section 34(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). He stated that planning permission is being sought to construct a 3 storey Care Home comprising 90no beds with ancillary accommodation to include day rooms, dining rooms, kitchen, laundry, staff facilities, etc. at Cloughvalley Lower, Carrickmacross. The development also includes the external hard and soft landscaping and all associated ancillary site works to assist the formation of the project (18/364). Mr. Hughes outlined the process which had been followed and explained that whilst the proposal does not accord with the Industry, Enterprise and Employment zoning attached to this site, it is however considered to be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. As such, a material contravention of the Development Plan is required if planning permission is to be granted. He recommended the members approve the proposed material contravention to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

He explained that it was necessary for the approval of the material contravention that three quarters of the membership of the full Council vote in favour of the proposal.

*On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr Keelan, it was unanimously agreed that the Council approve a material contravention to the County Monaghan Development Plan 2013- 2019 to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions specified, for the construction of a 3 storey Care Home comprising 90no beds with ancillary accommodation to include day rooms, dining rooms, kitchen, laundry, staff facilities, and all associated ancillary site works etc., at Cloughvalley Lower, Carrickmacross. (Planning Ref: 18/364).*

**5. To consider submission to the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy**

Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner gave a presentation to the members on the proposed submission to the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. Mr. Gourley stated that a significant amount of what been argued for by Monaghan County Council in previous submissions and engagements with the Regional Assembly had been incorporated in the draft Strategy. He also stated that it was clearly evident in the Draft RSES that the

comments from Monaghan County Council had influenced the content of the strategy with numerous mentions in the document of issues that are significant, relevant and important to the County, such as recognition of the Cavan-Monaghan Sub Region and its connectivity with the Eastern Economic Corridor, the Greater Dublin Area and N. Ireland, Monaghan designated as a Key Town and the growth potential of Carrickmacross recognised, the importance of delivering the N2/A5 Road realignment scheme, the Ulster Canal Greenway, Lough Muckno and Patrick Kavanagh Trail & Centre as tourist attractions. He added that case studies on the Monaghan Bio Science Centre, the reopening of the Ulster Canal and the Blackwater Catchment Care project had been included in the strategy. He concluded by stating that the Strategy has paid due regard to County Monaghan, but that further comment was required on a number of issues including more details in terms of prioritising delivery of objectives which had been set out in the draft submission document circulated to the elected members.

He stated that the deadline for submissions was the following Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February and invited comments from the members for inclusion within a section for members comments to be incorporated into the submission. A number of members made contributions to be included within the submission to which Mr Gourley agreed would be included within the Elected Members' comments section in the submission. A number of resolutions were submitted by members, as follows:

*Cllr Keelan requested that the resolution approved at the January Council meeting in relation to the undergrounding of the North South Interconnector is included in the submission on behalf of the members. This was agreed.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that in reference to the NWRA draft document presented by the Planning Section, that this Council writes to the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government seeking updates on the lack of updated guidance in respect of rural housing and the necessity to distinguish between rural areas under strong urban influence and elsewhere as detailed within the Flemish decree.*

*Cllr Conlon proposed, Cllr Carthy seconded that this Council seeks of the North West Regional Assembly to desist from truncating the six counties in the north of Ireland in their mapping graphics included in their current Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and all future documents.*

A vote by show of hands on Cllr Conlon's motion resulted in 7 for, 3 against, 5 abstentions. The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried.

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services circulated a briefing note to the members on Monaghan's position in the Northern & Western Regional Assembly (NWRA). He explained that the Local Government Reform Act merged two tiers of regional governance into one and created three regional assemblies where there was previously two. He outlined the benefits of being in the NWRA. He stated that the NWRA is a region in transition and will attract a higher rate of EU funding.

*Cllr O'Hanlon proposed, Cllr McNally seconded that Monaghan County Council explores in greater detail as to what benefits Monaghan would accrue from joining the Eastern Regional Assembly given its geographic location.*

A vote by show of hands on Cllr O'Hanlon's motion resulted in 10 for, 1 against, 4 abstentions. The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried.

**6. To approve Newspapers in accordance with Part 4 Article 18 (2) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2006**

*On the proposal of Cllr McNally seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Council approve the following newspapers in accordance with Part 4 Article 18 (2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2006 –*

- Northern Standard
- Anglo Celt
- Dundalk Democrat (Carrickmacross\Castleblaney MD area only)
- Irish Independent
- Irish Daily Star
- Irish Times

**7. To receive update on Housing Programmes:**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Nuala Woods, SEO Housing, Lorcan MacCinna SEE Housing, Jennifer Finlay, Asst. Engineer, Teresa McGuirk, ASO, and Mark Hall, Executive Engineer. The Housing staff then delivered a presentation to the Council members during which they gave detailed information on the following topics:

- The Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan
- Tenant (incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016
- Repair and Lease scheme
- Buy and Renew Scheme
- Rebuilding Ireland 2018-2021 targets – the social housing targets for 2018 of 162 had been exceeded by 137, which a further 158 homes projected for 2019.

Following the presentation, the staff responded to queries from the members. The members and the Chief Executive complimented the Housing staff on their work to date in the delivery of the Social Housing programme.

Cllr Gilliland referred to a recent meeting with Minister Damien English TD which was attended by members of the Housing SPC. He requested that the Council retrospectively approve the attendance of Cllrs O’Hanlon, S. Treanor, Carthy, Mr. Tom Freeman and himself at the meeting in Leinster House on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2018.

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Council retrospectively approve the attendance of Cllrs O’Hanlon, S. Treanor, Carthy, Gilliland and Mr. Tom Freeman at the meeting with Minister Damien English in Leinster House on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2018.*

**8. To receive the audited AFS and Audit Report on the Accounts of MCC for year ended 31 December 2017**

Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance referred to the audited AFS and Audit Report for 31 December 2017 which had been circulated. He also referred to the Audit Committee Report on the AFS 2017 and the Local Government Auditors Report 2017.

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that the documents circulated be noted.*

**9. To receive Audit Committee reports**

**(i) Audit Committee Annual Report which includes Performance & Effectiveness for 2018**

The members noted the Audit Committee Annual Report which had been circulated with the agenda.

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Audit Committee Annual Report on Performance and Effectiveness for 2018 be noted.*

**(ii) To receive the Audit Committee Report on the Annual Financial Statement 2017 and the Local Government Auditors Report 2017**

This document was already noted at item 8 above.

**(iii) To approve the Draft Audit Committee Charter for 2019**

The members noted the Draft Audit Committee Charter for 2019 which had been circulated with the agenda.

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Draft Audit Committee Charter for 2019, as presented, be adopted.*

**(iv) To approve the Draft Audit Committee Work Programme for 2019**

The members noted the Draft Audit Committee Work Programme for 2019 which had been circulated with the agenda.

*On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Draft Audit Committee Work Programme for 2019 as presented, be adopted.*

**10. To receive the Management Report – January 2019:**

The members noted the Management Report for the month of January which had been circulated with the agenda. The Chief Executive responded to a number of queries from the members in relation to the report.

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McNally, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council demands of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Josepha Madigan, TD, the restoration of the Heritage Council Community Grants Scheme which was of great assistance to local community groups in promoting and protecting our local heritage.*

*Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr McElvaney seconded that Monaghan County Council carry out a review of the road salting programme which operates excellently in County Monaghan, with*

*a view to including additional roads, i.e., the Rockcorry to Doapey Creamery – Newbliss road which is heavily vehicularised including school buses (1 special needs) HGV's etc.*

*Cllr Aughey proposed, Cllr O'Hanlon seconded that Monaghan County Council treat all local roads where schools are located and where this is not possible provide schools with salt containers and liaise with the Principal of the School along with members of the local community plus the owner of the public transport that is provided to the school.*

*Cllr Gilliland proposed, Cllr Truell seconded that Monaghan County Council include the L8100 on its salting programme to Loughmourne School and Autism Unit as it is the only road between the R180 and the R185 that is not salted and is only 2km long.*

*Cllr Bennett proposed, Cllr Conlon seconded that the road between Knockatallon Cross and Tydavnet be fully salted (currently only half salted). That the road from Scotstown to Roslea and the roads HSE houses are on are also salted.*

Following a brief debate it was agreed that all proposals relating to road salting be referred to the Transport & Environment SPC for consideration.

#### **11. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events :**

The members noted the reports from Cllrs. Campbell, Crowe, Keelan & McNally in relation to their attendance at the following conferences/training events:

- AILG Training, Co Leitrim
- AILG GDPR Training, Co Cavan
- Future of Cross Co-operation, Co Cavan
- Let's Talk Tourism, Co Kerry

#### **12. Business submitted by the Chief Executive.**

**Monaghan CCTV:** The Chief Executive referred to the discussion at the public meeting of the Joint Policing Committee in relation to the Monaghan Town CCTV scheme. He stated that in accordance with the Department of Justice Community CCTV Scheme guidance, each local authority must undertake to act as Data Controller for all Community CCTV Schemes, for the purposes of the Data Protection/GDPR legislation. There had been concerns about this and only one such scheme had been advanced nationally. He suggested that the matter be placed on the agenda for the next Monaghan MD meeting, and that a report would be prepared on what was required to have the Monaghan town scheme progressed to completion. He undertook to circulate a copy of the report to the other MD's but pointed out that the Monaghan Town scheme was the only one in the county to have been substantially advanced.

#### **Castleblayney Courthouse/Market House:**

The Chief Executive informed the members that following a safety appraisal, serious issues had been identified at the building which necessitated temporary road closures and the erection of safety hoarding around it. Further safety measures will be undertaken as a matter of priority. He apologised for the inconvenience but stated that the safety of the general public was paramount.

**13. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2019**

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were responded to by the relevant officials.

**14. To receive update on North South Interconnector project.**

*Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr O’Hanlon seconded that Monaghan County Council discontinue with immediate effect all meetings/discussions etc with ESB Networks in relation to the North South 400KV Interconnector, as they are not the authorised body, as per the grant of planning permission of December 2017, as it was granted to Eirgrid, with all 9 conditions to be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority, prior to commencement of development. ESB Networks has no authority under the grant of planning to authorise such agreement with this local authority of the 9 conditions.*

The Chief Executive informed the members that, as the statutory planning authority, he could not instruct staff not to engage/discontinue engagement with an agency in relation to a valid planning decision.

A vote by show of hands on Cllr Coyle’s proposal resulted in 12 for, nil against and 5 abstentions. The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried.

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr O’Hanlon, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council issues a formal complaint to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) requesting an immediate investigation into the following:*

- 1. The unauthorised carrying out by ESB Networks of the independent functions of Eirgrid, as specified in the Regulations S.I. 445/2000, and the systematic failure of ESB Networks to comply with the terms of the Infrastructure Agreement, and*
- 2. The dereliction of duty by Eirgrid in not fulfilling its responsibilities under the Infrastructure Agreement and its collusion with ESB Networks in intentionally facilitating ESB Networks to act in an unauthorised manner.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that this Council writes to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) requesting that they investigate the ESB’s role in the planning process for the North South Interconnector.*

*Cllr Gilliland proposed, Cllrs Truell and Campbell seconded, that Monaghan County Council Planning and legal departments examine claims made by the NEPPC and CMAPC in light of consultation with ESB/Eirgrid in relation to the North South Interconnector. It is reported –*

- 1. That the ESB are duly not authorised to have discussions with Monaghan County Council Planning Section in the absence of a Project Agreement between Eirgrid and the ESB.*
- 2. Examine the proposed system of submitting samples of access routes only – up to 10 in Monaghan, up to 10 in Meath and up to 5 in Cavan.*
- 3. Examine the continual dealings with Eirgrid/ESB where there is a formal complaint to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) by the NEPPC and the CMAPC where the transmission systems operator, namely Eirgrid, may be guilty of an offence.*
- 4. And report to the elected members of any implications that may be foreseen in relation to the 3 previous points in the progressing of the North/South Interconnector and Monaghan County Council.*

It was agreed that consideration of Cllr Gilliland's proposal would be deferred to the March Council meeting.

**15. Update on N2 National Primary Road Schemes**

Ms. P. Monahan, Director of Services updated the members in relation to this matter. She stated that the Project Office had been established and that allocations of €1m for each project had been notified to the Council. It was intended that the Consultants – Jacobs Engineering – would make a presentation to the CPG at the March meeting.

**16. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project.**

There was no discussion on this item.

**17. To receive presentation from Mr. M Ashraf Butt, Cavan-Monaghan Hospital regarding services**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr. Ashraf Butt, Head of Emergency Medicine, Cavan-Monaghan Hospital and invited him to make a presentation to the Council members.

Mr. Butt then gave a presentation to the members on the Monaghan Minor Injuries Unit. He explained that the Unit, based at Monaghan General Hospital, is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm (excluding bank holidays), and can treat adults and children aged 5 and over. The Minor Injuries Unit can help with problems such as: sprains and strains, musculoskeletal injuries, broken bones in arms and legs, dislocations of fingers and toes, wounds including cuts and grazes, soft tissue injuries and/or bruising, removal of foreign bodies, minor burns and scalds, minor head injuries with no loss of consciousness, insect and animal bites and minor eye injuries, that are unlikely to need overnight admission to hospital.

The Monaghan unit is staffed by consultant led teams of doctors, advanced nurse practitioners, nurses, radiographers and physiotherapists, there is swift access to diagnostics including X-ray, laboratory tests and some have access to physiotherapy services. Patients are seen in an appropriate clinical setting with a potential turnaround times in some cases of less than an hour. He stated that there had been an 18% increase in the number attending the unit in 2018 and urged the public to make as much use as they could of the MIU. There is no charge for patients with full medical cards or for those patients with valid GP referral letter.

Following his presentation he responded to queries from the elected members. The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Butt for his presentation and wished him every success with the project.

At this point (3.10 pm) the Cathaoirleach requested the approval of the members to extend the meeting time to enable the completion of the agenda. This was agreed. Cllr. McKenna stated that he had to leave the meeting at 3.45 pm as he and the other Sinn Fein members had another meeting at 4pm.

19. Questions:

**Cllr C. Carthy asked:**

1. Has the review of Vacant Housing been concluded for Co. Monaghan and, if so:
  - (a) How many units are vacant?
  - (b) Are there many units that could be bought by Monaghan County Council and used for social or affordable housing?
  - (c) Are the Council in discussions with their owners with a view to buying/leasing these properties?

**Reply: The review of Vacant Housing in County Monaghan is ongoing. The desktop analysis undertaken by Monaghan County Council has revealed the following:**

**Census 2016 statistics: there are 245,460 vacant dwellings across the State. Of this total 55% (140,120) are houses, with 43192 unoccupied flats accounting for the 17.5% of the total number of vacant housing. In addition, there are 62148 holiday homes in the State. According to Census 2016 Monaghan has a vacancy rate of 3,126 units of accommodation. This would equate to a vacancy rate of 12 % for County Monaghan. The national vacancy level is also 12% according to the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Of these numbers 2,449 are vacant homes of which 435 are apartments. There are 242 vacant holiday homes identified within the County according to the CSO.**

**An Post/Eircode data: Monaghan County Council has accessed An Post/Eircode data which appears to contradict the CSO statistics. An Post/Eircode data shows 1,292 vacant residential properties in County Monaghan. There is a very significant discrepancy between the CSO statistics and An Post/Eircode data. Monaghan County Council has been working on verification of the data and will continue this work on the ground over the coming months in 2019.**

**Of 172 vacant houses inspected over the last 24 months 77 have been purchased by Monaghan County Council and 6 are in the process of being purchased. In cases where property owners are not in a position to sell they have been provided with information regarding the Repair & Leasing Scheme.**

**Monaghan County Council will continue to target suitable vacant homes for acquisition in areas of housing need.**

2. Has a night-time review of the Street Lights in Carrickmacross taken place and, if so, will the Executive confirm if modifications will not take place to increase the spread of light from the newer LED bulbs?

**Reply: No night-time survey of the street lighting in Carrickmacross has taken place yet. It was not practical to undertake such a study while the Christmas Lights were still in place. A review is planned for the month of Feb 2019 and, depending upon the outcome of same, a decision will then be taken regarding any appropriate modifications.**

**Cllr C. Carthy asked:**

3. When is it expected that Monaghan County Council will get a response on applications it submitted under the Rural Regeneration Scheme?

**Reply: An Taoiseach and Minister Ring announced the first successful projects under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund on 23 November 2018. The Department has indicated that a second round of funding will be allocated shortly.**

4. What is the up-to-date position on the unfinished housing development, Drummond Ross (Magheross) in Carrickmacross; when are works expected to begin on completing the housing units?

**Reply: There has been some activity on the site at Magheross recently as the owner appears to have been making preparations for commencement of work. Monaghan County Council has been informed that the current owner of the property intends to commence work in February 2019.**

**Cllr R. Truell asked:**

5. Will Monaghan County Council consider prioritizing the preparation of a Local Area Plan for the Aghabog area. In light of recent local developments both physical and in relation to soft actions taken by local community leadership groups this would seem timely.

**Reply: Monaghan County Council is presently preparing eight Community Plans. The process involves significant consultation and engagement with local communities. Communities that wish to be progressed in the next round of plans in mid-2019 may contact the Community Department to express their interest.**

6. Can the Council give details of how many single dwelling applications are received per MD?

- (a) how many get permission,
- (b) how many get refused?
- (c) and how many are asked for further information?

**Reply: A total of 643 valid planning applications were received by Monaghan County Council in 2018. Information on the Planning system is maintained on a countywide basis, so there are no figures readily available on a Municipal District basis. Planning Permission was granted for 205 single dwellings and 11 applications were refused. A total of 126 applicants were requested to submit further information in relation to their single dwelling applications in 2018.**

7. What steps has Monaghan County Council taken to address traffic calming measures in Smithborough village.

- (a) can the speed limit be extended or ramps be installed?

**Reply: A site visit was undertaken with TII on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at Smithborough village as part of the National speed limit review along this section of the N54. TII highlighted that speed survey data suggests a higher speed limit should be imposed and recommended that on the approach to the Village from Clones the 50 km/h section should be repositioned closer to Smithborough Village near the existing traffic calming island in the N54 carriageway to further enforce the speed limit of 50 km/h.**

**However, a point to note, set down for agreement is the existing 50/100 km/h speed limit location to the west of the village. This location is recommended by TII to be a 60/80 km/h terminal. It was noted during the proposed discussion that an uncontrolled crossing within the proposed 60 km/h section, used by school children and pedestrians is present. Road contrast traffic calming measures (other than ramps) and a controlled crossing are to be considered at this location should the proposed 60km/h section be adopted.**

- (b) has Monaghan County Council snagged this issue with the Garda Siochana?  
**Reply: Yes, and the January 2019 speed survey data was advanced to the GARDA.**

**CLlr S. Coyle asked:**

8. Will Monaghan County Council outline in detail the following in relation to Local and Regional Road Restoration over the past 5 years, the term of the current County Council-
- (a) The Kilometres of Local and Regional Road repaired under the Annual Road Restoration Programme for the years 2014,2015,2016,2017 & 2018?
- (b) The cost per Kilometre of Local and Regional Road repaired under the Annual Road Restoration Programme for the years 2014,2015,2016,2017 & 2018?

<b>Summary Table – Regional Roads (Restoration Improvement only)</b>					
	<b>Regional 2014</b>	<b>Regional 2015</b>	<b>Regional 2016</b>	<b>Regional 2017</b>	<b>Regional 2018</b>
Cost/Km	€118,020.00	€114,780.00	€96,480.00	€117,720.00	€178,860.00
Unit Rate	€19.67	€19.13	€16.08	€19.62	€29.81
Km's/Year	3.30	9.35	9.96	6.5	4.00

<b>Summary Table – Regional Roads (Restoration Improvement Only)</b>					
	<b>Local 2014</b>	<b>Local 2015</b>	<b>Local 2016</b>	<b>Local 2017</b>	<b>Local 2018</b>
Cost/Km	€102,720.00	€103,480.00	€79,240.00	€97,560.00	€118,800.00
Unit Rate	€25.68	€25.87	€19.81	€24.39	€29.70
Km's/Year	45.80	46.65	37.15	37	36.3

9. Will Monaghan County Council give a detailed report on Housing Waiting Lists for all locations in the County as of the 1st February 2019, i.e. the numbers waiting for each selected location, town, village or settlement, also give a report on the period of time each applicant is waiting i.e., under 1 year, 1-2 years, 2-3 years, 3-4 years etc.?

**Reply: There are currently 1299 people on Monaghan County Councils waiting list dated 29/01/2019, this figure includes 181 transfer requests. Table 1 is a list of areas of choice by Social Housing Applicants. Please note applicants have up to three areas of choice and the figures below reflect applicants with more than one area of choice. Table 2 is a table of time for persons waiting on the Social Housing List.**

ORGANISATION	AREA OF CHOICE	NO OF OPEN APPLICANTS
Monaghan County Council	Annyalla	38
Monaghan County Council	Ballinode	55
Monaghan County Council	Ballybay	90
Monaghan County Council	Bawn	3
Monaghan County Council	Carrickmacross	320
Monaghan County Council	Carrickroe	5
Monaghan County Council	Castleblayney	266

Monaghan County Council	Clones	114
Monaghan County Council	Clontibret	14
Monaghan County Council	Doohamlet	29
Monaghan County Council	Emyvale	49
Monaghan County Council	Glaslough	49
Monaghan County Council	Inniskeen	26
Monaghan County Council	Knockatallon	6
Monaghan County Council	Latton	5
Monaghan County Council	Magheracloone	27
Monaghan County Council	Monaghan	522
Monaghan County Council	Newbliss	21
Monaghan County Council	Oram	25
Monaghan County Council	Rockcorry	9
Monaghan County Council	Scotshouse	21
Monaghan County Council	Scotstown	45
Monaghan County Council	Smithboro	41
Monaghan County Council	Threemilehouse	13
Monaghan County Council	Tyholland	20

**TABLE 2**

NUMBER OF YEARS ON WAITING LIST	NUMBERS OF APPLICANTS FOR EACH YEAR
0	27
1	277
2	285
3	195
4	135
5	73
Over 5 Years	307

10. Can Monaghan County Council give a full and detailed report on Social Housing allocations at all locations throughout the County, the numbers allocated in each i.e. town, village & settlement during the period of the current Council i.e.2014/2015/2016/2017 & 2018?

**Reply: Below is a table broken down into the various areas with allocations per area from 2014 - 2018**

AREA OF CHOICE	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Annyalla	2				
Ballinode			2		1
Ballybay	5	6	4	6	8
Bawn					
Carrickmacross	11	26	18	26	57
Carrickroe					
Castleblayney	15	21	43	27	26

Clones	2	5	13	6	5
Clontibret					
Doohamlet	1	1			1
Emyvale	4	7	5	7	4
Glaslough	2	2	1	3	2
Inniskeen	2	4		2	1
Knockatallon	1		1		1
Latton		1	3		2
Magheracloone	1			1	
Monaghan	20	26	19	52	31
Newbliss	2	2		3	3
Oram		2		2	3
Rockcorry	1	1		4	3
Scotshouse			1	2	1
Scotstown				2	1
Smithboro	1	2	1	9	7
Threemilehouse	2		1	2	3
Tyholland		1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>161</b>

**Cllr S. Coyle asked:**

11. Can Monaghan County Council outline the periods of the year for Hedge Cutting by Landowners, their responsibilities to maintain their hedgerows along roads etc. and the powers of the Local Authority to enforce the cutting of hedges along the public road?

**Reply: Presently under current legislation the February 28<sup>th</sup> is the last day for cutting hedgerows. Hedge cutting season opens on the 1st September and runs until the 28<sup>th</sup> February.**

**Section 70 of the Roads Act 1993 (hereafter “the 1993 act”), provides that the owner or occupier of any structure and land must take reasonable steps to ensure that any structure on the land is not a hazard, or a potential hazard, to persons using the public road.**

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

12. In relation to those families wishing to build a home in rural areas across county Monaghan, is there any further update from the Department in relation to the Local Needs Policy in light of the European Court ruling dating back to 2013 which seems to suggest that this policy is illegal, and also given that some members of Council have suggested that they won't adopt the new County Development Plan 2019/2025 until this very important policy issues is addressed?

**Reply: The Council has received no further updates on this matter from the Department.**

13. In relation this Council's public lighting programme

(a) what funding is available for the upgrading and extension of this programme in this current year 2019?

**Reply: Monaghan Co Council made provision in the 2019 Revenue Budget for an allocation of €40,000 towards Public Lighting. This is divided equally between the three MD's.**

(b) What funding is required to complete the current outstanding list of public lighting works?

**Reply: The responsibility for the management and financing of new Public Lighting works lies within each individual MD, and information pertaining to this can be sourced from each respective MD.**

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

14. What are the implications in the time ahead for the owners of vacant properties/zoned lands in our towns and villages across county Monaghan in terms of the recently introduced vacant site levy?

**Reply: The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 introduced a new statutory obligation for all Planning Authorities to establish a register of vacant sites and to make provision for a vacant site levy. On foot on this, the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013 – 2019 was varied to comply with this requirement and a vacant site register established. The draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 – 2025 also includes the relevant provision. To date no properties have been placed on the register, nor have any levies been applied, although the option to do so remains open.**

15. In terms of commercial rates, what funding was collected from this sector in 2018; how does this figure compare with previous years 2011/2012 for example?

**Reply: The amount of Commercial Rates collected by Monaghan Local Authorities on 2012 was €9,325,076. The amount of Commercial rates collected by Monaghan County Council in 2018 was €10,539,374.**

16. How many people are currently employed including temporary staff by Monaghan County Council, what plans have the Council to employ additional staff including outdoor and general operatives in the time ahead?

**Reply: At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018, the Council have 435 staff employed plus 50 retained fire fighters. The Council continue to recruit to meet operational needs across both indoor and outdoor staff as the need arises.**

**Cllr R. Aughey asked:**

17. Can Monaghan County Council take the lead with all stakeholders and agencies involved in providing a facility for Domestic Violence Abuse sufferers in County Monaghan?

**Reply: Tearmann Domestic Abuse Service has been providing services and support to women experiencing domestic abuse in Monaghan and Cavan for over twenty years. Tearmann is funded by Tusla Child & Family Services and employs, a Manager and two Support Workers, with offices in Monaghan and Cavan. One of the key service areas for Tearmann is the provision of crisis accommodation for women who have left a situation of domestic abuse. Refuge accommodation services for the region are based in Dundalk, Drogheda and Navan. Tearmann's Strategic Plan identifies the need for a feasibility study that would identify new models of service provision in relation to crisis accommodation for women experiencing domestic abuse in Monaghan and**

**Cavan. Monaghan County Council together with the other stakeholders and state agencies will continue to support Tearmann in its work to identify and provide such accommodation.**

**Cllr R. Aughey asked:**

18. Can Monaghan County Council outline what actions it is currently undertaking to combat litter on our counties roads?

**Reply: Monaghan County Council will be organising activities for Spring Clean 2019, litter picking during verge cutting programme and applying for funding to instigate a CCTV programme through the Anti-Dumping Initiative as per Litter Management Plan 2018-2020**

19. Can Monaghan outline its current status in relation to Salt supplies and whether there are any plans to extended salting routes to include more roads in the Winter programme and ensure salting covers roads to schools throughout the county.

**Reply: Monaghan County Council has two salt barns at full capacity of 2,500 tonnes of salt. A further 5,000 tonnes is on order.**

**MCC routinely salts 610Km of Priority 1 (All National Primary and National Secondary Roads) & Priority 2 (All Regional Roads and several heavily trafficked Local Roads).**

**MCC does not have the resources to treat all local roads with Schools.**

20. Can Monaghan County Council outline how many households benefitted from the Housing Grant Schemes for people with Disabilities/ Elderly in 2018 and confirm the amount of grant aid available for 2019.

**Reply: Monaghan County Council approved a total of 278 Housing Grants in the year ended December 2018. The allocation for 2019 has not yet been received**

**16. Notices of Motion:**

**Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr O’Hanlon seconded**

*“That Monaghan County Council demands of the Minister for Education & Skills, Joe McHugh T.D. and the Department a complete review of the Departments policies towards Leaving Certificate Students, who suffer bereavement, serious illness or injury, during the period of the Leaving Certificate Examination, as the consequences of forcing a student to sit the examination, irrespective of the personal circumstances, can have huge career implications for all of life, with the possibility of health issues, mental and physical, as a consequence of the current policy”.*

Following a debate on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the members and it was agreed.

**17. Votes of sympathy/congratulations.**

It was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the following:

- Cllr P.J. O’Hanlon and the extended O’Hanlon family on the death of Oliver O’Hanlon, Carrickmacross, RIP
- Anne O’Reilly, Council employee on the death of her father Gerard (Gerry) O’Reilly, Carrickmacross, RIP

- Stephen McQuaid, Council employee on the death of his mother Margaret McQuaid, Castleblayney, RIP.
- Eileen Mulligan and the wider Clerkin family on the death of Teddy Clerkin, Newbliss, RIP, former member of the Council's outdoor staff for 27 years.
- Lorraine Tierney and Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Council employees and the McCague family on the death of Annie McCague, RIP, Ballinode
- The McElwain family on the death of their mother May McElwain RIP, Knockatallon, wife of former County Councillor for North Monaghan, James McElwain.

It was agreed that the Council congratulate the following

- Brendán Ó Dufaigh mar gheall ar seoladh a leabhair nua 'Is maith an Scéalaí an Aimsir' a bhéidh mar achainn oideachais do dháltaí scoile.
- Bernie Bradley, Council employee on her appointment to the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's Disability Advisory Committee.

## 18. Conferences/Training

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr McNally, it was agreed that the Council be represented at the following conferences/training events by the members listed.*

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
AILG	'120 Years of Irish Local Government 1819-2019'	Longford Arms Hotel, Longford	21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2019	Cllr. S. Conlon Cllr. C. Carthy Cllr. B. McKenna Cllr. J. Crowe Cllr. N. Keelan Cllr. P. McNally Cllr. S. Coyle Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon Cllr. R. Truell Cllr. D. Maxwell Cllr. P. Connolly
Celtic Conferences	'Good Governance of community, Voluntary & Charitable Organisations in Ireland'	O'Donovan's Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork	22 <sup>nd</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2019	Cllr R. Truell
LAMA	Councillors promotions through Social Media'	The Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Cllr. S. Conlon Cllr. B. McKenna Cllr. P. Treanor Cllr. J. Crowe Cllr. N. Keelan Cllr. P. McNally Cllr. S. Coyle Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon Cllr. D. Maxwell Cllr. S. Gilliland Cllr. R. Truell Cllr. A. Campbell Cllr. P. Connolly

The time being 3.45 pm, Cllr McKenna enquired as to what time the Cathaoirleach was finishing the meeting. The Cathaoirleach replied that he wished to complete the business of the agenda before finishing and there were only a few items left, including urgent business and asked for the co-operation of the members to get the agenda completed. Cllr McKenna stated that he was leaving the meeting and that he wasn't happy that the urgent business had not been taken. The Cathaoirleach referred to Standing Orders which stated that "*urgent business shall be taken at the end of the meeting when the business of the agenda has been completed*". Cllr McKenna then proceeded to leave the meeting and made a comment. The Cathaoirleach asked Cllr McKenna to withdraw the comment but he refused to do so.

### **Urgent Business**

#### **Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr Carthy seconded**

*In view of the fact that the on-going nurses industrial action is set to intensify in the coming days and that the number of services hit will increase from 82 to 240 and the fact that this increase will mainly affect day respite services for people with an intellectual disability that Monaghan County Council calls on the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD and Minister for Health Simon Harris TD to take immediate steps to resolve the ongoing industrial unrest within the nursing grades in General, Psychiatric and Intellectual Disability by entering into meaningful negotiations with the nurses and resolving this industrial dispute as a matter of urgency.*

#### **Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr Connolly seconded**

*That this Council supports the nurses and midwives who have balloted for strike action in their demand for a safe, fully staff, functioning health service that values and pays them as essential skilled workers.*

Following a short debate on both motions, the Cathaoirleach put them to the meeting and they were agreed.

#### **Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr McNally seconded**

*That Monaghan County Council demands a commitment from An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed TD and the European Commissioner for Agriculture, Phil Hogan, to immediately implement supports for beef farmers, who are currently in a crisis situation, unable to have animals slaughtered, price reductions in excess of 20% in recent weeks and facing "WIPE OUT", as detailed in a confidential briefing to Cabinet of last week in a "No Deal Brexit", with the Agri Food Sector facing €1.7bn in tariffs.*

*We demand a commitment from the above, to the immediate implementation of exceptional response measures, especially in a "No Deal Brexit" i.e. Intervention and Aid to Private Storage and Export Refunds, to restore some confidence in the Agricultural Section and its 174,000 persons working directly in farming, especially in County Monaghan, with all economic activity, very heavily dependent on agricultural activity and food production.*

Following a short debate the Cathaoirleach put Cllr Coyle's motion to the meeting and it was agreed.

At this point Cllr Gilliland referred to the comment made earlier in the meeting by Cllr McKenna about the Cathaoirleach and stated that it was not acceptable behaviour. None of the Sinn Fein Councillors were present at this time.

*On the proposal of Cllr Gilliland seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that Cllr McKenna be asked to withdraw his comment made during the Council meeting regarding the Cathaoirleach.*

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

\_\_\_\_\_  
Meetings Administrator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_