

Minutes of Adjourned Meeting of Monaghan County Council held via Microsoft Teams, on Monday 22nd March, 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

Chair: Cllr C. Carthy, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs. Aughey, Bennett, Campbell, Conlon, Coyle, Connolly, Gilliland, Keelan, Kerr-Conlon, Maxwell, McCooey, McKenna, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor, S. Treanor, and Truell.

Mr. E. O'Sullivan, Chief Executive, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Mr. P. Clifford, A. King, Ms. P. Monahan, Directors of Services, Mr. Cathal Flynn, A/Director of Services, Ms. M. McGarvey, Senior Staff Officer and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

Apology: Cllr McElvaney

At the outset, Cllr Maxwell informed the members that he had received good news from Minister Heather Humphreys TD, that funding of €276,000 had been allocated for development works to Hollywood Park, Scotstown. All members and the Chief Executive welcomed the allocation of funding.

9. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group meeting

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 23rd February, 2021 which had been circulated.

Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr S. Treanor seconded that Monaghan County Council remove the Council Library from the open market and that we do not sell this premises.

Cllr Maxwell proposed, Cllr Aughey seconded that Monaghan County Council place the Library building on the open market and see what offers are received.

A recorded vote was taken on Cllr Connolly's proposal which resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs Connolly, Kerr-Conlon and S. Treanor Total 3

Against: Cllrs. Aughey, Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, Conlon, Coyle, Gilliland, Keelan, Maxwell, McCooey, McKenna, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor. Total 13

The Cathaoirleach declared Cllr Connolly's proposal defeated.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Aughey, it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 23rd February, 2021 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

10. To fix a date for special meeting to consider the Capital Programme 2021-2023 and Civic Offices Project.

It was agreed that a special meeting for the purpose of considering the Capital Programme 2021-2023 and the Civic Offices Project would be held on Monday 19th April, 2021 in the Garage Theatre, Monaghan from 11 am to 1 pm.

11. To receive the Management Report – February 2021:

The members noted the Management Report for the month of February which had been circulated with the agenda. The Chief Executive and Directors of Services responded to queries from the elected members.

12. Business submitted by the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive welcomed the allocation of €13.1 million towards the Dublin Street Regeneration Project in Monaghan Town from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

13. Matters arising out of the minutes of Councils meeting held on 8th February, 2021

Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 8th February, 2021 were responded to by the relevant officials.

Cllr Keelan requested that a further letter would issue to Minister Stephen Donnelly TD in relation to his motion regarding the Medical Card review.

14. To receive update on N2 National Primary Road Schemes

Ms. P. Monahan, Director of Services informed the members that the update on this item had been included in the Management Report. She also informed them that the Council had received approval from TII to proceed to Phase 3 – Detailed Design phase for the N2 Clontibret to the Border and N2 Ardee to Castleblayney road schemes.

15. To receive update on North South Interconnector project

The members noted the following correspondence which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting:

- a. Email from Michelle O’Neill, Sinn Féin regarding North South Interconnector.
- b. Email from Minister Heather Humphreys, T.D. regarding North South Interconnector.
- c. Letter from Senator Robbie Gallagher regarding North South Interconnector.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gilliland, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council renews its request to the Minister for Climate Action, Communications and Transport, Eamon Ryan TD & all Oireachtas Members for the Cavan-Monaghan Constituency for a meeting to again outline the total opposition of members to the over-grounding of the North-South 400Kv Interconnector and to again inform them clearly that this project will never proceed over the lands of Monaghan, Cavan and Meath.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to all party leaders requesting that they outline their party position / policy in relation to the under-grounding of the North - South interconnector.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council seeks a meeting (online) with Minister Nichola Mallon MLA and with Minister Eamon Ryan TD the line Ministers with responsibility for electricity infrastructure in order to discuss the north-south interconnector.

On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Gilliland, it was agreed that the Council writes to Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland asking why they won't call for a petition of concern on the under-grounding of the North-South Interconnector.

Eirgrid Presentation to Council members:

The Chief Executive informed the members that subject to the agreement of the members it was proposed to receive a presentation from Eirgrid officials on the 21st April, 2021 at 2pm via Microsoft Teams. He stated that the presentation was part of Eirgrid's consultation process on its strategy – *Shaping our Electricity Future*. He further stated that he had informed Eirgrid that the North South Interconnector is a standing item on the Council's agenda and the elected members would expect this to be addressed in any presentation and discussions and questions which would follow the presentation.

16. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services informed the members that Waterways Ireland had sought tenders for Clones Marina Project on 9 March 2021 for the provision of Civil/Structural Engineer led Integrated Design Team services to support the delivery of the design and development of the restoration of an approximately 1km stretch of the Ulster Canal between Clones town and the Clonfad aqueduct just under 1km south west of Clones.

It was agreed to follow up on the request to Waterways Ireland and the North South Ministerial Council in relation to clarification on the progressing of the stretch of the Ulster Canal from Clones to Middletown, Co. Armagh.

17. Questions:

Cllr A. Campbell asked:

1. When Irish Water were upgrading the old leaking lead pipes in the centre of Castleblayney, there was a number of areas that was not finished. These leaking pipes are still causing a problem.

(a) what plans have Irish Water to finish off this work and replace and upgrade the unfinished works.

(b) when is envisaged that this work will now commence?

Reply: Irish Water have planned to replace all the pipework around Market Square but due to structural issues with the Courthouse we had to demobilise our contractor and finish out what works we could at that time. Since that time structural works have been completed at the courthouse.

Funding has been approved in 2021 to complete the replacement of the remaining old pipework (circa 200m of pipework). These pipe replacement works will be completed as part of the Leakage reduction Programme with the current estimated programme timeline as follows; - commencement in late Q3 2021 with circa 4-5 week construction period.

2. Regarding the awarding of contracts since the UK has left the EU and now Brexit is now a reality for local businesses and the difficulty that is now being encountered by these businesses. With the Local Enterprise Office now to organize workshops/training to both Micro and SME business in Monaghan on the preparation of tenders for public contracts.

- (a) When is this training due to commence?

Reply: The LEO has procured training for the delivery of a training workshop named Effective E-Tendering for SME's, which we plan to deliver in April/May. The trainer will be Rocas Training & Consultancy. Additional and bespoke procurement mentoring will be offered post workshop delivery. Customised Brexit related supports for Co. Monaghan businesses include Customs and/ or Supply Chain mentoring. Additional post Brexit supports include access to high level participative management development programmes that include, but are not limited to; Financial Capability, Innovation and Green business, the outputs, which can all be aligned to the procurement/sales strategies of Micro/SME's. LEO is hosting a focused Brexit session on Distance Selling to UK on 5th March 2021 and a Post Brexit Cross Border Conference will take place on the 10th March.

- (b) How will it be rolled out?

Reply: Procurement training will be rolled out virtually; using Microsoft Teams.

- (c) How will this be advertised to SMEs and small businesses and in particular new SMEs and businesses that have not engaged with LEO in the past.

Reply: Like all training and LEO programme offering, it will be advertised on Facebook and LinkedIn, organically and via paid advertising, thus reaching those who may not have previously engaged with LEO. Similarly, like previous Procurement training courses we have ran, it will be advertised in the Northern Standard. Direct mailings will be sent to 1500 businesses who are registered on our database. Additionally, we have had an initial meeting with the Procurement Office and have early stage plans to develop a partnership seminar/mini conference that will focus on supplier opportunities for the SME's with Monaghan County Council. One of the outcomes of this proposed event will be a call to action to avail of the procurement workshop training opportunity, thus enabling participants to increase the capability and competencies in pitching for MCC contracts.

- (d) What are the different amounts of contracts is this training geared towards?

Reply: Works/Works Related Services / Services for values less than €25k/ 25k-250k and 250k to EU threshold.

3. With the current pandemic lasting so long and with so much shopping being moved on line. What is the update on the trading online voucher scheme? What follow up processes is in place to help existing participants?

Reply: The Trading Online Voucher Scheme (TOV) is designed to assist small businesses with up to 10 employees to trade more online, boost sales and reach new markets. The scheme offers financial assistance of up to €2,500 with co-funding of 50% from the

business along with training and advice to help your business trade online. The scheme offered a 90% grant rate up to 31st December 2020 but is now 50% from 1st Jan 2021. In 2020 LEO received 166 TOV applications. Of those, 4 were ineligible and 5 didn't proceed. 157 applications were approved to a value of €333,528.28.

Follow up includes:

- I. Inclusion on the Shop County Monaghan directory which LEO and MCC promotes, furthering enabling their brand and profile to be developed and for sales to be achieved
- II. Bespoke series of capacity building workshops planned for Spring 2021 for the TOV recipients. 157 recipients were emailed directly advising of the initial training event named 3- Clicks -and -Your -IN and 43 Co. Monaghan participants attended this event on 2nd March. Additional direct email and marketing material will be distributed in regard to Distance UK Selling Rules on 5th March, Website Management on 16th March, Online Advertising on 30th March and Social Media 6th April. It is anticipated that these training workshops will not only increase capacity of the TOV recipients but will increase the return of investment by the Department.

4. Regarding the Market House in Castleblayney.

(a) What is the update on the survey/public consultation about the regeneration of the building which has been carried out recently by architectural consultants AP+E?

Reply: In December 2020 AP&E Consultants completed an online public consultation survey and held workshops with various community/stakeholder groups regarding the proposed regeneration of the Market House building. The consultants have completed an analysis of the consultation submissions and are currently progressing scenario planning for the building to evaluate potential future uses having regard to the importance of sustainable and viable options.

(b) What is the next stage of this process?

Reply: AP&E Consultants are scheduled to have their final report outlining the potential future uses of the Market House facility completed by the end of March 2021. Following this the Council will begin the procurement process for the engagement of Design Team Consultants to commence the preliminary design stage for the project.

(c) What is the timeline process for these stages?

Reply: AP&E Consultants are scheduled to present their report to the Council on the Market House and Market Square by the end of March 2021. It is anticipated that presentations of the final report will be scheduled with the Elected Members and relevant Community/Stakeholder Groups in April 2021 and following this the Council will begin preparation of tender documents for the engagement of Design Team Consultants. It is envisaged that the Design Consultants will be formally appointed in June/July 2021 to allow design works to commence for the refurbishment of the Market House building and associated public realm works in Market Square.

5. With the recent announcement from the Government of over €400,000 for the Retrofitting Programme for Social Housing which targets the energy efficiency of homes and is one of the many targets to reduce carbon emission.

- (a) What is the actual scope of work which will be carried out in each house?

The level of works being completed will vary between properties. Under the new programme of works, properties receiving energy efficiency upgrades generally must achieve a minimum Building Energy Rating (BER) of B2. In order to assess what works must be carried out to achieve this Building Energy Rating a Home Energy Report is prepared. Older and poorer performing housing stock may require deep retro-fit works including, external insulation, new windows and doors and an energy efficient heat pump, however, properties constructed more recently will not require the same level of retro-fit work to achieve the same BER. Properties are examined on a case-by-case basis, and the technical inspections and reports generated determine the extent of work required and available funding under the Energy Efficiency programme.

- (b) When this work is complete what will the energy rating of houses be compared to what they are now?

Reply: Under the new Energy Efficiency/Retro Fitting Programme, properties receiving upgrade works must achieve a minimum Building Energy Rating of B2 or Cost Optimal Equivalent. The Cost Optimal Equivalent element has been included within the requirements as the Department recognises that it may not be possible to achieve a B2 rating in every house due to varying factors within the property and those within the DEAP Software used to complete the assessments. Monaghan County Council will endeavour to achieve the maximum improvement in BER allowed under the programme. In properties upgraded to date there has been an improvement from BERs of D, E, F or G to B2.

- (c) What is the projected savings in terms of running costs of these homes and carbon footprint?

Reply: The Energy Efficiency/Retro Fitting Programme offers a number of different improvement options that can be completed to individual properties. All of these options will improve the running costs and carbon footprint of the property, but some will have greater improvements than others. The final savings will vary depending on the options completed at each property. In every case Monaghan County Council will complete the works that give the greatest return in terms of reducing running costs and securing environmental improvements. Tenant factors such as hot water usage, desired room temperature and hours of operating will create variables that will affect the final running costs and carbon footprint.

In properties where deep retro fit works have been completed previously, and where the maximum upgrades available have been completed, (namely external insulation, new windows and doors and an energy efficient heat pump) the savings on running costs can be as much as, and in some cases more than, 50% per year with a reduction of 39.19 Kg/CO₂/m²/Year in carbon output.

- (d) Recognising that with Covid-19 only certain essential works can continue. What is the proposed timescale for these upgrades?

Reply: On some properties works have already commenced but as noted in the question the works have been paused due to Government restrictions under level 5 as Energy Efficiency works have not been deemed as essential. Proposed completion dates at these properties will be re-examined once restrictions have been lifted but initial indications are that works will be completed for late summer 2021. As the year progresses more properties will be added to the list with these properties being

completed toward the end of the year.

In terms of progressing other planned Energy Efficiency works Technical staff are examining alternative methods of surveying homes to progress works as much as possible during the current restrictions.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

6. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the publication of the community plans for the villages throughout the county; what is the next step for those villages that have had their community plans already published?

Reply: To date the following communities have had a commitment made to them by Monaghan County Council to produce a community plan.

<u>Community</u>	<u>Status</u>
Scotshouse	Plan completed & launched 2020
Oram	Plan completed & launched 2020
Newbliss	Final plan presented at community meeting late 2019. Those present wanted to bring it back to their respective groups for final sign off. The final sign off by the groups will be pursued when Covid restrictions are lifted.
Emyvale	Final draft plan presented at community meeting late 2019. Final sign off for the Plan will be pursued when Covid restrictions are lifted.
Lough Egish	The Plan was finished and delivered to the community in January 2021. Due to Covid restrictions, an official launch has not yet been organised.
Ballinode	Community Survey and a consultation with groups active in the area have been completed, and a draft Plan is being prepared. This will be open for community comment before being finalised. This process should be complete by summer 2021.
Smithborough	Work was delayed on this plan due to the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020. It is hoped to commence work shortly.
Donaghmoyme	Work will commence after Smithborough has been completed. As Donaghmoyme effectively consists of three separate communities, this will be a large undertaking and is expected to take the remainder of the year to complete.

With each of the above communities, projects identified in the process of engaging with the communities have been worked up into funding applications where appropriate, and several have been successful. Built into each Community Plan is the formation of a Community Council, with which Council staff will continue to meet to review progress of the Plan and identify how the Council can assist. The Council has also undertaken to appoint a Mentor/ Facilitator to help the communities to get underway in implementing their Community Plan and to help them to set up and operate their Community Council.

7. In relation to the scourge of illegal dumping and recent media reports indicating that in some counties illegal dumping is up by 20% - 30%, what is the overall situation in county Monaghan; what enhancement measures, if any, are being taken to combat and catch those responsible?

Reply: In 2020 there was a reduction of 14% in the number of environmental complaints received by Environmental Services. Furthermore, across the Connaught Ulster Region there was no major upward trend in complaints received by neighbouring local authorities.

In relation to activities, there is a report on litter activities undertaken in 2020 in the Chief Executive's Report this month. In addition to this, Environmental Services is in the process of completing a pre-consultation with Tidy Towns, Comhairle na nÓg and PPN as part of a development of a new litter management plan for the County, which will be presented to members in 2021. This new plan will set out Monaghan County Council's plan for dealing with litter over the next three years.

8. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the roll out of an affordable housing scheme for county Monaghan given that so many individuals and young couples are locked out of secure rental and home ownership?

Reply: Affordable housing schemes aim to help lower-income households to buy their own homes. They offer eligible first-time purchasers the chance to buy newly constructed homes and apartments at prices less than their market value.

County Monaghan is an affordable place to live. In County Monaghan the average cost of a second-hand home is currently less than the cost of building a new home and there are more than 40 second-hand houses for sale in County Monaghan at present at prices less than the current cost of construction. New 3-bedroom houses recently completed in a private housing development in County Monaghan were sold at prices circa €230,000 each. The proposed new affordable housing scheme will provide a subsidy by way of shared equity to help people in need of affordable housing to buy houses in private developments.

A new Affordable Housing Bill was published on the 20th of January 2021, but this legislation has not been finalised and the details of the scheme are not available yet.

9. In advance of the upgrading of the N2, which is many years away, what enhanced safety measures will the Council, in conjunction with the TII, put in place including the provision of average speed cameras similar to those used in the port tunnel?

Reply: MCC will continue to liaise with TII Safety Section to monitor and manage road safety across the entire network including the N2. There are currently no plans to deploy an Average Speed Camera system along the N2.

10. In order to rejuvenate our deflated economy

- (a) What assistance has been forthcoming from the local enterprise office, enterprise Ireland and other agencies to support the SME sector

Reply:

• Summary of COVID-19 Supports to SME's

Local Authority Supports

- **Restart Grant: Offers financial assistance of up to €10,000 (based on commercial rates bill from 2019) to micro and small businesses to help with**

costs associated with reopening and reemploying working following COVID-19 closures. Revised and replaced by Restart Grant Plus.

- Restart Grant Plus: The maximum grant up to €25,000 (up from €10,000) and the minimum payment will be €4,000 (up from €2,000). Firms that previously applied for the Restart Grant will be eligible to apply for a second top-up payment to a total combined value of the revised minimum and maximum grant levels. Closed to new applications from 31 October 2020.

SBCI Supports

- COVID-19 Working Capital Scheme: Provides working capital loans to COVID-19 -impacted businesses.
- Future Growth Loan Scheme -1: Provides longer-term loans for strategic investment. (Not a specific COVID-19 support but can be used as businesses respond to the pandemic).
- Future Growth Loan Scheme - Expansion: To provide for longer-term loans for strategic investment: the expansion was launched in July, during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- COVID-19 Credit Guarantee Scheme: Provides up to €2 billion in loans to businesses impacted by COVID-19 for liquidity and investment purposes.

Microfinance Ireland Support

- COVID-19 loan: Provides loans to microenterprises that do not meet the conventional risk criteria of banks

Local Enterprise Office Supports

- The Businesses Continuity Voucher: Provide support to firms who need assistance with business continuity and preparedness arising from the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Trading Online Voucher Scheme: Offers financial assistance of up to €2,500 along with training and advice to help your business trade online. Businesses that have already received a Trading Online Voucher can now apply for a second voucher, where upgrades are required.
- Micro-Enterprise Assistance Fund Available to Micro-Enterprises that have suffered a 30% reduction in turn-over due to COVID-19, provided that they commit to remaining open and to hiring and sustaining employment. This offers grant aid of between €500 - €1,000 of vouched expenditure on adaptation and reconfiguration costs, as well as COVID-19 consumables such as PPE, sanitiser and sterilisation equipment.

Enterprise Ireland Supports

- Online Retail Scheme €2m: The objective of the Scheme is to support companies in the indigenous retail sector with a pre-existing online presence to respond to both the domestic and international consumer demand for a competitive online offer. - reporting discontinued as scheme is closed.
- COVID-19 Business Financial Planning Grant: Grant to provide a strategic intervention to clients to work with third party consultants to prepare a detailed financial plan with forecasts and assumptions.
- LEAN Business Continuity Offer: The Lean Business Continuity Voucher will support enterprises to access up to €2,500 in training or advisory services support related to the continued operation of their business during the current pandemic.

- **Sustaining Enterprise Fund – Small Enterprise:** The purpose of the fund is to sustain eligible manufacturing and internationally traded services companies to provide support to companies: who have been impacted by a 15% or more reduction in actual or projected turnover or profit; and require access to liquidity to sustain business continuity.
- **Sustaining Enterprise Fund – HPSU:** Scheme is aimed at EI's HPSU companies who, due to the negative economic impact and uncertainty arising from COVID-19, are facing challenges in growing sales revenues as originally projected, require funding to execute a revised business plan and are facing challenges to securing this funding.

Intertrade Ireland Supports

- **E-merge:** Administered by Intertrade Ireland. Consultancy support and advice to help businesses develop online sales and ecommerce solutions.
- **Emergency Business Solutions:** Administered by Intertrade Ireland. Fully funded consultancy support and advice to address key business challenges in areas such as emergency cashflow, loan applications and HR/People IDA Ireland Support
- **Business Continuity Support:** Open to all IDA clients, the purpose of this support is to provide consultancy and training support to client companies of IDA to manage their operations and recover their business during this pandemic. Initial support of €2,500 can be approved up to a maximum support of €29,700.

• **Summary of Brexit Supports to SME's**

SBCI Supports

- **Brexit Loan Scheme:** open for eligible businesses with up to 499 employees to innovate, change or adapt in response to Brexit-related challenges. Loans range from €25,000 up to €1.5m, for terms of up to three years and a maximum interest rate of 4%. Loans up to €500,000 unsecured. This may be useful for businesses who have Brexit impacts on their cashflow (conditions apply).

Enterprise Ireland Supports

- **Ready for Customs Grant:** a new €20 million Customs Clearing Capacity Building Scheme to help SMEs involved in exporting and importing with the UK and further afield to put in place the staff, software and IT systems to be ready for new customs arrangements from 1 January 2021.
- **Online Customs Insights Course:** 40-minute online course on key customs concepts, documentation and processes.
- **Brexit Advisory Clinics:** took place nationwide providing information and practical support through individual meetings across Strategic Sourcing, Financial and Currency Management, Customs Transport and Logistics.

Local Enterprise Office Supports

- **Preparing your Business for Customs Workshops:** providing businesses with a better understanding of the potential impacts, formalities and procedures when trading with the UK post transition period.
- **Brexit Mentoring**

InterTrade Ireland Supports

- **Brexit Advisory Service:** practical advice, support and information on Brexit related issues.

- **Brexit Planning Voucher: offers 100% financial support up to £2,000/€2,250 (inclusive of VAT) towards professional advice in relation to Brexit matters.**

Microfinance Ireland Support

- **Brexit loan: Provides loans to microenterprises that do not meet the conventional risk criteria of banks**

(b) What incentives are available for new start-ups that will encourage the uptake of vacant premises/retail units in our towns.?

Reply: There are no financial incentives available from LEO for new retail start-ups but the Leo offer training in Start your Own Business, Mentoring & Managing Development.

ClIr P. Connolly asked:

11. To ask Monaghan County Council for

- (a) An update in relation to the unfinished development, Chapel Court, Carrickroe and
- (b) What developments/progress has there been in relation to the proposed CPO of the derelict portion of this site?

Reply: Monaghan County Council is considering the possibility of acquiring the property through the derelict sites process. The feasibility of acquiring the property and bringing the vacant houses into use is under consideration and a valuation of the property has been sought to determine if it is feasible to acquire it and bring it into use.

ClIr S. Conlon asked:

12. With €218 million budgeted through the Department of Housing effort at tackling homelessness by way of the 'Housing First Model', what amount of this fund, and related support measures are allocated for Monaghan County Council for 2021?

Reply: Housing First is a national programme that is aimed at delivering support services to people who are homeless. The funding for this programme is provided to Local Authorities on a regional basis. Monaghan County is part of the North East region comprising the counties of Monaghan, Louth and Cavan. The funding provided for the Housing First programme for the period 2019 to 2021 is €387,763.00. The funding provides for the care and support element for people who are homeless. The Local Authority or the approved housing body provides the accommodation from their stock and the funding received is for the provision of support services. Monaghan County Councils target for this service over the three years is for three homeless people to be provided with this service. There are two people in Monaghan in the current Housing First programme.

13. With the declaration by Minister for Housing Darragh O'Brien TD that the 2021 budget allocation "is the very definition of housing for all", what amount of the €50 million dedicated to the 'Serviced Sites Fund' is allocated for much needed social and private housing for County Monaghan.

Reply: The Serviced Sites Fund is intended to provide significant infrastructure such as roads, bridges or other services required to prepare and open up land for the development of housing in areas where the cost of purchasing a house is significantly higher than the cost of construction.

County Monaghan is an affordable place to live. In County Monaghan the average cost of a secondhand home is currently less than the cost of building a new home and there are more than 40 secondhand houses for sale in County Monaghan at present at prices less than the current cost of construction. New 3-bedroom houses recently completed in a private housing development in County Monaghan were sold at prices circa €230,000 each. The proposed new affordable housing scheme will provide a subsidy by way of shared equity to help people in need of affordable housing to buy houses in private developments.

County Monaghan has excellent roads and infrastructure in place which is currently facilitating the development of social and private housing. Monaghan County Council is encouraging Developers to complete unfinished housing developments throughout County Monaghan to provide social and private housing in or beside existing housing estates that have roads, services and all the necessary infrastructure in place.

€50million+ Social Housing projects in County Monaghan in 2021 include the following: (note that some sites have closed temporarily under current Covid19 restrictions)

- Clones Renewal Scheme 24 dwellings on 7 sites €6million (Monaghan CoCo Capital)
- Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme €3million nearing completion (MonCoCo Capital)
- Lui na Greine Scotstown 32 houses €7million (MonCoCo Capital)
- Gortakeegan Traveller halting site 14 houses €1.2million (MonCoCo Capital)
- Ard an Radhairc Carrickmacross 41 houses €9.8million (MonCoCo Capital)
- Liseggerton Clones 19 houses €3.3million (Oaklee Capital)
- Lough na Glack Carrickmacross 24 houses €4.5million (NEHA CALF) under SHCEP
- Magheross Carrickmacross 33 dwellings €6million (Tuath CALF) under SHCEP
- Radhairc an Bhrí Castleblayney 38 houses €8.1million (Tuath CALF) under SHCEP
- Lakeview Carrickmacross 12 apartments €2.4million (NEHA CALF) under SHCEP

In addition to the above Monaghan County Council has further social projects approved, planned and in the project pipeline equating to another €50million and it should be noted that social housing provided by Monaghan County Council in Capitalprojects funded under the Social Housing Investment Programme can be sold at a discount to tenants under the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme. County Monaghan's excellent roads and infrastructure currently in place and relatively low development costs readily facilitate the development of social and private housing.

14. What number of houses have been acquired by Monaghan County Council over the past three years for social housing units through Part V obligations from private developers in housing developments in excess of nine or more units, with a breakdown of these numbers and locations within each Municipal District area? At these locations have the social houses been clustered or dispersed throughout the developments?

Reply: Part V social houses are provided in all significant private developments of more than nine units. Over the past three years social houses were provided under Part V at the following locations:

- In 2018 the final 4 of 9 Part V houses were completed in a development in Carrickmacross; the first 5 were included in a phase completed in the previous calendar year.
- In 2019 the first 8 of 10 Part V houses were completed in a development in Carrickmacross and the first 2 of 4 were completed in a development in Castleblayney.

- In 2020 the final 2 of 10 Part V houses were completed in a development in Carrickmacross and the final 2 of 4 were completed in Castleblayney. Additional Part V houses will be provided in further phases of developments where required in compliance with the legislation.

No Part V houses were completed in the other two Municipal Districts during the last three years as no significant private housing developments were under construction. A new 73 house private development has commenced in Monaghan town in 2020 that will yield at least seven Part V houses to be delivered on a phased basis. The houses will be partly dispersed and partly clustered within the development, with four of the houses being provided in a cluster as they are intended to be single-storey accessible housing to be provided for older people and people with disabilities.

The decision as to whether Part V houses are to be dispersed or clustered depends on very large detached 4-bedroom houses and the social housing need identified is for smaller houses then the houses required under Part V might include pairs of semi-detached 3-bedroom houses or 4 or 5 no 2-bedroom houses as small clusters in the development to address the housing need identified and to incorporate the house types required into the development while maximising the number of houses delivered under Part V .

15. Please provide an update on what progress has been made with my proposal below, agreed at the February 2020 meeting: "That for the purpose of ensuring issues of accessibility are addressed on a regular basis, that a quarterly inspection is undertaken by designated Council staff persons with the requisite skill set, and that follow up remediation measures are taken to ensure optimum conditions exist in our towns and villages for those citizens faced with mobility challenges".

Reply: In response to the proposal to ensure issues of accessibility are identified and addressed on a regular basis, the Access officer developed a Streetscape Accessibility Checklist. The purpose of this checklist is to identify any barriers to accessibility on the streetscapes of the county, identify actions to remove any barriers identified and review progress on the remedial actions identified. The Streetscape Accessibility Checklist focuses on accessibility of the physical environment and includes:

- Footpaths
- Pedestrian crossings
- Designated accessible parking

Progress to date

- The Streetscape Accessibility Checklist was agreed by members of Monaghan Disability Network at the *Make Way Day* event on September 26th, 2020.
- Each Municipal District coordinator agreed to carryout quarterly inspections in each of the five towns in the county using the Streetscape Accessibility Checklist.
- The first inspections were carried out in the last quarter of 2020.
- Access issues identified have been incorporated into elements of work which will provide or improve accessibility within:
 1. Town & Village Renewal funding programme
 2. Active Travel Funding programme
- Due to the COVID restrictions and continued remote working arrangements no inspections have incurred in 2021.

- A copy of the Streetscape Accessibility Checklist is attached.

Clr C. Carthy asked:

16. Using currently active developments/sites in Co. Monaghan, what is the number of units that will, or are expected to, be made available for social housing for the remainder of 2021 with a breakdown of size and location; as well as expected delivery dates?

Reply: After the Government confirmed a shutdown in construction activity on Friday 8th January 2021 as part of the national effort to halt the spread of COVID-19 it was initially expected that all construction sites would remain closed until restrictions were eased. However social housing sites with dwellings that could potentially be completed by the 28th of February and subsequently 30th of April were allowed to remain open. Unfortunately, a small number of social housing sites in County Monaghan were not permitted to remain open as they were not nearing completion.

Monaghan County Council propose to deliver 121 Social Housing Units in 2021, subject to Construction works resuming in April 2021 and no further lockdowns/restrictions. See Table below for number of units, location and delivery breakdown.

The size of properties work out as follows; 40% of the properties will be 1 or 2 bedrooms, 50% will be 3-bedroom and 10% will be 4-bedroom

MD	Project Name	MCC or AHB	No of Units	Delivery Date
Ballybay - Clones	Clones Renewal Scheme ~ Boyle Sport Fermanagh Street *	MCC	3	Q1 2021
Ballybay - Clones	Clones Renewal Scheme ~ Davys Fermanagh Street *	MCC	3	Q1 2021
Ballybay - Clones	Liseggerton, Clones	AHB	19	Q2 2021
Ballybay - Clones	13 McCurtain St. Clones	MCC	1	Q3 2021
Ballybay - Clones	Clones Renewal Scheme ~ 2a & 3 Analore Street	MCC	2	Q4 2021
Ballybay - Clones	Clones Renewal Scheme ~ An Bonnan Bui & Flower Shop Fern	MCC	6	Q4 2021
Ballybay - Clones	Folly Court, Ballybay	MCC	6	Q3 2021
Total No of Units in Ballybay - Clones:			40	
Carrickmacross - Castleblayney	Plás an Bhrí, Bree, Castleblayney *	MCC	26	Q1 2021
Carrickmacross - Castleblayney	Lough na Glack	AHB	24	Q1 2021
Carrickmacross - Castleblayney	Radharc an Bhri, Bree, Castleblayney	AHB	14	Q3 2021
Carrickmacross - Castleblayney	Drummond Close, Magheross, Carrickmacross	AHB	19	Q4 2021
Carrickmacross - Castleblayney	Lakeview Apartments, Drummond Radhairc	AHB	12	Q4 2021
Total No of Units in Carrickmacross - Castleblayney:			95	
Monaghan	Cnoc na Greine, Tydavnet *	MCC	6	Q1 2021
Monaghan	Lui na Greine, Scotstown	MCC	18	Q4 2021
Total No of Units in Monaghan:			24	
* Units substantially completed in 2020:			38	
TOTAL to be Delivered in 2021:			121	

The total number of the dwellings above to be allocated in 2021 will total 159 which includes 38 that were substantially completed in December 2020 and reported as 2020 delivery.

It appears that the current Covid19 restrictions may remain in place for sites until April 2021 which is approximately a 14-week delay on the projects affected. Delays will be mitigated as far as possible and additional opportunities for provision of social housing continue to be explored

17. What is the total length of road network serviced by Monaghan County Council, in KM, and what percentage of this network is in need of repair (rated between 1-4): Can the road section give a breakdown as per Municipal District?

MD	Total Length (KM)	PSCI 1-4 (KM)	% PSCI 1-4
Monaghan	713	102	-
BBY-CLN	1062	149	-
CBY-CMX	788	189	-
Total	2563	440	17.17%

Road Length & PSCI rating 1-4 per District.

Reply: Total Length of Road serviced by Monaghan County Council: 2,563 Kms

Clr S. Coyle asked:

18. Can Monaghan County Council give a detailed update on Local Improvement Scheme (LIS), which have greatly benefited many families in County Monaghan, but many families/businesses and landowners are awaiting to have access to their properties improved under this scheme-

- (a) How many applications are on the current scheme and awaiting an offer of works to be carried out?

Reply: There are currently 42 applicants on the current list and 118 applicants awaiting to be assessed for the new scheme.

- (b) How many applications have Monaghan County Council accepted prior to the closure of acceptance are awaiting assessment and when do the County Council expect to undertake this process?

Reply: Applications were received from 118 applicants prior to the scheme closing on the 31st December 2018. MCC hopes to carry out these assessments in 2021-2022.

- (c) In each of the past 5 years (2016,'17,'18,'19,'20), how much monies have County Monaghan received and how many lanes in each year have been completed?

Reply:

2017 – Allocation Received - €366,312.00 - 21 Lanes Completed
2018 – Allocation Received - €540,841.00 - 28 Lanes Completed
2019 – Allocation Received - €250,000.00 - 14 Lanes Completed
2020 – Allocation Received - €250,000.00 - 12 Lanes Completed
2021 – Awaiting Allocation

- (d) When do Monaghan County Council expect to re-open the LIS to new applications?

Reply: Roads Department are continually monitoring waiting lists and assessing what can be done with available funding, and we propose to reopen the scheme when a significant portion of the current applicants have been cleared. Given the current rate of funding this may take several years.

19. How many roads in County Monaghan have had works carried out, including complete Restoration under the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS), in each of the years since the

County began participation and how much has been allocated to the County in each of those years?

Reply: **2018 - Allocation Received - €180,196.00 - 2 Schemes Completed**
 2019 - Allocation Received - €617,919.00 - 10 Schemes Completed
 2020 - Allocation Received - €544,000.00 - 7 Schemes Completed
 2021 - Allocation Received - €544,000.00

20. Can Monaghan County Council outline the stage at this point of the proposed housing units at Church Street, Ballybay, when works are expected to commence and be completed, with the details of the size of dwelling etc?

Reply: A Procurement competition for the demolition of the derelict fire damaged 12 Church Street, Ballybay property and construction of two number two storey two-bedroom townhouses was advertised on eTenders with tender prices returned recently. The Most Economically Advantageous Tender has been identified and Monaghan County Council has submitted the Tender Report to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for final Stage 4 Funding Approval. Providing Stage 4 funding is approved we expect to begin construction in Q2 2021

18. Notices of Motion

Cllrs P. Treanor proposed, Cllr B. McKenna seconded:

1. *That Monaghan County Council support the Beef Plan Movement association in their call for an Independent Meat Regulator. We further support their request that said Meat Regulator will have statutory and legislative powers to investigate anti-competitive behaviour by meat processors, meat traders, bodies associated with the trade of meat, trade of meat by-products and/or trade by retailers who operate along the meat supply chain.*

Following a short discussion on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr S. Conlon proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded:

2. *That this Council records it's support for the World Health Organisation's plea for the equitable global distribution of all vaccines, treatments and therapies developed to combat the coronavirus scourge, and further notes:*
 - *that some 130 countries across the world have yet to receive a single vaccine;*
 - *that some countries have made arrangements for the delivery of vaccines far in excess of their populations need;*
 - *that multiple voices have raised concern that some of the world's poorest countries are unlikely to receive an adequate delivery of vaccines to meet their populations need until late 2023 or even into 2024;*
 - *the failure of the pharmaceutical companies behind the current batch of developed vaccines to share their research and findings with equally competent pharmaceutical manufacturers across the world to help speed up the production and distribution of vaccines and thereby the defeat of this global pandemic;*
 - *the European Commission's approval of an application by concerned citizens to secure one million signatures of EU citizens to compel the Commission to consider the steps it can take, including legislation, to address this global inequality;*

That this Council encourages all citizens to sign the EU hosted petition through Google Chrome on www.noprofitonpandemic.eu thereby helping to reach the one million signatures target at the earliest date possible.

That this motion is circulated to all County and City Councils in this State and all local authorities north of the border seeking their support and adoption.

Following a short discussion on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr P. Connolly proposed, Cllr Coyle seconded:

- 3. That Monaghan County Council prepare a comprehensive report relating to its role and involvement in relation to the provision of services for mothers and babies from 1920-1970 and that this report together with archive material be placed on Council records, available and accessible to families seeking such information now and in the future.*

Following a short discussion on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

19. Votes of sympathy/congratulations

It was agreed that a vote of sympathy would be extended to the following:

- Gareth McMahon, Council official on the death of his mother Maureen, RIP
- Liz Brannigan and Susan Duffy, Council officials on the death of their father Vincent RIP

It was agreed that a vote of congratulations be extended to the following:

- Patrick Duffy, past pupil of Ballybay Community College on being awarded a scholarship and the NUI Mansion House Prize in Irish History and is now studying history at Lincoln College Oxford England.
- Paidí Walsh past pupil of Ballybay Community College on being awarded a Trinity College Dublin Entrance Exhibition Scholarship in recognition of his 2020 Leaving Certificate results.
- Kristofer Grigaitis, a 5th year pupil at Ballybay Community College on his qualification for the national finals of the All Ireland Olympiad held on 10th March 2021.

Urgent Business:

Cllr P. Treanor proposed, Cllr Carthy seconded

That Monaghan County Council writes to Bank of Ireland, The Financial Services Union, the Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohue TD and all local Oireachtas Members, demanding that Bank of Ireland reverse their decision to close their branches in Clones and Castleblayney.

Following a short discussion on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council offer full support to An Taoiseach, Michael Martin TD, An Tanaiste, Leo Varadkar TD, Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs and totally condemn the threats made to these democratically elected representatives and all democratically elected representatives who uphold our democratic system, important to each of us, our families and communities, offer our full support to the investigating An Garda Siochana, also our full support, prayers and thoughts to the families of each individual involved and their constituents'.
(This motion if adopted be forwarded to each individual involved and An Garda Siochana).*

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____