

Ceantar Bardasach Carraig Mhachaire Rois – Baile Na Lorgan

Comhairle Contae Mhuineachain



The Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblayney

Monaghan County Council

Minutes of proceedings of MD Monthly meeting held virtually on Monday 20th December 2021 at 10.00am.

Present: Cathaoirleach PJ O’Hanlon

Cllrs. Aoife McCooey , Colm Carthy, Noel Keelan, Aidan Campbell

Apologies: Cllr. Mary Kerr Conlon

In Attendance: Paul Clifford, Director of Service, Damien Thornton, A/District Coordinator, Matthew Lambe, District Engineer, Amanda Murray, Staff Officer, Julieann O’Reilly, Clerical Officer

Presentation from John McArdle, Monaghan County Council Broadband Officer - Broadband

John McArdle, MCC Broadband Officer, spoke about broadband within Carrickmacross and Castleblayney. Following this, the members put their comments/questions to him:

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Thanked John McArdle for the presentation.

Noted the serious issue of people paying for a product and not getting a return.

Wondered if it is possible to have a meeting with the company?

Asked if the infrastructure in Carrickmacross town is fit for purpose?

Regarding the National Broadband Plan, specifically in the hinterlands, how long will it take to complete works?

Cllr. Campbell:

Complimented the work that John McArdle carries out.

Noted that indicators are showing that the process is going to be slow.

Spoke about SIRO and stated that it is his of the understanding that nothing is happening in Monaghan. Suggested inviting a delegate from SIRO to meet with the members.

Cllr. Keelan:

Acknowledged the work of John McArdle.

Agreed with Cllr. Campbell's comments about SIRO – we need some feedback from them.
Stated that having good broadband is as critical as having an electricity supply.
Stated that he intends to make a proposal at the next Full Council meeting.
Commented that he is very concerned about the slippage in the roll out of the National Broadband Plan and that this is simply no acceptable.
Voiced concerns about the difficulties people are having contacting Eir.

Cllr. Carthy:

Thanked John McArdle for the presentation.
Voiced his concern about the delays in the roll out of the National Broadband Plan, stating that it is not acceptable that people are 5 years away from accessing it.
Noted that Broadband is a necessity.
Commented there are problems contacting Eir – sometimes calls are not taken from the public.

Cllr. McCooey:

Wondered if there is any merit in meeting with or writing to these people?

John McArdle responded as follows:

SIRO are delivering very high-speed Broadband to urban areas. He stated he would support engaging with SIRO – it may be an important advance.

In relation to rural premises, *imagine* can offer solutions for rural areas. Other providers include Digiweb and Netone, however there can be issues as their masts are currently at full capacity.

If people are not receiving the broadband speeds they are paying for, there are two options:

1. Record the actual speed and contact the provider. Document when complaint is submitted. If no improvement in service, contact COMREG.
2. If getting less than 30mb broadband you may contact the Department of Communications to request that your area be included in the National Broadband Plan.

New Estates are a problem. There is a delay between them being opened and broadband services being delivered. It is hoped to address this issue in 2022, to see if the process can be speeded up.

Any requests to engage with National Broadband Ireland is supported.

There are plans from Eir to upgrade the exchanges, however the difficulty in contacting them is recognised.

Progress in being made in relation to remote working / hub spaces.

On the proposal of Cllr. Campbell and seconded by Cllr. Keelan the following motion was unanimously agreed:

“Can this MD, through our Broadband Officer John McArdle, write to SIRO to invite them to meet with us to get SIRO to engage with us to include the MD and Monaghan in their future roll out of High-Speed Broadband as a priority”.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Carthy the minutes of the November Monthly Meeting held on Monday 22nd November 2021 were adopted.

2.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Carthy requested an update on the security issues re: Shirley House Lane.

A/District Coordinator Damien Thornton advised that the matter is under review.

Cllr. Carthy stated that the dog bags at the dog bins are still not being filled.

A/District Coordinator Damien Thornton replied that they have been refilled but unfortunately it appears that there are individuals who are taking the entire amount in one go.

Cllr. Carthy pointed out that the design of the dispensers make it very difficult to take more than one at time. He suggested placing a sticker "Please take one", stating that he finds it hard to believe that people feel the need to take the lot of them. Cllr. Carthy advised that he reviewed the area and found that the bags were not refilled.

Cllr. O'Hanlon suggested putting a check in place.

Cllr. Carthy spoke about the previous motion regarding Community Welfare Officers / Offices. He stated he believes there is a need to call in Minister Humphreys about this issue, noting that other towns have lost their Community Welfare Officer.

On the proposal of Cllr. Carthy and seconded by Cllr. Keelan the following was unanimously agreed:

"Can this MD request an urgent meeting with Minister Humphreys regarding the crucial provision of Community Welfare Offices in Co. Monaghan to ensure that the CWO services continue in this county, including the face-to-face facilities currently in place".

3.0 Correspondence

- I. Letter from Niamh Smyth T.D. – Response from the Minister for Transport regarding the section of the N2 being omitted from the new project.

Cllr. O'Hanlon stated that there is a need to keep an eye on this issue. He went on to say that he has strong reservations about the project in relation to the N2.

4.0 MD Coordinator Report

Cllr. Keelan:

Welcomed the CCTV Public Consultation for Carrickmacross.

Asked if the MD are hopeful that the Bike Rental Scheme in Inniskeen will be up and running in the New Year as it seems to be a slow process.

Reply – the contract is there to be signed. The preferred tenderer has issues with insurance, but they are very hopeful they will resolve same in the near future.

Welcomed funding for Tullyvaragh Junction on the N2 and asked what will happen now?
Also welcomed funding for Ballinacarry Bridge,
Reply – an update will be sought from Roads Section.

Cllr. Campbell:

Welcomed the funding for Ballinacarry Bridge.
Stated that he shares concerns about what will happen regarding the Tullyvaragh Junction.
Advised that a regular run takes place on Black Island. At times flooding prevents the event taking place. Can this issue be investigated? Queried as to whether an Analysis and Opportunities study into the development of enhanced recreational facilities could be undertaken.

Reply – this matter will be investigated, with a view to presenting any findings to Coillte.

Cllr. Carthy:

Spoke about the proposed bandstand project. Asked if the funding will need to be sent back? Are rising costs going to affect any future projects, is this a concern?

Reply – The bandstand project was 90% funded with 10% match funding. The Department are willing to cover the design costs. Unfortunately, the market is currently saturated with such projects.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Welcomed the appointment of a Technical Supervisor to the CTEKII.

5.0 Questions

Questions raised by Cllr. Colm Carthy for December 2021 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

1. In relation to the Conabury Hill Housing Estate, Castleblayney, I requested information on a number of items in March and the executive confirmed it would liaise with the Planning section to try to get answers – please confirm:
 - commit to engaging with private landowners adjacent to this estate to establish a downhill sewerage connection to the public waste system (rather than the current system of pumping waste uphill to public system)? Water Services/Planning
 - consider replacing the damaged timber fence surrounding the estates waste treatment plant with a proper, heavy-duty, steel fence to ensure access is completely restricted to unauthorised individuals? Matthew/Planning
 - review the drainage to the Conabury Hill road itself, to ensure that surface water is drained off road rather than its current path (through this estate)? Matthew/Planning
 - Consider a review of the gullies in the estate to ensure they are clear and properly clearing surface water from the estate? Matthew/Planning

Response:

The Conabury Hill Housing Estate has not been Taken in Charge by Monaghan County Council.

An application to take the estate in charge was received in May 2021. Technical assessments addressing the infrastructure issues highlighted above are nearing completion. Pending the outcome of these assessments, and the resolution of any issues arising, the estate shall be considered for taking in charge.

2. When is it expected preliminary designs will be completed for the Market House project, Castleblayney and can the executive confirm when it expects to progress this project further?

Response:

It is anticipated that Preliminary Designs for the project will be completed in Q1 2022, following this Detailed Design works will be commenced. It is envisaged that a Part VIII Planning Application for the project will be submitted in Q2/Q3 2022 and that Detailed Design works for the Market House & Market Square project will be completed in Q3 2022.

3. Can the engineering section carry out an assessment of access routes from housing estates/housing clusters in Carrickmacross to the local schools in the area in order to further encourage children to walk or cycle to school? There are a number of routes that are currently unsafe and may require additional safe crossings installed.

Response:

The adopted *Carrickmacross: Active Travel Town, Walking and Cycling Strategy 2017* provides for a detailed analysis of key trip attractors for the main residential areas in the town. The key routes and desire lines between the residential areas and these key trip attractors, including schools, are identified, together with infrastructure improvements aimed at providing safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists. In March 2021, Monaghan County Council secured funding under the multi-annual Active Travel Programme for a review of the adopted Strategy, and the subsequent detailed design of walking and cycling facilities throughout the Carrickmacross urban area, all in the context of current national and county-level walking & cycling strategies, policies and design standards. It is envisaged that the National Transport Authority shall confirm the mechanism for the delivery of this scheme in early 2022.

4. A previously agreed extension to balustrading/railings at the bottom of St Macartans/Horse Hill, at the Farney Street junction, Carrickmacross, has yet to be installed, can the Council confirm when it expects to fit this?

Response:-

It is envisaged that these works shall be completed in Q1 2022.

5. Has any further consideration been given to adding a pedestrian crossing to both the Rockdaniel Road (at the Culloville Road Junction) and Oriel Road (close to new Primary Care Centre)?

Response:-

Engineering staff shall complete speed and traffic surveys, including pedestrian counts, in Q1 of 2022 to ascertain the necessity for pedestrian crossings at both locations. Should the analysis of these surveys determine the requirement for a pedestrian crossing at either location, the proposal shall be added to the Low-Cost Safety Scheme application list for consideration under future funding.

Questions raised by Cllr. Aidan Campbell for December 2021 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

6. With the recent announcement of funding totalling €139,490 under measure 2 of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme which will go to upgrade and enhance the Monaghan Way from Castleblayney to Inniskeen.

- When will work commence on this project to upgrade and enhance the Monaghan Way?
- The MD Executive, in conjunction with Monaghan County Council's Tourism Officer, shall commence the procurement of a multi-disciplinary design team in early Q1 2022.
- Can the MD along with the Tourism section collaborate to promote the Monaghan Way from Inniskeen to Castleblayney in conjunction with all the stakeholders?

The MD Executive and Monaghan County Council's Tourism Section shall endeavour to actively promote the redevelopment of the Monaghan Way in collaboration with all key stakeholders

- Can the current signage which exists to promote the Monaghan Way be updated, renewed and enhanced?

The scope of works for the redevelopment of the Monaghan Way from Castleblayney to Inniskeen includes for the provision of new and upgraded signage along this section of the Monaghan Way.

- With the original Monaghan Way that ran from Inniskeen through Castleblayney and on towards Mullyash and then to Clontibret, can this section be examined now also?

The current funding allocation does not provide for an examination of the Castleblayney-Mullyash-Clontibret section of the Monaghan Way. There is however provision for a feasibility study to be undertaken into a potential stand-alone loop at Mullyash.

7. What is the update for the road safety and improvements works due to be carried out on the junction where the road leads down from the Alms Houses to Saint Marys Church in Castleblayney? The busy crossing is used by students going to Castleblayney College and also students going to Scoil Mhuire na Mbuachailli.

Response: -

Roads Section – Active Travel Team (project is substitute for Scout Lane)

8. With the announcement of funding totalling €49,950 to continue the development and feasibility stages of the Castleblayney to Ballybay Greenway under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

- What is the next phase in this project?
- When will there be further engagement with the design team?

Response:-

The development of a greenway consists of 8 separate phases. These range from phase 0 which is scope and pre-appraisal to Stage 7 - close out and review. The proposed Ballybay to Castleblayney greenway is currently at Phase 1 - concept & feasibility

The funding awarded under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme will allow for the progression of the project to Phase 2 - options section, and Phase 3 - design and environmental evaluation.

It is proposed to commencement the procurement process for the consultant in early 2022. Public consultation regarding the project will be held in Q2 of 2022.

9. With work ongoing on the new lights on the Shercock Road out of Castleblayney to join up with Blackhill GAA centre; when it is anticipated that this work will be completed to enable this part of the town to be lit up and safer to walk on?

Response:-

Civil engineering works for the erection of the public lighting columns are complete. It is envisaged that commissioning works will be completed in early January 2022, on receipt of required certification.

10. With the recent funding announcement totalling €50,000 to design flood alleviation works at Annadrumond

- Has the design tender documents been issued yet?
- What is the brief of the tender?
- When will this important design document be ready to go to the Department to advocate for funding to help alleviate the flooding in Annadrumond?

Response:-

It is envisaged that tender documents shall issue to the market in January 2022. The brief of the tender is the identification, design and submission (for planning consent) of a Flood Relief Scheme, that is technically, socially, environmentally and economically acceptable. Subject to a successful tender process, and obtaining the necessary consents, it is hoped that this Council will be in a position to making a submission to the Department advocating funding to help alleviate the flooding in Annadrumond in Q3 2022.

Questions raised by Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon for December 2021 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

11. How much has the MD invested in the Workhouse acquisition to date from the GMA and how much local funds are needed to support current grant application for funding under RRDF?

Response:-

Monaghan Co. Council purchased the Old Union Workhouse in 2020 for the sum of €540,000. The full cost of this acquisition shall be funded through the General Municipal Allocation (GMA) over the next number of years. To date, the GMA has provided for purchase payments totalling €125,000. The current grant application provides for Local Authority match funding to the amount of €72,152.

12. With the investment of €100,000 announced on 9th of December for a TCF Plan for Carrickmacross, how do the Executive intend to progress this initiative.

Response:-

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, announced €2.6 million in funding to deliver the first ever Town Centre First Plans, which will be key to tackling dereliction and revitalising town centres. As part of the initiative, each local authority will be provided with €100,000 to support the development of its own unique master plan. The plan will focus on tackling dereliction, vacant properties and making town centres more attractive places to live, work, socialise and run a business. It will also help re-imagine and revitalise rural communities as part of forthcoming Town Centre First Policy.

Carrickmacross MD will now work closely with local community groups, retailers and the other members of the Town Teams in devising and delivering on the objectives of their respective masterplans. This initiative is a key part of *Our Rural Future* and is also linked to the Government's 'Housing for All' strategy and the forthcoming 'Town Centre First Policy', to be announced in the coming weeks.

Questions raised by Cllr. Noel Keelan for December 2021 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

- 13 As discussed on site with our engineering staff some time ago, what plans have this Council to upgrade including replacing the wing walls at Corcrin bridge on the local road L4640?

Response:-

This bridge on the L4640 forms part of scheduled parapet walls repairs in the district for 2022.

- 14 What is the up to date position in relation to the rollout off the public lighting programme for this Municipal District area?

Response:-

At present works have been completed for the installation and commissioning of 7Nr. Lights on the Convent Avenue Carrickmacross. There are 16Nr. Public Lighting columns in-situ on the Shercock Rd Castleblayney and 10Nr. Public

Lighting Columns in-situ on the Kingscourt Rd Carrickmacross that are awaiting certification prior to commissioning. Its envisaged that certification and commissioning of both locations will be completed in January 2022. Civil Engineering Works are schedule to commence at Lisdoonan and Drumillard in January 2022 with commissioning and certification expected towards the latter half of Q1 2022.

15 Is this Council winter ready in terms of salt supplies including the provision of salt boxes throughout the housing estates in this MD area? Have we a facility to supply salt boxes to those who request them including residents' associations community centres etc?

Response:-

This Council has adequate supplies of salt for the Winter Maintenance period. Monaghan County Council does not provide salt directly to the general public. In order to provide help and assistance to Local Community Groups, Schools and Churches and Businesses during the winter period, it operates a "Purchase a Salt Bin Scheme" which allows Local Community Groups and Businesses to prepare themselves for the winter period at a reasonable cost. It is up to the community group/school/business to source their own salt after the first fill has been used. Application forms for this scheme are available on the Monaghan County Council website and at the Municipal District Offices in Carrickmacross, Clones and Monaghan.

16 In welcoming the funding for the upgrading of the Monaghan Way from Castleblayney to Inniskeen, when is it hoped to commence works, what will this work consist of and is there good engagement and buy in from the landowners involved?

Response:

The MD Executive, in conjunction with Monaghan County Council's Tourism Officer, shall commence the procurement of a multi-disciplinary design team in early Q1 2022. The scope of works includes:

- Repair and rebranding works comprising vegetation clearance, the installation of some new stiles and gates, and the provision of new and upgraded signage
- The development of 3 new looped walks at Annadrumman, Culloville and Inniskeen
- Feasibility studies into the potential re-routing of the trail at 4 No. Sites
- Marketing of the upgraded route

The MD Executive and Monaghan County Council's Tourism Section shall continue to engage in meaningful consultation and work collaboratively with all stakeholders throughout the delivery of the scheme.

17 In relation to the public realm plan for Inniskeen village, what plans will be put in place to have an information day/evening for local residents while mindful of Covid restrictions?

Response:

Pending developments associated with the current surge in Covid-19 cases, it is intended to hold a Community Comms Event in Inniskeen Community Centre in Q1 2022.

6.0 Presentation from Ronan McParland – Draft Public Realm Plan Inniskeen

Following the presentation by Ronan McParland, the members commented as below:

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Requested that the presentation is forwarded to all the members.

Noted that the MD have not been shy about supporting Inniskeen Village. Thanked Director of Services Paul Clifford and the MD team for all the work done in Inniskeen.

Spoke about the costings – it is going to be down to ourselves to prioritise and do it over a number of years.

Cllr. Campbell:

Stated that Inniskeen is a beautiful village and that the people working behind the scenes for years need to be commended.

Commented that the draft plan is a list of what needs to be done and the plan can be used to seek funding.

Advised that he is looking forward to seeing some of the projects come to fruition in the future.

Cllr. Keelan:

Stated that Inniskeen is one of the finest villages in the County.

Commented that connectivity is crucial.

Voiced concern that The River Fane is not mentioned as much as perhaps it should be.

Noted that there are parking issues in the centre of the village.

Wondered what is the timescale for delivery and what is the overall cost?

Spoke about an Information Day/Evening being facilitated, stressing the importance of bringing people along with such a plan.

Ronan McPartland responded as follows:

In relation to costings and timeframe – project priorities have been identified.

The presentation slides will be shared amongst the members.

Will further investigate the matter of the River Fane.

The plan may influence where parking may be.

The Information Day was re-scheduled due to Covid restrictions – hopeful it will occur in the new year.

7.0 DOS Orders

Directors Orders CMX-CBY MD 56/2021 and 57/2021 were duly noted.

8.0 VOS/VOC

A vote of sympathy was passed with the following: -

Gerard Callaghan and family on the death of his wife Sheila.

Mr. Shane Crosby and family on the death of his mother Jacinta.

9.0 AOB

Cllr. Carthy:

There are parking issues at the schools in Carrickmacross which is a huge bug bear to many. Can it be considered to add road markings to the entrance of the schools to highlight that there is no parking?

Illegal parking have caused numerous incidents in Carrickmacross, particularly at school collection times. Parnell St and Farney St have been blocked by cars double parking. There are also issues at Market Square. Can An Garda Síochána be written to, to highlight the areas of concern and call on them to have a greater presence during these times?

Cllr. Keelan seconded this proposal and it was unanimously agreed to write to An Garda Síochána.

Cllr. Campbell:

Complimented all involved in the roll out of the vaccination programme.

Cllr. Keelan:

Requested that the MD review the lighting at pedestrian crossings with a view to improving same?

Recognised Roseleen Kearney for her involvement with the book by Elizabeth O'Toole, "A Poet in the House".

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Echoed Cllr. Campbell's comments about all involved in the vaccine programme.

Cathaoirleach O'Hanlon thank all the members, MD indoor and outdoor staff for their work. He also expressed thanks to all services – An Garda Síochána, Fire Services, Health Service Staff and Carers. Young people of the county were also recognised for the way they have handled themselves during these difficult times.

Cathaoirleach O'Hanlon wished everybody a happy, peaceful and safe Christmas.

The meeting concluded at 12:00am

Cathaoirleach

Date

Meeting Administrator