

**Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held on MS Teams, on Monday 10 January 2022 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Chair:** Cllr A. Campbell, Cathaoirleach

**Present:** Cllrs. Aughey, Bennett, Carthy, Coyle, Conlon, Connolly, Gilliland, Keelan, Kerr-Conlon, Maxwell, McKenna, O’Hanlon, P. Treanor, S. Treanor and Truell

Mr. P. Clifford, A/Chief Executive, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms. P. Monahan, Director of Services, Mr. Cathal Flynn, Ms. N. Woods and Mr A Hughes, A/Director of Services, Mr. Ms. L. Brannigan, Senior Staff Officer and Ms. M. McGarvey, Meetings Administrator

**Sympathy – John Lennon, RIP:**

*On the proposal of Cllr A Campbell, seconded by Cllr D Maxwell, it was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the wife and family of the late John Lennon, Engineering Staff with the Council who had passed away on the 22 December 2021.*

All members of the Council associated themselves with the vote of sympathy. They spoke highly of John – his dedication to his work, his efficiency in his role as Engineer and his huge interest in his local community. Mr Paul Clifford, Deputy Chief Executive, associated himself and the staff with the vote of sympathy.

**Sympathy – Patsy Treanor, RIP:**

*On the proposal of Cllr A Campbell, seconded by Cllr D Maxwell, it was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the wife and family of the late Patsy Treanor, former Fianna Fáil member of Monaghan Co Council who had passed away on the 26 December 2021.*

All members of the Council associated themselves with the vote of sympathy. Cathaoirleach Aidan Campbell stated that Mr Treanor had enjoyed a long political career and was a highly respected member of the staff of St Davnet’s Hospital. He thanked the members and representatives of the Council who had provided a guard of honour at Mr Treanor’s funeral. Mr Paul Clifford, Deputy Chief Executive, associated himself and the staff with the vote of sympathy.

**Sympathy – Patsy McArdle, RIP:**

*On the proposal of Cllr A Campbell, seconded by Cllr D Maxwell, it was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the long-time partner, daughter and family of the late Patsy McArdle, journalist with the Northern Standard, who had passed away on the 06 January 2022.*

All members of the Council associated themselves with the vote of sympathy. Cathaoirleach Aidan Campbell stated that Mr McArdle was an outstanding reporter, a journalist of national renown and a gentleman, who was respected by all parties. Mr Paul Clifford, Deputy Chief Executive, associated himself and the staff with the vote of sympathy.

The Cathaoirleach adjourned the meeting for a short period as a mark of respect.

## **1. Confirmation of Minutes**

### **(i) Minutes of Council meeting held on 06 December 2021**

*On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan, seconded by Cllr S Coyle, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021, be confirmed.*

## **2. Correspondence.**

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

- Letter from the Minister for European Affairs, Mr. Thomas Byrne, T.D regarding European Network of EU Councillors.
- Email from the Office of the Minister for Business, Employment and Retail, Mr. Damien English, T.D. regarding Eirgrid, ESB networks and their agents to cease all works on the North South Interconnector.
- Letter from TII regarding Road Safety Audit on the N12 at Knockaconny.
- Report on 2022 Grant Allocations to Local Authorities for National Roads, Active Travel and Greenways.
- Letter from Chief Executive Officer, Bus Eireann regarding school transportation.
- Letter from the Higher Education Authority regarding Dundalk Institute of Technology - Technological University Status.
- Letter from the Joint Policing Committee Administrator regarding Domestic Violence Services Support (Monaghan).
- Resolution from Ballybay-Clones Municipal District regarding the Irish Government and the E.U in dealing with the UK withdrawal from the E.U.
- Resolution from Donegal County Council regarding the restoration of Section 140 Motions to Councils
- Resolution from Galway City Council regarding the Help to Buy Incentive Scheme.

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

- Response email from Senator Joe O'Reilly regarding Eirgrid.
- Letter from the Office of the HSE regarding the increase of hours of the Minor Injury Unit, Monaghan Hospital.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Heather Humphreys, TD regarding the nine recommendations from the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection Community.

### **Proposals arising out of correspondence:**

*On the proposal of Cllr P Connolly, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett, it was agreed that this Council calls on the Minister for Justice to ensure that in relation to the forthcoming national strategy "Supporting a Victims Journey " and in view of the fact that one-third of domestic abuse victims are male that proportionate additional funding be made available for male victims of domestic abuse and that refuges are also made available.*

*On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, it was agreed that this Council fully endorses the position of the Irish Government and the E.U. in dealing with the U.K. threatened withdrawal from the E.U. Protocol and urge the British Government, British Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss M.P., not to trigger Article 16 unilaterally suspending the British Trade Deal with the E.U., particularly, as the European Commission Vice President, Marcos*

*Sefcovic, has indicated that the Northern Protocol is the foundation of the entire Brexit Withdrawal Agreement ,stating “without the Protocol, the whole system will collapse”, the consequences for Border Communities would be disastrous, irresponsible and reckless”,.*

*(It was agreed that this motion be forwarded to An Taoiseach, Micheal Martin TD, An Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar TD, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney TD, all Party Leaders to the Northern Ireland Executive, all local Oireachtas and European Parliament Members.*

*On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr P Treanor, it was agreed that this Council support the Ballybay-Clones MD motion endorsing the position of the Irish Government and the EU in dealing with the UK withdrawal from the EU Protocol and urge the British Government not to trigger Article 16 unilaterally suspending the British trade deal with the EU as the consequences for border communities would be damaging, irresponsible and reckless.*

*On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr PJ O’Hanlon, it was agreed to circulate a copy of the correspondence received from the HSE, dated 23 December 2021, regarding expansion of services at Monaghan General Hospital to all Cavan/Monaghan Oireachtas Members.*

*On the proposal of Cllr P Treanor, seconded by Cllr N Keelan, it was agreed that this Council write again to Education Minister, Norma Foley T.D. and the Chief Executive Officer of Bus Éireann, requesting a joint meeting to seek an urgent resolution to the difficulties being encountered in relation to access to School Transport for students in County Monaghan.*

*On the proposal of Cllr C Carthy, seconded by Cllr N Keelan, it was agreed that this Council calls on Minister Heather Humphreys to reinstate, as a matter of urgency, the in-person clinics for those accessing the Community Welfare Offices in Co. Monaghan. We highlight our surprise and disappointment in the way services are currently being rolled out, via phone to the Monaghan Town CWO, and ask that these changes are revoked, and previous in-person services are continued into the future. The CWO is a vital service to the most vulnerable in our society and should be expanded and not reduced.*

*On the proposal of Cllr PJ O’Hanlon, seconded by Cllr S Coyle, it was agreed that this Council write to Minister Eamonn Ryan requesting a meeting, in person or on-line, in relation to the cancelling of funding for the project on the N2 from Clontibret to the Border and to provide an update to the project from Ardee to Castleblaney, also on the N2.*

*On the proposal of Cllr S Conlon, seconded by Cllr B McKenna, it was agreed that a delegation from this Council, to include County Monaghan Oireachtas members, seek as a matter of urgency, a meeting with Minister Eamonn Ryan and officials to discuss the absence of funding for the N2 Clontibret to the Border road scheme.*

*On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell, seconded by Cllr R Aughey, it was agreed that this Council seek an urgent meeting with all Cavan Monaghan TDs and Senators to discuss the removing of funding from the Clontibret to the Border road scheme.*

### **3. To consider Section 183 Notice**

#### **(i) Sale of an industrial site at Tullyherim, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan**

Mr C. Flynn, Director of Services, presented the Section 183 notice which had been circulated in relation to the proposed sale of an industrial site at Tullyherim, Monaghan, Co Monaghan.

*On the proposal of Cllr R Aughey, seconded by Cllr P Connolly, it was agreed that the Council approve the sale of an industrial site at Tullyherim, Monaghan, Co Monaghan in accordance with the terms of notice dated 10 January 2022 and attached site location map under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001.*

**4. To Review Capital Programme 2022 - 2024**

Mr Alan Hall and Mr Paul Connolly, Senior Executive Engineers attended the meeting and gave a comprehensive presentation to the members on the Capital Programme. Cathal Flynn, Director of Services, introduced the presentation by stating that despite the difficulties of 2021, it had been a successful year in terms of capital project delivery. He advised that the Capital Programme is a three-year rolling programme, reviewed annually, and was presented to members along with the annual budget. He stated that the Programme includes a total of over 105 projects, which will require funding of some €278 million over the three-year period. He further stated that it was important to note that consideration of the Capital Programme by the Members does not confer Council approval on any individual project. This can only be achieved through the normal statutory processes and compliance with the Public Spending Code. Funding arrangements also need to be clearly identified and secured in advance of committing to any particular project. Mr Hall and Mr Connolly then provided members with an update on the status of the various projects contained in the programme.

A discussion followed to which a number of members contributed and complimented Cathal, Alan, Paul and all staff associated with the various projects. Deputy CE, P. Clifford concluded by thanking members for their support of the Capital Project.

**5. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021.**

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021 which had been circulated.

*On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan seconded by Cllr S Coyle, it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.*

**6. To receive Management Report – December 2021**

The members noted the Management Report for the month of December which had been circulated with the agenda.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Directors of Services responded to queries from the elected members.

*On the proposal of Cllr C Carthy, seconded by Cllr N Keelan, it was agreed to call upon Monaghan County Council, following confirmation from National Ambulance Service that Fire Personnel can be used to assist in Cardiac arrest calls, to engage in the process of using our retained service for these exceptional circumstances. Considering the huge strain on the Ambulance Service of late, and cases where severe call-out times have been highlighted in Co. Monaghan, it would be unthinkable that we would not use our highly trained retained Fire Service in matters of such importance.*

**7. Business submitted by Chief Executive**

The Deputy Chief Executive informed the members there was no matters for consideration under this item.

**8. Matters arising out of the minutes of meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 06 December 2021 were responded to by the relevant officials.

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

Ms. P. Monahan, Director of Services informed the members that the update on this item had been provided in the earlier TII discussion under 'Correspondence' item and was also included in the Management Report.

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

No further update on North South Interconnector.

*On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr N Keelan, it was agreed that this Council re-issue December meeting correspondence to Oireachtas members seeking **an** immediate reply to the motions adopted by the members at their meeting on Monday, 6th December 2021. The issues raised in these Motions are of enormous concern and importance to the affected communities of the proposed construction of the 400Kv North-South Interconnector, who, be assured, remain vehemently opposed to the over grounding of the project".*

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

Cllr P. Treanor advised members that Phase 2 of the project is progressing well. The tender process is ongoing and works are expected to commence in July 2022. He congratulated Cllr D Maxwell on his appointment as Chairperson of ICBAN.

**12. Questions**

**Cllr C. Carthy asked:**

1. How many vacant houses/residential units have been identified by Monaghan County Council and, of these:
  - How many in each MD?
  - How many are derelict?
  - How many have owners have been contacted to try and bring their units back into use?

**Reply: Monaghan County Council is continuing to progress the Vacant Homes Programme and is collating information regarding all properties inspected for vacancy. Since the inception of the Vacant Homes Programme and following the review of the initial desktop information the Vacant Homes Office have identified 180 vacant homes, 30 in**

Monaghan MD, 107 in Ballybay - Clones MD and 43 in Carrickmacross – Castleblayney MD. In addition, Monaghan County Council is bringing vacant derelict properties into use through various housing renewal projects that are ongoing and commence, subject to funding, other projects in towns and villages throughout County Monaghan.

In the past quarter there have been significant efforts in identifying ownership of vacant/derelict properties which in most cases are not registered with the Property Registration Authority. This is a continuous process of gathering information regarding vacant properties within the County. Through engagement and investigation Monaghan County Council has confirmed details of ownership details but also established in certain circumstances where some properties initially thought to be derelict/vacant have in fact people living in them. This results in further engagement with property owners with regard to improving the appearance of their buildings and/or initiating Private Rental Inspections where applicable to make sure they are of the required standards for rental accommodation.

Monaghan County Council's Vacant Homes Office is registered with [www.vacanthomes.ie](http://www.vacanthomes.ie) where the public can provide the details of any vacant homes in their locality and the website will automatically notify the Vacant Homes Office by email. At present there are 27 properties registered vacant on the website. These properties will be investigated and collated with the properties already recorded.

Monaghan County Council continue to gather information and survey vacant homes throughout County Monaghan to provide a holistic profile on vacancy and encouraging the use of vacant homes wherever possible.

2. Are there any new measures being put in place by the Local Enterprise Office to support businesses affected by Covid restrictions and what plans are in place to roll such measures out? **Reply: No new measures as such have been announced but the LEO has been proactively supporting businesses through existing schemes which aim to promote competitiveness and improve resilience such as Green for Micro, LEAN for Micro and the Trading Online Voucher.**

LEO Monaghan has also been actively promoting the #LookforLocal campaign. This is a national initiative which was introduced last year and in the lead up to Christmas. LEO Monaghan has made a concentrated effort to promote local businesses through the campaign. Visiting the towns in the county and highlighting local businesses across several social media platforms, has allowed the LEO staff to engage with business owners and help address their concerns and needs.

3. Can the Council provide a breakdown of supports allocated under the Streetscape scheme rolled out in recent months (number of units in each of the associated towns, types of premises/business etc.)?

**Reply: On 4th August 2021 the DRCD announced the 2021 Streetscape Enhancement Measure to upgrade and enhance shopfronts and street facades in rural towns and villages, initially allocating €220,000 including 10% for Administration/Technical costs to Monaghan. Three towns were nominated;**

- Monaghan
- Carrickmacross
- Ballybay

In response to concerns raised by local authorities the Department subsequently reviewed the scheme and offered an extended deadline as well as an opportunity to apply for additional funding. Ultimately Monaghan received a total allocation of €320,058, which will be distributed as follows:

Town	Projects/Properties	Residential	Business	Amounts
Monaghan	95	36	59	€167,714
Ballybay	44	19	25	€73,249
Carrickmacross	26	1	25	€59,095
Administration and Technical Assistance				€20,000
Total	165			€320,058

Staff are working very closely with Property Owners, The Tidy Towns/Town Teams/Chamber groups to obtain the necessary documentation to comply with the scheme rules. 14 Letters of Offer have been issued to-date to 13 businesses and 1 residential property. A significant number of additional offers will be issued in January 2022 once the necessary documentation is in place.

4. When is it expected that:
- (a) Phase two (4-bed units) of the Clois na Droimmaine estate, and  
**Reply: Tuath Housing, the AHB that is involved in the Clós na Droimmaine development, has advised that the completion of the houses has been delayed due to ongoing contractual matters. Monaghan County Council has asked Tuath Housing to provide a further update as soon as possible.**
- (b) remaining apartments in Drummond Rharairc (Dundalk Road) Carrickmacross, will be made available for allocations from Monaghan County Council's waiting list?  
**Reply: North & East Housing Association's best estimate at the moment is that the 12 apartments will be ready for tenants in March 2022. The apartments are substantially complete however NEHA say that they still have a significant way to go in terms of legal paperwork and conveyancing before closing.**
5. What is the up-to-date position on the taking in charge of the Conabury Hill estate in Castleblayney?  
**Reply: An application to take the estate in charge was received by the Local Authority in May 2021. Technical assessments are nearing completion, although an initial evaluation does indicate that remedial works will be required, particularly in respect of the foul and storm water systems. Following the completion of these assessments, the Local Authority will be required to agree a Site Resolution Plan (SRP) with Irish Water before the taking in charge process is completed.**

**Cllr S. Coyle asked:**

6. Can Monaghan County Council give a full update and briefing on the new Fire Station for Ballybay, which has been recommended for Ballybay Fire Services since the mid 1970s, all members of Ballybay Fire Service are to be commended for the excellence of their services to the immediate area, all of County Monaghan and adjoining area's from their central County location of Ballybay, unfortunately their facilities have not been fit for purpose for a lengthy period, can the briefing include target commencement and completion dates, total spend and facilities to be included? **Reply: The need for a new Fire Station in Ballybay has been identified as a priority, and the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management within the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has included this project in the Fire Service 2021 – 2025 Capital Programme.**  
**The new 2 bay fire station will provide modern welfare facilities for fire-fighters, and include a training room, drill tower & yard, watch room, equipment storage capacity and car parking provisions.**  
**A provisional cost plan has been prepared outlining an estimated total build cost of €1.7 million which has been forwarded to the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management for 'Approval in Principle' to advance to Planning Stage. The estimated**

cost, while reflecting both the topographical and flooding challenges of Ballybay Town and surrounding area, is subject to the current cost volatility influencing the construction industry.

Consultants have commenced preparation for a Part 8 Planning application to be lodged in Q1 2022. At present the project is targeted to commence construction in Q4 2022 / Q1 2023 subject to approval and will have a build period of 12-14 months.

7. As applications have been submitted to Monaghan County Council for over two years now, by the residents of the Alders Housing Estate, Clones Road, Ballybay and the Carrabarra Island, Smithborough, for Taking in Charge, can Monaghan County Council give a full update on the processing and progress of these applications and when is the process to be completed, as this is having a hugely negative impact on the home owners in each estate in terms of property valuations etc?

**Reply: The Alders and Carrabarra Island housing developments were left unfinished by their respective developers. The Local Authority has previously intervened on a number of occasions to resolve some of the more serious issues relating to the operation of the wastewater systems. Notwithstanding this, some significant infrastructure issues remain.**

The Local Authority has engaged with Irish Water on both of these developments in accordance with the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between both bodies.

At the last meeting, which was held on 16 December 2021, agreement in principle was reached with Irish Water in respect of a Site Resolution Plan (SRP) for The Alders. The SRP proposes significant physical remedial works to the wastewater system, as well as works to the road and footpaths. It is anticipated that Irish Water will formally sign off on the SRP in January, following which the remedial works shall be carried out, and the taking in charge process completed.

The development at Carrowbarra Island has also been the subject of ongoing engagement with Irish Water, including at the meeting on 16 December 2021. Surveys are currently being undertaken to determine what remediation works are required and these shall inform the preparation of the draft SRP. An initial assessment indicates that the defects in this development are not as serious as those identified at the Alders. It is anticipated that the draft SRP will be completed and forwarded to Irish Water for agreement early in the new year.

8. Many trees along roads in County Monaghan are dead, as a result of disease, lightning strikes etc and are now a great danger to road users in wind/storms etc, with Ivy killing many tree's would Monaghan County Council carry out an immediate survey of all dangerous tree's along roadways in the County and encourage land owners and communities to remove Ivy from tree's where possible?

**Reply: With the exception of trees planted within the fence lines of new road projects, the responsibility for the maintenance of hedge rows and trees along public roads lies with the landowner.**

Monaghan County Council does not have the resources to systematically inspect all road verges however should staff become aware of trees that are in a dangerous condition then a notice can be issued to the landowner to make the boundary safe.

9. Can Monaghan County Council give an update on the construction of the Housing Units at Church Street, Ballybay, as there has been a great delay in their delivery, as to when construction will commence and be completed, for allocation to the lengthy waiting lists in Ballybay?

**Reply: This project had to be retendered because the original contractors who tendered for the project had to withdraw due to unforeseen cost increases. When the project was**



retendered the most economically advantageous tender was received from Rodney Brady Construction and the firm has now been appointed to construct two houses on behalf of Monaghan County Council. Work has commenced on site and is currently on programme. The Contractor has engaged with the owners of the neighbouring properties and has completed pre-condition surveys of the surrounding properties and established the site boundary. The derelict fire-damaged structure has been demolished and temporary works are currently being installed on site. After the Christmas break substructure works including the new foundations will commence on site. It is envisaged that the houses will be ready for allocation in Q4 2021.

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

10. To ask Monaghan County Council for an update in relation to the proposed cycle paths from:

- (a) Corlatt roundabout to Collegiate College.
- (b) Ballyalbany to Tydavnet
- (c) Ballyalbany junction to Coolshannagh roundabout.
- (d) Phase 3 to Emyvale village N2 Monaghan to Emyvale.

**Reply: N2 Active Travel**

Clandillon Civil Consulting are continuing to work closely with Monaghan County Council to progress the N2 Active travel schemes. The consultant is working to TII's new standard for active travel schemes on national roads which was released in October of this year. Draft alignments for the four segments are currently in progress, with constraints identified and options being developed.

A topographical survey of the N2 is ongoing and is expected to be completed in Q1 of 2022. This survey information will inform the design process.

Environmental and ecological surveys and assessment will be required as the draft alignment develops. These surveys and assessments are due to commence early in 2022. The design and environmental reports will be submitted for review by the project funders, TII. Once approved the project can proceed to Phase 4 allowing Part 8 planning applications to be submitted in parallel in Q2 of 2022.

The four sections of this project will provide an additional 6.9km of cycle path along the N2 and link up with the proposed Ulster Canal Greenway on the N12 north of the Coolshannagh Roundabout. Funding of €345,000 has been secured for the 4 schemes for 2022.

#### **14. Notices of Motion**

**Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr PJ O'Hanlon seconded:**

1. That Monaghan County Council request the Taoiseach, Michael Martin TD, An Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar TD, Minister Eamon Ryan TD, the Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science, Simon Harris TD, Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD, Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD, all Government Ministers, opposition leaders and all Oireachtas Members, to immediately implement a strategy, in consultation with Mental Health, Survivor Organisations, Employer Organisations, Trade Unions, Teaching Organisations, Student and parent Organisations, to introduce legislation, clearly outlining the responsibilities and penalties regarding Bullying in schools, facilities for care of persons, workplaces and

homes as a priority, due to the devastating impact of Bullying on lives , families and communities.

*Following a short debate on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put the motion to the members and it was agreed. Motion to be circulated to named Office Holders and local Oireachtas Members*

#### 15. Votes of sympathy/congratulations

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

- The family of the late Liam O'Connor, former Principal of Beech Hill College, Monaghan
- Cathal Flynn, Director of Services on the death of his Uncle, Jackie Duffy
- Paul Clifford, Deputy Chief Executive on the death of his mother in law, Eileen O'Harte
- The family of the late Paddy McDonnell, member of the Traveller Accommodation Committee

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

A vote of congratulations and thanks to all those who have worked over the Christmas period in delivering all public services including those who have provided a PCR testing opportunity at Cohan GAA Centre - including on Christmas Day.

#### 16. Conferences

*On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr D Maxwell, 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
Celtic Conferences	Social Media use in Political Campaigns	O'Donovan's Hotel, Clonakilty, Co Cork	04-06 February 2022	<b>Members to confirm attendance</b>

The meeting concluded.

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

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

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