

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 09 May 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

Chair: Cllr A. Campbell, Cathaoirleach

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

Mr. J. Murray, A/Chief Executive; Director of Services, Mr. P. Clifford; A/Director of Services, Mr. Cathal Flynn, Ms. N. Woods and Ms O McConnon; Mr G McMahan deputising for Ms P Monahan; Ms. M. McGarvey, Meetings Administrator & Ms L. Brannigan, Senior Staff Officer.

Apologies: Ms P Monahan, Cllr Kerr Conlon

Sympathy – Jimmy Leonard, RIP:

On the proposal of Cllr A Campbell, seconded by Cllr S Coyle, it was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the wife and family of the late Jimmy Leonard, former Fianna Fáil member of Monaghan Co Council who had passed away on the 13 April 2022.

All members of the Council associated themselves with the vote of sympathy. Cathaoirleach Aidan Campbell stated that Mr Leonard came from a farming background and understood the challenges that face the farming community. Mr Leonard had made a significant mark at both national and local level. He thanked the members and representatives of the Council who had provided a guard of honour at Mr Leonard's funeral. Mr John Murray, Deputy Chief Executive, associated himself and the staff with the vote of sympathy.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

(i) Minutes of Council meeting held on 04 April 2022

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell, seconded by Cllr N Keelan, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 04th April 2022, be confirmed.

Cllr Keelan's comment regarding proposer/seconded for Agenda item 'To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy' was noted.

2. Correspondence.

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

- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D., acknowledging that he had received correspondence regarding the requirement to apply for Electronic Travel Authorisation to travel to N.I.
- Letter from the Office of the Taoiseach, Mr. Micheal Martin, T.D., acknowledging that he had received correspondence regarding the requirement to apply for Electronic Travel Authorisation to travel to N.I.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D., acknowledging that he had received correspondence regarding the war in Ukraine.

- Letter from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., acknowledging that he had received correspondence regarding Carbon Tax which had been forwarded to the Office of the Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohue, T.D.
- Email from the private secretary to the Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohue, T.D. acknowledging that he had received the correspondence regarding carbon tax.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister of State, Mr. Peter Burke, T.D., acknowledging that he had received correspondence regarding the extension and duration of planning permission grants.
- Letter from the Office of the Chief Executive Officer for the Health Service Executive, Mr. Paul Reid, acknowledging that he had received the correspondence regarding the Minor Injury Unit at Monaghan General Hospital which had been forwarded to the HSE Parliamentary Affairs Division.
- Email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D., acknowledging that he had received the correspondence regarding the trolley crisis in Monaghan General Hospital.
- Email from Senator Robbie Gallagher regarding the response from the Minister for Transport, Climate, Environment & Communications, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., following the commencement matter which had been raised in the Seanad in relation to increased funding for roads in Cavan, Monaghan and rural Ireland.
- Email from Mr. Brendan Smith, T.D., regarding an acknowledgement email which he had received from the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D., in relation to the Minor Injury Unit at Monaghan General Hospital.
- Email from the Office of Ms. Niamh Smyth, T.D., regarding the response she received from the Department of Health regarding the Minor Injury Unit in Monaghan General Hospital.
- Email from the office of Ms. Niamh Smyth, T.D., regarding the response she received from the Minister for Transport, Climate, Environment & Communications, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., regarding funding for roads.
- Email from the office of Ms. Niamh Smyth, T.D., regarding the response she received from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., regarding an extension to the duration of planning permission grants
- Email from Mr. Brendan Smith, T.D, regarding representations he made to:
 - The Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D., regarding the Minor Injury Unit.
 - The Minister for Housing Local Government and Heritage, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., regarding an extension to the duration of planning permission grants.
 - The Minister for Transport, Climate, Environment & Communications, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., regarding Eirgrid.
- Resolution from Clare County Council to request that the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D., initiates an independent review of the resourcing of the National Ambulance Service.
- Resolution from Westmeath County Council to write to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., requesting permission for Bord na Mona to allow contractors to harvest turf due to the urgent need for fuel in light of the War in Ukraine.
- Resolution from Westmeath County Council to correspond to all relevant Government Departments to request a further reduction of taxes on fuel.

2.1 The following additional correspondence which had been received after the agenda had issued, was also circulated:

- Email from Ms. June Molloy, Communications Manager, RCSI Hospital Group regarding the Minor Injury Unit, Monaghan General Hospital.

- Resolution from Wexford County Council regarding procurement processes.
- Resolution from Wexford County Council to call on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to introduce financial assistance for the removal of asbestos in residential dwellings.
- Letter from Deputy Matt Carthy, T.D., regarding the North-South Interconnector, One-Off housing planning rules, Monaghan's local road network & the Minor Injuries Unit at Monaghan General hospital.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr P Connolly, seconded by Cllr C Carthy, it was agreed that this Council support Clare Co Council's motion calling on the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly to initiate an independent review of the grossly under resourcing of the national Ambulance Service, the suitability, effectiveness, efficiency of the current dynamic deployment system used by the NAS for deployment of services in Rural Ireland .

On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr N Keelan, it was agreed that this Council request the Government and the Minister for Climate Action, Communication Networks and Transport, Eamonn Ryan TD to allocate additional funding to Monaghan County Council for Road Restoration works in 2022 due to the atrocious condition of many local roads in the County and the huge increase in costs. That Monaghan County Council invite the Transport Minister, Eamon Ryan TD to visit County Monaghan to travel and view the terrible condition of many roads in the County, causing enormous suffering, expense etc to their residences and road users".

On the proposal of Cllr S Conlon, seconded by Cllr C Bennett, it was agreed that this Council question the explanation within correspondence from RCSI Communications Manager, June Molloy as an excuse not to increase opening hours, and that we remind the RCSI that out of the eleven MIU's, Monaghan is the only facility that is not operating on a 12 / 7 daily basis. We call once again for the equality of services across all MIU's and that Monaghan General Hospital is extended accordingly.

3. To consider Section 183 notice relating to the Sale of Industrial Site, Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross.

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services, referred to the Section 183 notice dated 19th April 2022 which had been circulated in relation to the Sale of Industrial Site, Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross. Mr. Clifford advised members that the S183 had been previously endorsed by the members. It is being presented again as one of the original partners has withdrawn at contract stage.

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan seconded by Cllr C Carthy it was agreed that the Council approve the Sale of Industrial Site, Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross in accordance with the terms of notice dated 19th April 2022 and attached site location map under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

4. To consider the Chief Executive's Reports prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) in respect of the following:

A Hughes, Senior Planner, referred to the Part VIII report which had been circulated in respect of the construction of a two bay fire station (including a training tower) and ancillary accommodation and site works at Corrybrannan, Ballybay, Co Monaghan. He advised that no submissions had been received during the public consultation period.

On the proposal Cllr S. Gilliland, seconded by Cllr S Coyle, it was agreed to approve the construction of a two bay fire station (including a training tower) and ancillary accommodation and site works at Corrybrannan, Ballybay, Co Monaghan as detailed in the Chief Executive's Reports prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

5. To note the Annual Financial Statements and approve Over expenditure and Transfers to Capital Account for the Financial Year 2021

The members noted the Annual Financial Statement for 2021 which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. Ms O McConnon, A/Head of Finance, advised members that the Council recorded a surplus of €1,995,589 for the year ended 31 December 2021 resulting in a cumulative surplus of €130,402. This is the first time since 2005 that the Council has recorded a cumulative surplus on the revenue account. The D/Chief Executive, Ms. McConnon and Directors of Services responded to queries from the members.

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell seconded by Cllr H McElvaney it was agreed to note the Draft Annual Financial Statement (AFS 2021) and to approve over-expenditures and transfers to Capital Account, as per schedules submitted to the Members, as follows:

Over Expenditure

Division		Expenditure	Income	Net Position
		(Over)/Under	Over/(Under)	
		Estimates	Estimates	
		2021	2021	2021
		€	€	€
A	Housing and Building	-1,214,226	1,625,216	410,990
B	Roads Transportation & Safety	-3,052,549	2,886,927	-165,622
D	Development Management	-1,810,600	2,097,991	287,391
E	Environmental Services	-89,614	54,668	-34,946
F	Recreation & Amenity	-491,604	354,357	-137,247
H	Miscellaneous Services	-3,326,099	5,106,563	1,780,464
		-9,984,692	12,125,722	2,141,030

Transfer to Capital

	Transfer	Budget	Difference
	Amount	Provision	
Urban Roads General Maintenance CMX/ CBY	€69,639	€0	-€69,639
Regional Lighting Running Cost	€71,055	€71,055	€0

Local Lighting Running Cost	€115,609	€115,609	€0
Clones Sports Project	€30,000	€30,000	€0
Industrial and Economic Development	€150,000	€150,000	€0
Clones/ Ballybay MD Allocation	€335,840	€335,840	€0
Monaghan MD Allocation	€335,840	€335,840	€0
Carrickmacross/ Castleblayney MD Allocation	€335,840	€335,840	€0
Landfill Scotch Corner Operation	€6,646	€6,646	€0
Fire Service Officers and General	€38,517	€38,076	-€441
Fire Service Gratuities	€50,000	€50,000	€0
Loan Charges Swimming Pool	€107,000	€107,000	€0
Irrecoverable Rates	€538,000	€538,000	€0
Local Election	€20,000	€20,000	€0
Transfer to/ from Capital Account	€100,000	€100,000	€0
Members Gratuity Scheme	€100,000	€100,000	€0
Disability Initiatives	€10,000	€10,000	€0
Monaghan Town Improvement	€29,003	€0	-€29,003
Civil Defence General	€15,103	€0	-€15,103
Broadband officer	€12,500	€0	-€12,500
Maintenance of Networks & PCs	€175,000	€100,000	-€75,000
Town Events Carrickmacross - Castleblayney	€38,011	€0	-€38,011
Promotion of Local Community	€50,000	€0	-€50,000
Heritage Officer Recoupable	€2,756	€0	-€2,756
General Maintenance Fire Station	€8,244	€0	-€8,244
Library Headquarters	€46,085	€23,530	-€22,555
Peace Campus Loan Charges	€58,333	€75,647	€17,314
Workshop & Overhead	€338,086	€0	-€338,086
Carrickmacross/ Castleblayney MD Office	€1,476	€4,173	€2,697
Burial Grounds Coolshannagh Graveyard	€797	€0	-€797
New Offices Provision	€500,000	€200,000	-€300,000
Financial Management System	€55,496	€18,499	-€36,997
Covid Expenditure	€200,000	€0	-€200,000

6. To consider nominations to the Audit Committee

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell, seconded by Cllr R. Aughey, it was unanimously agreed that Ms Siobhán McArdle, Director, McArdle Skeath, be appointed to the Council's Audit Committee to replace Ms Fern Ross.

The members thanked Ms Ross for all her excellent service to the Council's Audit Committee since she was appointed to the Committee in 2014.

7. To receive presentation from Library Services on Key Projects

Ms Deirdriu McQuaid, Senior Executive Librarian, joined the meeting to deliver a detailed presentation showcasing the key projects and programmes of the library service, providing an opportunity for the members to learn more about the multifaceted services being delivered to the community. These included the Sensory Service Programme, STEAM programme, Right to Read programme, Services to older people (new memory collection), LGBTi programme, Local history and genealogy services and Europe Direct. Ms McQuaid

highlighted the extent of outreach and community support activity the service had engaged in during the Covid19 pandemic, its close links with the county's schools and work it was engaged in with Down Syndrome and dementia services in the County. The overview of the services was accompanied by display of resources.

The Cathaoirleach and members thanked the entire library services team for the excellent services they provide to people in their communities, the value of which had been particularly evident during the Covid 19 lockdown.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms McQuaid for her comprehensive presentation to the meeting.

8. To consider Environment Fund 2022 Allocations

The members noted the report circulated which recommended the allocation of funding under the Environment Fund 2022. Ms S Finnegan, Environmental Services, advised that the number of applications received in 2022 under this fund is 100 applications. The report recommends the allocation of €65,750 to fund 99 out of the 100 applications. The final application will receive funding under a more appropriate funding scheme.

On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle seconded by Cllr D Maxwell it was agreed that the Council approve the allocation of funding under the Environment Grant Scheme 2022, as per the report circulated with the Agenda.

9. To approve the LCDC Annual Report 2021

Ms O Brady, SEO, Community Section, informed members that LCDCs are required under Section 128B of the Local Government Act 2001 to prepare, adopt and submit an annual report to the local authority each year in respect of the performance of its functions in the previous calendar year. The Annual Report was adopted by the LCDC at its meeting on 12 April 2022.

On the proposal of Cllr C Bennett seconded by Cllr S Coyle it was agreed that the Council approves the LCDC Annual Report for 2021.

10. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 26th April 2022 which had been circulated.

Following discussion on correspondence from Monaghan Integrated Development, it was agreed to ascertain the current situation in other local authorities, along with updated guidance from the Department and revert to members in due course.

On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan seconded by Cllr P Treanor it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 26th April 2022 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

11. To fix a date for Annual Council Meeting

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell seconded by Cllr C Bennett, it was agreed that the Annual

Meeting of Monaghan County Council would be held on Monday, 20 June 2022 at 3.00 pm.

12. To consider invite from Prince Edward Island to Irish Settler Days Celebrations in June 2023

The members noted the correspondence from Patrick Duffy, Fort Augustus, Prince Edward Island circulated with the Agenda inviting a delegation to the Irish Settler Days celebration in June 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna seconded by Cllr D Maxwell it was agreed that, the Cathaoirleach, a representative from each political grouping and representation from the executive would attend.

13. To receive Management Report - April 2022

The members noted the Management Report for the month of April 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 A McCooey seconded by Cllr C Bennett it was agreed that this Council provide all details pertaining to the cost of the 'Period Poverty' project from commencement date up to one month before the annual budget meeting so that members can consider and make appropriate provisions in the budget to fund and transition this project from a pilot scheme to a long term basic service provided to the women of Co Monaghan.

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell seconded by Cllr P Connolly it was agreed that this Council write to Bus Eireann to voice our total disgust at the condition of the toilets in Monaghan Bus Station on the weekend of 7/8 May 2022. The issue which was brought to the attention staff by a group of American Tourists using the station, was met with total indifference.

On the proposal of Cllr S Conlon seconded by Cllr D Maxwell it was agreed that following the meeting with Bus Eireann representatives, Adrian O'Loughlin and Michael McKeown at Monaghan Municipal District's meeting in February where appeals were made by members seeking an improvement in services at the Monaghan Bus Station, as well as capacity and punctuality issues, that this Council seek a meeting with Anne Graham, CEO of the National Transport Authority, to discuss the failure in resolving these issues.

14. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events

The members noted the reports from Cllrs. Conlon, Connolly, Keelan, Maxwell and McKenna in relation to their attendance at the following conference/training events:

- LAMA - Spring Seminar – Co. Kilkenny
- AILG – Annual Training Conference – Co. Donegal
- AILG – Social Media and I.T. Awareness Training – Co. Westmeath
- Housing for All – Housing in Ireland – Co. Cork

15. Business submitted by Chief Executive

The Deputy Chief Executive informed members that there were no matters for consideration

under this item.

16. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 04th April 2022

There were no matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 04th April 2022.

On the proposal of Cllr S Conlon, seconded by Cllr C Bennett, it was agreed to write again to Minister Heather Humphreys TD requesting of the Minister an opportunity for a delegation to meet her and relevant officials to discuss issues of significant importance affecting our constituents including the North South Interconnector and the Monaghan Hospital Minor Injuries Unit.

17. To receive update on N2 National Primary Road Schemes

Mr G. McMahon, A/Senior Engineer, informed members that Monaghan County Council had received confirmation from TII that no further funding for the Clontibret to the Border scheme will be made available in the current year. He advised that Monaghan County Council are continuing negotiations with Jacobs in relation to contract suspension.

On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna, seconded by Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, it was agreed that the Roads Department would make contact with the Shared Island Unit seeking an update on correspondence recently issued to them.

18. To receive update on North South Interconnector project

The following correspondence was received in relation to the North South Interconnector:

- Email from the Minister for Social Protection and Community & Rural Development, Ms. Heather Humphreys, T.D., regarding the resolution she received in relation to Eirgrid which she forwarded to the Taoiseach, Mr. Micheal Martin, T.D. and the Minister for Climate Action, Communications and Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D.
- Email from Ms. Niamh Smyth, T.D. regarding correspondence she received regarding Eirgrid which she forwarded to the Minister for Transport, Climate, Environment & Communications, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D.

19. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project

No further update on the Ulster Canal project.

20. Questions

Cllr. S Coyle asked:

1. Can Monaghan County give a full update on the application from the owner occupiers and residences of the Alders Housing Estate, Clones Road, Ballybay to have the Estate Taken in Charge by Monaghan County Council, submitted in Q4 2019 and as to when the process can be completed?

Reply: A Site Resolution Plan was agreed with Irish Water in December 2021. A tender notice to carry out the identified remedial works recently closed on e-tenders, and

tender responses are presently being assessed with a view to completing the works in the near future. Thereafter the formal taking in charge process can be completed.

2. Can Monaghan County give a full update on the application from the owner occupiers and residences of the Carrabarra Housing Estate, Scotstown Road, Smithborough to have the Estate Taken in Charge by Monaghan County Council, submitted in Q4 2019 and as to when the process can be completed?

Reply: A mini tender has recently been completed to remedy pump supply defects. A technical assessment has also recently been completed which identified a more comprehensive scope of works needed to remediate water and related services within the estate. It is anticipated that these works will be tendered for in the next 1-2 months. It is not possible at this time to give a definitive date for the completion of the taking in charge of this development.

3. Can Monaghan County give a full update on the application from the owner occupiers and residences of the Dartry Court Housing Estate, Boyher, Rockcorry to have the Estate Taken in Charge by Monaghan County Council and as to when the process can be completed?

Reply: A taking in charge application was received in March 2022 and is currently undergoing a technical assessment. A definitive date for the completion of the taking in charge process cannot unfortunately be given at this stage.

Cllr. R Aughey asked:

4. How much has Monaghan County Council spent on architect consultants in the last 5 years?

Reply: Monaghan County Council have spent circa €1.4 million on Architect led Design Teams and Architects fees in the last 5 years. The Architect Led Design Teams include other consultancy disciplines such as Structural Engineers, Mechanical & Electrical Engineers and Quantity Surveyors.

5. Would it not be prudent if Monaghan County Council employed its own architect for its many projects and services to the county?

Reply: Monaghan County Council employ Architects and Architect Led Design Teams that are suitably qualified to deliver a wide range of services for specific types of projects including Housing, Public Buildings, Conservation Services, Master Planning, Landscaping etc. Architects and Architectural firms possess different skill sets and Monaghan County Council consider the targeted engagement of external architects to match the specific project requirements provides better value for money resulting in higher quality assets.

6. How many County Councils have their own architects on staff?

Reply: Monaghan County Council have not surveyed other Local Authorities to ascertain how many have Architectural departments, however the larger authorities such as Dublin City, Fingal and South

Dublin do have Architectural departments with teams of Architects in direct employment. Monaghan County Council are not aware of any other Tier 5 Local Authority with a professional Architect directly employed.

7. With regard to play facilities and opportunities in the community, what is the council's policy on inclusion for all children including those with physical and /or sensory disabilities or challenges and what steps have been taken to support those children?

Reply: Monaghan County Council is one of a small number of Councils to have an inclusive play policy, which we adopted in 2019. All work on playgrounds since that

time has been done in line with the inclusive play policy. There are fully inclusive playgrounds at Lough Muckno, Ballybay Town Park and Rossmore Park, the latter attracting children from special education units right across Monaghan, Cavan and Louth.

Monaghan County Council has also provided funding to groups such as Downs Syndrome North East and Special Needs Active Parents, who have used the funding to develop amenities which are tailor made to support the children under their care and help them to interact with family members and friends. One example is the excellent sensory riding trail developed at Mullaghmore Equestrian Centre.

Monaghan County Council is currently working in consultation is ongoing with InterACT (Trinity College) and Inclusion Ireland on the design of a Communication Board which will be located at the Rossmore Park Playground. The board will provide communications support and will benefit children or adults who are either pre-verbal or non-verbal and/or have communication difficulties.

8. Can Monaghan County Council outline what actions they have undertaken or plans they have in place to tackle the blight of dog fouling in our communities and can the Council outline when it intends to reinstate the Dog Warden position into active service?

Reply: Following on from our Dog Fouling “Bag It, Bin It” campaign in 2021, joint dog walking patrols have been taking place throughout the county; in towns, villages and parks, on a weekly basis, by the Acting Dog Warden and the Litter Patrol Officer. Dog owners are spoken to informally as part of raising dog fouling awareness and the harmful effects to humans associated with this. Our officers provide dog owners with dog bags which can be used whilst walking their dogs.

Advertisements are placed in the Northern Standards and on social media intermittently, again to remind dog owners “Your Dog, Your Responsibility”. Dog signs and bins are located in all main walking thoroughfares throughout the county with additional combi dog fouling bins being provided over the past six months. These bins are maintained by MD staff, who empty and replenish the biodegradable dog bags. Leaflet drops in estates, where high incident rates occur, also take place if there is a request to do so.

The Acting Dog Warden has been carrying out dog warden duties on a full-time basis since May 2021. Duties related to random checks on dog licenses have been suspended due to the pandemic, but all complaints have been investigated and all other duties have been carried out as much as possible while following Covid protocols.

The Dog Warden position has been advertised internally within the Council and interviews are due to take place within the next month.

Cllr. C Carthy asked:

9. When is it expected that tenancies will commence in the new apartments in Drummond Rharairc and houses in Ard na Radhairc at Nafferty, Carrickmacross?

Reply: Nominations for Drummond Radharc apartments have been sent to the AHB and they have been contacting the individuals directly. North East are working on finalising all legal work and it is expected that tenancies can begin within the next number of weeks

In relation to Nafferty building works are continuing with an expected completion date of October 2022.

- 10. What is the up-to-date status of the 'taking-in-charge' of both Conabury Hill estate, Castleblayney and Alderwood estate, Carrickmacross?**

Reply: The Planning Authority has carried out a technical assessment of the development at Conabury Hill which identified a number of defects relating to roads, footpaths, storm water, and water services. A proposed scheme of works to remedy the defects was recently advertised for tender, with responses to be submitted by 04th May 2022. Following the appointment of the successful tender and completion of the required remedial works, the formal taking in charge application shall be progressed.

In respect of Alderwood, the local authority is continuing to liaise with the developer's agent and are currently awaiting confirmation from the developer that previously identified defects have been resolved before the development undergoes a further assessment.

- 11. When is it expected that the remainder of houses in Radharc an Bhri, Castleblayney, will be allocated to tenants?**

Reply: Nominations for these apartments have been sent to the AHB and they have contacted the individuals directly. Building works are expected to be completed in June.

- 12. Are there any plans to tidy up the exterior of Hope Castle in order to make the building more aesthetically pleasing (i.e. painting the walls, tidy up the surrounds etc.)?**

Reply: The Municipal District Executive, in collaboration with Muckno Community Partnership, intend to undertake some aesthetic maintenance works on the Castle, and its immediate surrounds, in mid-late Q2 2022.

Cllr P. Treanor asked:

- 13. Does Monaghan County Council engage with SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland) on a regular basis?**

Reply: Monaghan County Council have worked very closely with SEAI for a number of years. The Council is a member of the Public Sector Energy Partnership Programme since 2014. Our partnership with the SEAI and their assistance has been a critical contributor in Monaghan County Council exceeding the 33% 2020 energy reduction targets and in achieving 48.56%. This partnership will continue to be critical in achieving our 2030 targets.

- 14. What role will Monaghan County Council play in the roll-out of the retro-fitting programme for housing in County Monaghan?**

Reply: Currently Monaghan County Council's role in relation to any retro fit programme is in relation to the Council's own housing stock only.

For 2022 contract 1 of the Energy Efficiency Retro Fit programme has been tendered and the successful contractors have been appointed. Contract 1 consists of 24 properties with deep retrofit works being completed to each of these properties. These properties are split over the three Municipal Districts. It is anticipated that works will commence in Q2 of 2022 and will be completed in Q4 2022.

Monaghan County Council are currently developing Contract 2 for this year which will be issued to tender in the coming weeks. It is anticipated that contract 2 will consist of 15 properties, however, the exact number is yet to be confirmed and will depend on the availability of Contractor resources.

15. Has Monaghan County Council received the go-ahead to prepare Affordable Housing Schemes or Serviced Sites?

Reply: Monaghan County Council has not received any go-ahead to prepare affordable housing schemes or serviced sites. However, Monaghan County Council has sold some serviced sites in Latlorcan for private development.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

16. What is the up to date position in relation to the local lane improvement scheme (LIS) including funding available, number of lanes on the list, when it is hoped to reopen the scheme for new applications?

Reply: There are 13 lanes remaining on the historical list and a further 118 applications received for lanes in 2017/18 which require assessment to see if they meet the required criteria. Monaghan County Council have received an allocation €351,880 in 2022. There is no plan to open the scheme for new applications until the historic list is completed, the new applications have been assessed and the works completed on the successful applications.

17. In relation to the proposed Ardee to Castleblayney road improvement scheme when is it expected to have a final design for this project, when can landowners and residents affected by this project expect to meet with council officials and appointed agents on site to discuss land take and accommodation works and other associated issues?

Reply: Jacobs is progressing the design of the initial road alignment. This initial design will include details of proposed junctions and side roads, drainage, earthworks, land take requirements and property impacts. The initial design is expected to be ready in Q3 2022, allowing discussions with directly affected landowners to take place from this point. It is still too early in the design of the initial alignment to be able to provide details of the dates for landowner discussions – the project team will be meeting as the design progresses to agree a programme and format for these discussions.

Any feedback and comments received on the initial design will be considered by the project team before a proposed design is finalised. An Environmental Impact Assessment report will be drafted, and CPO documentation will be prepared. The current Phase 3 process (Design & Environmental Evaluation) can then be closed out. The Phase 3 process is expected to be completed in Q2 2023.

Approvals will then be required before the project can be submitted to An Bord Pleanála to start the statutory approval process.

18. What is the up to date position in relation to the proposed flood relief schemes for the county that were announced and planned for some years ago including the proposed scheme for Inniskeen village?

Reply: The Office of Public Works (OPW) have identified schemes under the CFRAM programme which are small in size (<€1m) that are currently being progressed by Local Authorities and are funded in full under the Office of Public Works' flood relief capital works programme. There are 91 Projects that are being developed under this scheme. Further to the identification of these initial 91 schemes a list of schemes have been identified where future funding will be made available under the Office of Public Works' flood relief capital works programme (The full details of scheme under this programme can be found at www.floodinfo.ie). Inniskeen Village has been identified on this list; it is currently unclear when this funding will be made available.

Inishkeen Flood Relief Scheme	Monaghan	Progress the development of a Flood Relief Scheme for Inishkeen	Progress the project-level development and assessment of a Flood Relief Scheme for Inishkeen, including environmental assessment as necessary and further public consultation, for refinement and preparation for planning / exhibition and, if and as appropriate, implementation. The proposed measure consists of a series of flood embankments and walls. Hard Defence would also include a 253m long section of raised road where space is restricted for walls or embankments. The raising of the road would require that the soffit level of a critical bridge structure be raised in conjunction with the road raise. These hard defences would protect to the 1% AEP fluvial flood event with an average height of 1.36m and a total length of 0.64 km.
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See below overview of proposed scheme:

- 19. What is the up to date position in relation to the proposed improvement works to be carried out at the very dangerous Tullyvaragh junction on the N2?**

Reply: A Part 8 was advertised on 20th Jan 22, but uncertainty as to the line and junction strategy of the Preferred Option of the N2 Ardee to Castleblaney scheme has led to withdrawal of planning. The final design will have a bearing on how the Tullyvaragh Safety Scheme will progress. The N2 Ardee to Castleblaney final line and junction strategy is expected in mid-summer, 2022. An online option at this location will eradicate the identified safety issues as the minor/major road junction will be extinguished.

- 20. What is the up to date information in relation to the new tenant purchase scheme in terms of income and other qualifying conditions etc.?**

Reply: New Regulations were issued early in 2022 regarding changes to the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016 and came into effect on 1st February 2022. S.I. No. 776/2021 - Housing (Sale of Local Authority Houses) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (irishstatutebook.ie)

The two main changes were:

i. Minimum income requirements: The minimum income required for an applicant to be eligible to apply under the scheme has been revised downward from €15,000p.a. to €12,500 p.a.

This change will ensure persons whose pension is their primary source of income can now apply under the scheme. The change only applies to pensions – other social welfare payments may only be regarded as secondary income.

ii. Time receiving social housing supports: The period of time tenants will be required to be in receipt of social housing support to be considered eligible under the scheme has been changed from one to 10 years.

In the case of joint tenancies, both tenants must be in receipt of social housing support for at least 10 years before being eligible to apply.

However, before these changes can be implemented Local Authorities are awaiting an

update to the Ministerial Direction issued under Sections 24(3) and (4) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 which gives direction to all housing authorities concerning the manner in which each authority shall determine reckonable income for the purposes of the purchase of houses by tenants under Part 3 of that Act.

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

- 21.** As the Clones Road is a major arterial national traffic route, positioned alongside multiple residential units and housing estates, will the Council seek from Transport Infrastructure Ireland to undertake a traffic safety assessment with a view to installing traffic calming measures including the installation of a pedestrian crossing between the Oriel Road junction and entrance to Knockroe Glen?

Reply: The Clones Road has been the subject of a number of safety assessments in recent years and traffic calming measures have been implemented in accordance with the design standards and TII approvals with the most recent being in 2017 which included inter alia the provision of a traffic island 35m east of the N54 Junction with Oriel Way within the road median.

In addition, Monaghan County Council recently conducted a 2-day road traffic survey along the N54 close to the Oriel Way junction. This survey recorded the average daily traffic volume as 12,981 AADT. The average speed recorded was 51kph and the 85th percentile speed was 59kph (a high level of compliance). Also, the Gardai have confirmed that enforcement exercises have been carried out on this section of the N54 with low numbers of violations recorded.

As part of the Active Travel programme, it is planned to develop a Mobility Plan for Monaghan town that will review all routes through the town (including N54) with the intention of improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Work on this plan has commenced.

When the mobility plan is in place the Active Travel unit will seek funding to implement any schemes identified in the plan. The N54 will be a high priority in this regard.

- 22.** Further to the absence of a response to the following query previously presented at an Irish Water Elected Reps clinic on March 14th, I ask this Council what plans are in place regarding the current waste-water pipe and discharge infrastructure that serves the ten houses at Cois Chnoic, Pound Hill Monaghan that lies exposed down a field behind these dwellings towards the Mall Rd. and that presents the potential for considerable environmental damage?

Reply: This is not an Irish Water asset but requires works to enable it to meet taking in charge standard. Monaghan County Council are engaging with the owner of the property on the mall road with a view to put in place a permanent and sustainable sewer that will serve the properties at Cois Chnoic into the future. A consultant has been engaged and we are working with the developer to obtain a solution.

The temporary pipeline is being monitored and any defects will be repaired to ensure no environmental hazards emerge.

- 23.** For the purpose of creating additional housing availability for the private sector through sale of individual sites or housing developments, what supports are available from the Departments to develop lands at Latlorcan that will enable overdue progress at this extensive plot of land, and also has been the outcome in this regard from the Housing Need Assessment that was expected by the end of March?

Reply: The Central Government proposal included in "Housing for All" is to make a new "Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund" for the provision of serviced sites for housing. The

fund is intended to attract people to build their own homes and support the refurbishment of vacant properties, enabling people to live in small towns and villages in a sustainable way. No detail has been provided by Central Government regarding the proposed scheme and it is not known whether or not the proposed “Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund” will be applicable to the lands at Latlorcan.

Some of the land at Latlorcan might be suitable for development of housing through a Public Private Partnership (PPP). Monaghan County Council has prepared a site selection report for land at Latlorcan and submitted it to the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) for consideration under the national call for PPP proposals. The NDFA will be examining sites throughout Ireland to assess their suitability for inclusion in PPP regional bundles. The outcome of the assessment process will be known later this year. In relation to the HNDA, the Planning Department has commenced this work and a final report will be available end July.

21. Notices of Motion

In the absence of Cllr Aughey, consideration of Notice of Motion 15(3) was deferred to the June Council meeting:

Cllr. P Treanor, Cllr B McKenna, Cllr C Bennett, Cllr S Conlon & Cllr N Keelan proposed, Cllr A McCooey seconded:

- 1. That Monaghan County Council support the Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI) and their campaign to have a right to a Personal Assistance Scheme (PAS). That we write to the Taoiseach, Micheal Martin T.D., Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar T.D., and Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D. and demand that this Government legislate for the right for a disabled person to a Personal Assistant if they require one. What this means is that a person can be hired to act as the disabled person's Personal Assistant (PA), which enables them to do all the tasks that they cannot do themselves. They are not carers and carry out tasks at the direction of the disabled person, therefore enabling the individual to live an independent life.*

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

Cllr. C Carthy proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded:

- 2. That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister of Social Protection, Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D. and the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, Ms. Catherine Martin T.D., to find a solution which would allow artists with disabilities to be in receipt of the Basic Income for Artists payment without it affecting their disability supports and requests the introduction of a pilot scheme for artists with disabilities, to co-exist for the duration of the Basic Income for Artists pilot scheme, which would remove the weekly earnings limit & means test from those in receipt of disability supports.*

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

Cllr. A McCooey proposed, Cllr PJ O’Hanlon seconded:

4. *That Monaghan County Council writes to the Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Heather Humphries T.D., to request her consideration to extend the fuel allowance as a year-round payment for its current recipients, until such time when we see a significant reduction in cost of living.*

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

Cllr. S Coyle proposed, Cllr A McCooey seconded:

5. *That Monaghan County Council request the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. Darragh O’Brien T.D. and the Government to immediately introduce changes to the qualification criteria and increase the income limits to the Social Housing Support application process, while acknowledging the Social Housing Assessment (Amendment) Regulation 2021 (Statutory Instrument no 116 of April 2021) changes, the huge increase in building costs in recent times, accommodation rent increases and the current qualification criteria for Social Housing Support are resulting in many families finding themselves in very difficult and stressful situations, a position of limbo in relation to permanent housing accommodation across Ireland.*

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

22. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

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

Declan Nelson, Former County Manager on the death of his wife, Mary Nelson, Clover Hill, Monaghan Town, County Monaghan on Wednesday 27th April 2022.

Bernie McBrien, Motor Tax on the death of her Mother, Mary King, Cooltrimegish, Castleblaney, Co. Monaghan on Tuesday, 13th April 2022

Gavin Sheridan, Part-time Fire Fighter, Ballybay Fire Station on the death of his wife, Elaine Sheridan, 67 Wylie’s Hill, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan on Sunday 24th April 2022.

The Doran Family, Doohamlet, on the death of Pat Doran, former employee of Monaghan County Council.

The family of the late Fr Pat McHugh, former Parish Priest in Castleblaney.

The Byrne family, Lisnaclea, Carrickmacross on the sad passing of their daughter Aoibhe RIP

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

John McGeough and Peter Duffy, Bawn Handball Club on winning the 2022 Emerald Masters All Ireland handball title.

Monaghan Collegiate School students, Louise McChesney & Hannah Potts who are through to the world final in the Junk Kouture competition in Abu Dhabi later this year.

Paul McPhillips and Judith Caffrey (Andersons Pub, Drum Village) on their appearance on RTE's 'The Great House Revival'.

All those elected to the Assembly last week and note the historic outcome, where, for the first time in 101 years, a nationalist party was returned as the largest party.

23. Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell seconded by Cllr B McKenna it was agreed that the Council be represented at the following training event by the members listed.

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
AILG	Active Moderation and Connecting with Constituents	Online	27.05.22	Cllr Colm Carthy Cllr Cathy Bennett Cllr Brian McKenna Cllr Pat Treanor Cllr Noel Keelan
AILG	Housing for All – Pathway 3 & 4	Online	10.06.22	Cllr Brian McKenna Cllr Pat Treanor
AILG	Finalising your Development Plan	Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone	16.06.22	Cllr Paudge Connolly Cllr Seamus Coyle Cllr Brian McKenna Cllr Noel Keelan

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____