

Municipal District of Monaghan

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan Municipal District held in Mtek 1 Building, Knockaconny on Monday, 21st February 2022 at 10am.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Maxwell presided.

Present: Cllrs. Cathy Bennett, Brian McKenna, Paudge Connolly, Seamus Treanor, Sean Conlon and Raymond Aughey,

In Attendance: John Murray, Director of Services, Donal McElwain, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Dermot Deeney, Executive Engineer, Bernie McElvaney, Senior Staff Officer.

At the outset, the members paid glowing tributes to Ms McElvaney and wished her good health and happiness in her retirement. Mr Murray, on behalf of the Executive thanked her for her good work and wished her the very best in her retirement.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

On the proposal of Cllr McKenna, seconded by Cllr. Bennett, it was agreed that the minutes of the Municipal District meeting held on 17th January 2022 be confirmed.

2. Matters arising:

Cllr McKenna advised that Bus Eireann should be attending the full MD meeting at a public session to discuss the issues at Monaghan Bus Station and Cllr Conlon agreed. Cllr Maxwell advised that he will bring the Bus Eireann representatives into the full meeting.

Cllr Bennett requested an update on Hollywood lake to which Mr McElwain responded that he had met the committee again to finalise and agreed proposals and hoped works would be complete in Quarter 3, 2022. He added that a feasibility study will be carried out on the Loop Walk. Cllr Bennett stated that if feasible, new members would come on board.

Cllr Conlon asked had a response been received from Irish Water in relation to his question on pipe replacement in Connolly Park to which Mr Deeney advised no response to date.

1. Bus Eireann:

Adrian McLoughlin introduced himself as the Regional Operations Manager for East of Country and Michael McKeown as the Services Delivery Manager for North East.

At the outset, Mr McLoughlin apologised for the failure to respond to correspondence from the Members. Cllr Conlon advised that we had a similar engagement with Bus Eireann reps five years ago regarding the very unsatisfactory service at Monaghan Bus Station. He added that the bus station falls short of an optimum travel experience, an opportunity for a coffee stop and lack of hospitality for people on long journeys, maintenance of the toilet block, a canopy along the front of the building. The hours of operation and no access to toilets is the cause of the bus having to stop at a nearby filling station causing confusion.

Cllr Connolly raised the issue of the telephone not being answered and asked about the possibility of calls being transferred to the national number. Cllr Treanor stated that it was a national disgrace,

that people who had travelled in third world countries had never seen a bus station as filthy, with the condition of the toilets absolutely disgusting.

All members reiterated the poor conditions of the bus station.

Mr McLoughlin stated that the coffee service is a private contract with CIE and they are in discussions to re-open in the next couple of weeks. He added that they are looking to re-open all waiting areas, he accepts that it needs a lot of investment to bring up to standard and they are seeking funding from NTA and the government.

In relation to the lack of phone service, he advised that there is a national number 0818 836611 manned seven days a week. Cllr Maxwell stated that the old number should come down from social media and the new number put up.

In relation to the re-introduction of the early morning service, he advised that we need to look at passenger demand. Cllr Maxwell advised that it will take six months to get the confidence back for people to use the service as it was so unreliable.

Mr McLoughlin advised that they have now introduced seat reservation online and if there is an issue with a breakdown the person is alerted via email.

Cllr Aughey will welcome all positive development and hopefully services will be back to normal.

Mr McLoughlin stated that Bus Eireann want to get us involved in terms of stakeholder engagement and to meet more frequently. Cllr Maxwell stated that as issues arise, we will email you and plan to meet in one years' time or as the need arises.

4. Report from Municipal District Co-ordinator:

Mr McElwain outlined his report to the members.

Cllr Aughey asked would the Broad Road Car park be completed by November this year to which Mr McElwain responded that we would expect to have it finished in autumn.

Cllr McKenna asked would we be able to complete all the roads on the roads programme this year or possibility of an extra road to which Mr McElwain responded that the allocation has been received and once tendered and all information received we will be in a position to give full clarification but advised that indications are that we will not get all roads completed.

Cllr Conlon asked when the signage at the Margaret Skinnider roundabout would be installed to which Mr McElwain responded that he will follow up with Roads Section.

Cllr Conlon asked is there not an onus on An Gardai to keep the traffic flowing in the event of traffic lights breakdown and asked for a report for next meeting on the setting up of a regime/ a plan in place in the event of traffic lights break down.

Cllr Treanor requested an intermittent light at the Diamond and also a yellow box at this junction and DV8.

5. Questions and Responses:

Cllr Aughey asked:

- 1) Could you give me a detailed timeline off the pedestrian crossing in Glaslough Village?

Do we envision that the pedestrian crossing in Glaslough is to happen this year? Are there going to be traffic calming measures installed as well as the pedestrian crossing in Glaslough to deal with speeding?

Response: It is planned to go to tender for the construction by end of February 2022 with the works to be completed by May 2022. Advance warning signage will be installed. No other traffic calming measures are proposed.

- 2) Can we give Beautiful Bragan some help with services on the 2nd April with the planned walk in Bragan?

Response: The Monaghan MD will contact Beautiful Bragan to investigate what assistance the council can offer within their remit.

- 3) Could the Monaghan MD ask the Roads section to investigate the provision of pedestrian crossings in Slieve Beagh, Scotstown, Balinode, Tydavnet and Monaghan town in relation to pedestrian safety under the active travel scheme?

Response: A request for funding for a study of the proposed areas can be submitted to the NTA. However, the annual NTA application for 2022 has been submitted and the funding has been received. Therefore, NTA funding for this study may not be available in 2022.

- 4) Could we also ask the active travel unit to see if it is possible to put a footpath on the L1610 Mullaghmore West all the way out from Ballinode village to the bridge on the main Rd to include pedestrians and cyclists. This measure would help improve cyclist and pedestrian movements and as a result help slow traffic on this busy rd.

Response: The Active travel team can carry out a preliminary analysis on the L1610 Mullaghmore West to identify whether a footpath/cycle path is feasible. Funding for the detailed design and any proposed works may not be available in 2022 as any application will be subject to NTA approval.

- 5) Could we get an update on the greenway in Monaghan town in relation to the new improvements mooted?

Response: Monaghan County Council Active Travel Unit are currently progressing the detailed design of the upgrade of the Monaghan Town Greenway. The current delivery plan breaks the Monaghan Town Greenway up into 3 sections:

- **Section A - Armagh Road to Old Cross Square**
- **Section B - Old Cross Square to the Glen Road**
- **Section C - The Glen Road to the Threemilehouse Road. The detailed design of Sections A & C will be completed in house by the Active Travel Unit. These works will include the repair of fencing, upgrades to existing drainage, new surfacing, public lighting and street furniture.**

Due to the level of interaction between vulnerable road users and town centre traffic at this location. The upgrade works to Section B (Mall Road) will be

undertaken by a Consultant. The Consultants will consider the existing layout and outline a number of options as to how this section can be improved to make it safer and more appealing to less experienced cyclists.

The programme for the delivery of Section A is as follows:

- Feb 2022 - Detailed Design
- March 2022 - Procurement of Contractor
- April - July - Construction.

Once the detailed design of Section A is complete, the detailed design of Section C will commence with anticipated programme for delivery as follows:

- March - April 2022 - Detailed Design
- May 2022 - Procurement of Contractor
- June - September - Construction

The programme for Section B is as follows:

- Feb 2022 - Appointment of Consultant
- March - April 2022 - Option Selection & Concept Development
- May 2022 - Preliminary Design
- June - July 2022 - Detailed Design & Procurement
- August - November 2022 - Construction

Cllr McKenna asked:

- 1) When will we have a report from the planning office in relation to telecommunications mast on Killygoan as requested by notice of motion at our September meeting in 2021?

Response: A letter was issued by the Planning Authority to ESB Telecoms in September 2021 under S.8 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

A formal response was received in October 2021 with the summarised response of ESB Telecoms being as follows:

- The mast tower benefits from pre-1960 status i.e. it was in place prior to the coming into force of the Planning Act in 1963.
- Significant maintenance work has taken place in 2021 including but not limited to strengthening the tower legs, upgrading antennae by replacing old with new to avail of new technologies. Further similar works are scheduled to take place.
- As of September 2021, there were four operators on the mast: Vodafone, Three Ireland, Eir Mobile, and ESBT. Each operator has a range of antenna / equipment on the mast.
- All works to date have been carried out within the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the exemptions contained within the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and in particular the provisions of Class 31.
- The site continues to form part of a vital communications network serving Monaghan and the wider area.

The Planning Authority have no evidence to refute the response of the ESB.

Cllr McKenna expressed disappointment at this response and asked had the Planning Authority taken photographs of what is on the mast so that they can compare/monitor when works are being carried out at the mast. Cllr Connolly fully supported Cllr McKenna and asked that we write to the Planning Authority and advise that the Applicant should be requested to remove the illegal mast while seeking retention permission. He added that photographs should be taken of all masts in the county.

- 2) Can we have an update on progress of the provision of a pedestrian bridge at the Horseshoe bridge and likewise on the dangerous bridge at Ballyalbany? When will we have the designs? When is it likely works will commence? and what is the expected completion date to ensure we do not lose the funding?

Response: The tender for the design consultant for both bridges is due back on Friday 18th February 2022. It is expected to have the design and contract tender docs completed by Q4 2022. Works will commence and be completed in 2023.

Cllr Conlon asked:

- 1) As outlined in the current Capital Programme, €70,000 is indicated for spending on overdue upgrades at the Belgium Park football pitch; what works are proposed and is there a timeline that will create minimum impact during the playing season?

Response: This is a prebudget estimate. When a suitable funding measure is announced a funding application will be made detailing what works are to be complete in compliance with the funding criteria. No current funding available.

- 2) As outlined in the current Capital Programme, what progress is occurring with the proposed housing developments identified as Stage 4 and 5 of implementation:

30 houses at Knockcarrick Annyalla,
14 houses at The Meadows Emyvale,
17 houses in Monaghan Town,
9 designated sheltered houses in Monaghan Town.

Response: 30 houses at Knockcarrick Annyalla

The decision to grant Planning Permission for the proposed houses was made by Monaghan County Council on 27 January 2022.

As there was a submission received during the statutory consultation period associated with Planning there is a possibility that the decision to grant Planning Permission could be appealed to An Bord Pleanala. If there is no appeal to An Bord Pleanala then the Developer would hope to commence the houses in the summer of 2022 and complete the houses in late 2023.

14 houses at The Meadows Emyvale

Planning Permission and funding approval is in place for 14 houses at The Meadows, Emyvale. The construction of the houses commenced in 2021 and the Approved Housing Body (AHB) Tuath Housing advise that it is intended that the

houses will be completed in two phases with handover of the first phase in late summer of 2022 with the remainder to be completed towards year end of 2022.

17 houses in Monaghan Town

Planning Permission and funding approval is in place for 17 houses in Monaghan Town to be provided in conjunction with Cooperative Housing Ireland AHB. Monaghan County Council has been advised that contracts have been signed and it is intended that the development will commence before the end of Q1 of 2022 with completion anticipated in early 2023.

9 designated sheltered houses in Monaghan Town

Planning Permission for the 9 single-storey houses proposed was granted in 2021. Cluid Housing AHB has advised Monaghan County Council that a favourable submission has been received from the Developer, they hope to reach agreement soon and submit an application for funding.

It is anticipated that the 9 houses will commence before year end of 2022 with a construction period of approximately 12 months.

- 3) Following recently completed upgrade works at the toilet block and soon to be completed cycle trail, what additional funding streams have been applied for, or are pending outcomes that will enhance the visitor experience at Rossmore Park?

Response: There are no live funding applications at this time. However, additional works at Barnhill Lake Amenity area will be delivered as part of the Family Cycle trail project. In addition to this, heritage interpretation and trail signage will be installed by end April which will greatly enhance the visitor experience in the park.

A Conservation Management Plan for heritage/historical sites within the park is currently being developed. It is envisaged that a key output of the plan will be the development of a Priority List of sites that require conservation works which can be used to access heritage funding in the future.

6. Motions:

“Following Government launch of the Town Centre First Policy last week, can Monaghan Municipal District confirm when it is intended to recruit the network of town Regeneration Officer to drive future development”

Cllr Aughey

Cllr Aughey outlined the Motion which was seconded by Cllr Maxwell and agreed by all members.

Cllr Aughey asked for an update on funding and when is it going to happen. Mr Murray responded that the Policy has just been announced and no circular received on recruitment of officer or budget. He will come back to the members when he receives further correspondence from the Department.

Cllr Conlon asked for an update on Mill Street, added that great work was done on capturing five derelict dwellings in town centre and we should be writing to the Department with

another five derelict buildings and seek funding to purchase these. Mr Murray responded that there is no definite use for Mill Street and will be making a decision in next two months. Cllr McKenna stated that we should introduce penalties to Derelict Site owners.

“That this council will investigate a serviced land initiative for the Clones and Ballinode roads to enable residents on these roads to connect to the public sewers, to also allow future development on these roads, and that town side location if needed in the expansion of our town to achieve the critical mass that seems to be needed for towns going forward. That this report will be presented to this MD in due course for the consideration of the members on how to proceed”

Cllrs David Maxwell, Paudge Connolly, Seamus Treanor and Raymond Aughey

Cllr Connolly outlined the motion and all members agreed that a Report be sought from Water Services and when Report comes back, they will take it forward and lobby for the development of our town.

7. Urgent Business:

Cllr Maxwell read a motion which was proposed by Cllr Connolly and seconded by Cllr Treanor:

“That this Municipal District takes immediate steps to spend the remnants of the €500,000 flood relief which was granted for flood relief a number of years ago”

Cllr Conlon outlined the following Motion which was seconded by Cllr McKenna:

“That this Council proceeds without further delay the implementation of flood mitigation / drainage works as first proposed in the Tobin Consulting Report of 2001 beside Monaghan Shopping Centre”

Cllr Conlon stated that the three storms had a massive impact on our drainage system and paid tribute to the outdoor staff on their good work. He requested that this council proceed without further delay the implementation of flood mitigation/drainage works as first proposed in the Tobin Consulting Report of 2001 beside Monaghan Shopping Centre. He added that we need a plan of action to get this drainage bottleneck sorted.

Mr McMahon stated that a national study CFRAMS was carried out. A priority List was created, and Monaghan was not on the list. An allocation of €500,000 was received from the OPW for realigning and relaying flood alleviation. Money has been spent on a detailed design and a Part 8 application. On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Bennett and agreed by all the members that we write to the OPW, attach photographs and ask can this allocation be spent on flooding at Credit Union. Mr McElwain advised that we are currently investigating the Shambles and we will have a report for the April meeting.

Cllr Aughey read out a letter re speeding issues on the Emyvale road out of Glaslough village and was advised that it should be brought to the Speed Limit committee.

8 Sympathy:

Sympathy was extended to the following:

The Ward Family on the passing of Philomena Ward, Castleshane.

The Kinsella Family on the passing of Billy Kinsella, employee of Wexford County Council.

The Leonard family on the passing of their son, Aiden.

The Hunt Family on the passing of Peter Hunt.

The Macklin Family on the passing of Margaret Macklin, Latlurcan.

Dated this 21st day of February 2022

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____

Meetings Administrator