

Ceantar Bardasach Carraig Mhachaire Rois – Baile Na Lorgan

Comhairle Contae Mhuineachain



The Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblayney

Monaghan County Council

Minutes of proceedings of MD Monthly Meeting held in Carrickmacross Civic Office, Riverside Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan on Monday 28th November 2022 at 10:00am.

Present: Cathaoirleach Aidan Campbell

Cllrs. Aoife McCooey, Colm Carthy, Noel Keelan, PJ O’Hanlon, Peter Conlon

In Attendance: Carmel O’Hare, A/Director of Services, Damien Thornton, A/District Coordinator, Matthew Lambe, District Engineer, Deirdre Power, Staff Officer, Julieann O’Reilly, Assistant Staff Officer

Cathaoirleach Aidan Campbell opened the meeting by expressing condolences to the family of Ronnie and Jean Hollinger who recently died tragically in a road accident on the N2. Cllr. Campbell commented that this road has claimed many lives. He also commended the blue light services for their response on that night.

Cllr. O’Hanlon concurred with Cllr. Campbell’s comments. He commented that, according to statistics, Monaghan is number two in the country for the most road fatalities, only behind Sligo. Cllr. O’Hanlon stated that this MD, along with MCC, continue to have to fight to complete the Clontibret – Border scheme – he cannot understand this. Cllr O’Hanlon went on to say that he feels that members need to come together or perhaps the current Chairperson could arrange a meeting with the Minister for Transport.

He expressed his sympathy to the families of two former Urban District Council members who passed away in recent times: Former Chairperson Ellie Capaldi (RIP) and Michael Birdy (RIP). Cllr. O’Hanlon commented that Ellie Capaldi (RIP) was a very popular lady who worked hard for the town. He formally proposed that a letter of sympathy is sent to her family.

Cllr. O’Hanlon expresses his sincere condolences on the passing of Mickey Birdy stating he was a popular man and worked very hard.

Cllr. Carthy supported the vote of sympathy to the Hollinger family. He noted that the tragic incident may strengthen the argument to upgrade this road to make it safer.

Cllr. Carthy also wished to lend his condolences to the families of Ellie Capaldi (RIP) and Mickey Birdy (RIP).

Cllr. Keelan wished to be associated with the previous votes of sympathy. He commented on the high number of fatalities on this road. Cllr, Keelan called on the public to be mindful of speeding and other road users.

Cllr. McCooley also wished to be associated with the votes of sympathy. She highlighted how important it is to improve road safety on the N2.

A/Director of Services Carmel O’Hare offered condolences on behalf of the Executive to the families of past UDC members Ellie Capaldi (RIP) and Michael Birdy (RIP).

She noted that Roisin Moore, N2 Project Office, is currently putting a lot of work into progressing the N2 schemes.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. O’Hanlon, the minutes of the In Committee Budget Meeting, held on Monday the 24th of October 2022, were adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr. Carthy and seconded by Cllr. Keelan, the minutes of the October 2022 Monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Monday the 24th of October 2022, were adopted.

2.0 Update - Residential Zoned Land Tax

- Darina Kierans, Planning Section, MCC

Cllr. Campbell queried whether or not the message is getting out there?

Reply – It is starting to. There are advertisements on local radio twice daily.

Cllr. Carthy questioned if there are any benefits to the members attending the upcoming information evening in Carrickmacross? Is it aimed at the public only? Can anything else be done to try and encourage others to share the message? (E.g. – PPN, Regen team etc). Cllr. Carthy commented that the members will get the most contact from the public once the deadline has passed.

Reply – All are welcome to attend. Elected members can help spread the word. All solicitors in the County have been emailed. Any suggestions re: groups to contact about getting the word out is very welcome.

Cllr. Keelan stated that there can’t be much more done than what is already being done. As the deadline nears, people may tune in more.

Cllr. O’Hanlon agreed with Cllr. Carthy’s comments – when the deadline passes, there will be a lot of incoming queries. Cllr. O’Hanlon suggested that there should be an extension period available. He also commented that although he is fully supportive of Residential Zoned Land Tax, there is a need for more private housing.

Reply – Can acknowledge that the date is not ideal with the run up to Christmas, however this is out of our control. A supplementary map will be displayed in May 2023 and there is a mechanism in place for appeals should someone be missed.

Cllr. McCooey asked if there is a database/registry of those who own these lands?

Reply – No, it is up to landowners to verify that they own land.

Cllr. McCooey questioned how land where the landowner is unknown is dealt with on the supplementary map released in May 2023?

Reply – this is not MCC's role.

Cllr. Campbell commented that more zoned lands needs to be opened up for building private housing.

3.0 Presentation

Monaghan Integrated Development – Monaghan Volunteers

- **Sinead Keenan**

Cllr. Campbell expressed thanks for the presentation.

Cllr. Carthy advised that he had attended the event in the Iontas, Castleblayney and had been blown away by the services provided. It seemed that the volunteers get so much out of it.

Cllr. Keelan stated that it was a worthwhile presentation, and that the County would not function without volunteers. Cllr. Keelan noted concerns he has regarding individuals requiring separate Garda Vetting for each organisation.

Reply – This is a legislative requirement. The process has improved -wait times are normally 2-3 weeks.

Cllr. Keelan asked if an idea can be given of the number of volunteers in Monaghan?

Reply – Organisations needing volunteers approach the service and advise what they need. The role is then promoted, and volunteers apply for the position. Approx. 200 -300 people are registered per year.

Cllr. Keelan commented that the local library service would be an excellent for advertising the service.

Cllr. McCooey stated that it is a great service and wondered what skill sets are needed?

Cllr. O'Hanlon noted that the service is based in Monaghan town and wondered if it would be possible to come to Carrickmacross on certain days? He commented on the invaluable work carried out by the service.

Reply – We are conscious there is not as much service to towns outside of Monaghan town. There are not as many drop-in queries as in the past – it is mostly phone calls or emails. There was a previous service in Carrickmacross, pre -Covid, once per month, based in the library. There was a low uptake from “settled” individuals. Most of the volunteers were in

temporary accommodation or asylum seekers and unfortunately unable to commit long-term.

4.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Carthy:

Asked what the opening hours of the public toilets are in Carrickmacross?

Reply – 8am to 8pm.

Queried if contact has been made with Castleblayney Regeneration Team regarding the installation of a livestream camera?

Reply – We are due to meet with the Castleblayney Regeneration Team before Christmas.

Cllr. Keelan:

Commended MCC for the hedge cutting programme, commenting that Carrickmacross town looks very well.

Sought an update regarding the public light at Magee's Cross, Inniskeen

Reply – The supply is on the Dundalk side. We are awaiting costings of connection.

5.0 Correspondence

i. Response from Heather Humphreys T.D. Office

- Unable to attend the proposed meeting with members.

ii. Response from Niamh Smyth T.D. Office – unable to attend the proposed meeting with members.

Cllr. Keelan stated that he understands it is a very busy time. He requested that all local TDs are contacted by the Executive with a view to meeting in January.

iii. Response from HSE – motion regarding Disability Services, Crannóg Centre.

Cllr. Carthy advised that he takes issue with this response. If “safety of persons availing of Disability Services and staff is paramount” , why then remove clinical staff and replace with non-clinical staff?

iv. Thank you letter from An Garda Síochána

Cllr. Campbell wished to acknowledge the work carried out by MD staff at this event.

v. Response from Office of the Tánaiste – motion regarding Newbaze Ireland.

vi. Response from Newbaze Ireland – motion regarding Newbaze Ireland.

Cllr. O’Hanlon stated that the letter seems to say that the issue is the current Covid-19 situation in China including problems travelling to and from China. Cllr O’Hanlon commented that he would have thought if clearance is in place that they would still be in a position to export it? Cllr. O’Hanlon noted the mention of negotiations with the Chinese

authorities. He stated that this has been going on for 3 years now and wondered if anything can be done to help on the Irish side?

On the proposal of Cllr. O'Hanlon and seconded by Cllr. Keelan it was unanimously agreed to issues an invitation to Newbaze Ireland representatives to discuss the matter further, whether this be in committee, or in the public forum.

Cllr. Carthy commended Mr. Doyle and the Newbaze staff for maintaining the property to a good standard.

6.0 MD Coordinator Report

Cllr. Keelan:

Commended A/District Coordinator Damien Thornton and the MD staff team for all the works carried out.

Very concerned about the Inniskeen Bike Rental Scheme although understands it is a difficult issue to resolve, which is no fault of the MD. Welcomed that funding is secured.

Asked if there is good cooperation from landowners regarding the Monaghan Way (Castleblayney - Inniskeen) and welcomed progression of same.

Reply – To date there have been no issues.

Commented that the quality of road maintenance is good in most cases. However, there seems to be a return to the same roads repeatedly.

Questioned if there is a design available yet for Ballynacarry Bridge?

Reply – no design available yet. Archaeological / Site investigations are on-going.

Requested a presentation on where money is being spent on the Active Travel Programme.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Clarified that the planning application has been submitted and it is intended to begin works on CTek II early next year.

Voiced his concerns at how long some works seem to take using the examples of Shirley House Lane Carpark and Carrickmacross Workhouse. He asked if a letter can be sent to Planning Section regarding the Shirley House Lane Car Park and the Local Area Action Plans, asking when we can expect a response?

Expressed his frustration at the waiting time. He stated that all Cllrs. have pushed these projects and he does not know why the wait is so long.

Reply – an email has issued to planning section requesting an update and a response is expected in the coming weeks.

Asked what the status is on the Pedestrian Crossing at Inniskeen Chapel?

Wished to clarify that A/District Coordinator Damien Thornton and District Engineer get works done throughout the year and clarified that he understands that Active Travel is outside of the control of the MD – takes up to 2 years.

Commented that District Engineer Matthew Lambe is one of the best engineers he has worked with to date and A/District Coordinator Damien Thornton is "first class", stating that he feels the issues lie with outside organisations.

Cllr. Carthy:

Commented that nobody is "getting at" the Executive about these projects. He stated that he understands that they take time, however, there is a perception out there that these projects are taking far too long. Noted that costs have significantly increased since funding was received. Stated that the sooner Shirley House Lane Carpark is done the better.

Requested an update on Lurgan Hill footpath.

Reply – the contractor is in place. Works were due to start before Christmas, but it was decided to delay due to traffic concerns during the Christmas season.

Welcomed the pedestrian crossing installed on the Ardee Road at the Nuremore.

Noted that funding was insufficient for Annadrummond. What other projects could this money be used for?

Reply – we are hopeful that the department will agree to the transfer of monies. We are reviewing a number of options pending departmental approval.

Cllr. McCooey:

Commented that she would have liked to have seen mention of The Market House, Castleblayney getting planning permission. Asked what is the next step? Can we have an update?

Reply – The scheme is being delivered centrally by the capital projects team and a monthly update will be requested going forward.

Questioned if the Monaghan Way extends as far as Mullyash?

Reply – Mullyash is a standalone route.

Stated that there are a number of locations in Castleblayney affected by flooding, both urban and rural areas. Asked if anything can be done? Can we ensure that gullies are cleared in drier weather? What is the process when clearing these floods?

Reply – there is a programme in place regarding clearing of gullies.

Cllr. Conlon:

Noted that Shirley House Lane Carpark has been on-going for a number of years.

Stated that he had found it difficult to get parking on the evening of the Christmas Light Switch on. Spoke about future proofing car parking in Carrickmacross and suggested sourcing funding for electrical charge points in the town.

Cllr. Campbell:

Wished to clarify that he feels the MD work is exceptional with the recent success of allocations for Lough Muckno and Rahans lake, commenting that if the MD staff are asked to do something – it will be done.

Requested a comment about Oram Graveyard.

Reply – funding is being sought from Climate Action and Adaptation grants. The issue lies with tree roots growing into pipes,

Asked for an update on the Dundalk Road.

Reply – a number of private lands are involved. Tree roots are growing into pipes. On-going works are occurring.

Stated that Annadrumman is a big project, and we cannot take our eye off this regarding sourcing funding opportunities.

A/Director of Services Carmel O’Hare acknowledged the sense of frustration regarding the pace of works, also noting the many recent changes amongst the staff team. She advised that Carrickmacross – Castleblayney Municipal District will be prioritised.

Cllr. O'Hanlon stated that there is a need to push for funding from the department. He commented that there is a Green Minister currently and wondered if he has any interest in rural roads? Cllr. O'Hanlon stated that members need to do everything in their power to take away responsibility for funding local / tertiary roads from the department.

Cllr. O'Hanlon clarified that his issue does not lie with Roads or the quality of work.

Cllr. Conlon concurred with the above comments.

A/District Coordinator Damien Thornton advised that the MD try their utmost with pothole repairs and road maintenance but noted that these are heavily weather dependent.

Cllr. Keelan stated that a key item to have on the agenda is to propose a meeting with local TDs to discuss these issues.

7.0 Motion

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

'This Municipal District Council calls on the TII to install additional signage on the M1 and N2 road network to include Carrickmacross Town (at exits, junctions, sporadically along route etc) to ensure those travelling to the town are given adequate advanced notice.

'The members also request that consideration be given by the Executive to installing prominent signage prior to each exit for the town on the N2 welcoming motorists to the town. This could be done in conjunction with Council departments (Tourism, Heritage, Arts etc), the Municipal District and the Carrickmacross Chamber of Commerce.'

Cllr Keelan noted that the "Dancing at the Crossroads" sculpture can barely be seen.

Cllr. O'Hanlon noted that it has been tried for years to get a Monaghan sign on the M1, which is under the remit of TII. He stated that he thinks it is important to forward the motion to Monaghan County Council, if agreeable to Cllr. Carthy.

Cllr. McCooey commented that it may be difficult to change road signage and suggested looking at a more artistic approach, using the Castleblayney sign as an example.

Cllr. Conlon concurred with Cllr. McCooey's assessment.

8.0 DOS / CE Orders

The following Orders were noted: CMX-CBY 46/2022; CMX-CBY 47/2022; CMX-CBY-CBY 51/2022; CMX- CBY 52/2022; CMX-CBY 53/2022 and CMX-CBY 54/2022.

9.0 VOC/ VOS

Votes of Congratulations were extended to Donaghmoynne Ladies GFC on reaching the All-Ireland Senior Ladies Football final, to Castleblayney Ladies Faugh's on their quarter final

win in Maastricht, Belgium, to Corduff Gaels GAA Club for reaching the Ulster Club Intermediate Final.

Cllr. Campbell also spoke about the fantastic Christmas Lights Switch On events in Carrickmacross and Castleblayney and thanked the MD and outdoor and technical staff for their help.

Votes of sympathy were extended to Bridget Cooney on the passing of her partner Philip Mc Mahon RIP; Andrew & Mary Capaldi on the passing of Ellie Capaldi RIP; Mary Mulvaney & family on the passing of Liam Mulvaney RIP; Paddy Shevlin & family on the passing of Anne Shevlin RIP, Patrick Waters on the passing of Madge Waters RIP and to Michael Birdy Junior on the passing of his father Michael Birdy Senior.

10.0 A.O.B

Cllr. Carthy:

Following a traffic count carried out at Drummond Etra, can consideration be given to installing "Children at Play" signage in the area? (Behind houses 1-10)

Proposed last March that a sensory zone is introduced for this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Can this be put back on the agenda please?

A traffic count at Lakeview, Keady Road, Castleblayney showed excessive speeding. Traffic calming measures are needed.

Can the MD support an application made by CMETB for additional modular accommodation and request that this application is expediated?

Cllr. McCooey:

At Ard na Lurgan, Castleblayney the playpark is located far away from the estate. Are there any schemes available, for example, for a sensory garden for the green area? Additional bins are needed at this location also.

Cllr. Keelan:

Commended MCC on recent works on the Ballybay Road, Carrickmacross.

Asked if there are any plans for the Dundalk approach road in Carrickmacross? There is a need for traffic calming measures at this location beside the graveyard.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Commended works at Ballybay Road, Carrickmacross and also at the nearby roundabout and in the vicinity of Emmet Park.

Commented on the Castleblayney Road, off the roundabout, past Active8. When it is dark the island located here is not very visible. Stated that he witnessed a vehicle drive up on top of it by accident. Can this be investigated during dark hours?

Cllr. Conlon:

Thanked the MD for some of the smaller projects completed around the Carrickmacross area, namely the Shercock Rd and further out the Ballybay Rd.

Cllr. Campbell:

Stated that the signing of contracts for the CTek II building is a good news story for Carrickmacross.

Following a proposal by Cllr, Campbell it was unanimously agreed to hold the December monthly meeting in the Gate Lodge, Castleblayney at 11am on Monday 19th December 2022.

The meeting concluded at 12:20

Cathaoirleach

Date

Meeting Administrator