

Municipal District of Monaghan

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan Municipal District held in Council Chamber, M-Tek 1 Building, Knockaconny, Co Monaghan, on Thursday 13th October 2022 at 10.40am

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Raymond Aughey presided.

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

Apologies: Cllr. Brian McKenna

In Attendance: Nuala Woods, Director of Services, Donal McElwain, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Darren Flanagan, Assistant Engineer and Michelle Curran, Senior Staff Officer.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Raymond Aughey commenced the meeting with one minute of silence for the Victims of Creeslough, Co. Donegal following the tragic accident on Friday 7th October 2022. Sympathies were expressed for the victims, their families and friends, the Creeslough community and first responders

1. Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Bennett, it was agreed that the minutes of the Municipal District meeting held on 27th September 2022 be confirmed.

2. Matters Arising

Reckless Driving & Speeding

Cllr. Aughey raised point about Pedestrian Crossing Ramps

Yellow Box Junction

Regarding traffic Cllr Treanor states that a yellow box needs to be placed at the Diamond. Mr McElwain said TII agreed and have contracted to do the works along with the yellow box at Heaton's corner.

Clones Road

Cllr. Treanor advised that the ramp on the Clones Road near Armstrong's Factory seem to be too high, causing damage to vehicles despite their slow speed. MD engineers to review this ramp.

Roads

Cllr Bennett asks about an update on the Bog / Smithborough Road from Scotstown. Mr Flanagan said the engineers assessed it and 2 substantial areas totalling 450 meters has settled due to the dry weather. Mr. McElwain advised the road needs to be added to the Annual RI Programme and funding secured for same.

Ballinode Walks

Cllr. Connolly asked for an update regarding the Ballinode Community Projects requesting walking tracks. Mr. McElwain advised that a number of walkway routes have been discussed. A route along the river was deemed unsafe due to the exit onto the main road.

The Loop Route requires a large amount of funding, however this is not covered by Active Travel Department as it is considered recreational.

The Ballinode to Killmore / Scotstown link route was considered a priority by the village community. An funding application was made by the MD for a feasibility study which was successful. This is now with Active Travel to proceed.

Rossmore Numbers Trail

Cllr. Connolly requested update on this project following his motion last month.

Mr. McElwain advised funding will be required to design and implement. Mr. McElwain advised he will need to check the previous submitted funding applications.

Cllr. Maxwell advised trail sign located in the last cove before Roddy Castle is blocking the cove from fishing Anglers use and requested relocation. Mr. McElwain will investigate.

Coillte

Cllr. Treanor requested that Coillte maintain their hedges on their lands. Mr. McElwain advised the MD engineers were in contact with Coillte and Coillte confirmed they will be cutting their hedges by year end.

Footpaths

Cllr. Aughey asked for progress on the Clontibret footpaths.

Mr. Flanagan advised that the contract was awarded this week, the programme is also to be issued this week. Mr. Flanagan advised it is difficult to confirm what the exact failure was that resulted in the pitting and advised that there are three areas to be replaced.

N2 at Clontibert- Islands

Cllr. Treanor noted weeds on islands, and signage which needs to be refreshed. Mr. Flanagan advised that TII hold the maintenance contract and he will follow up with TII on same.

Belgium Park

Cllr. Treanor noted weeds around Belgium Park, Belgium Square, Barrack Lane and requested a clean-up. Mr. McElwain advised this was completed within the last few days.

Ulster Canal – CPO

Cllr. Treanor requested update on the CPO of Ulster Canal project. Mr. McElwain advised as per last month.

3. Report from Municipal District Co-Ordinator

No queries raised

4. Monaghan Volunteer Centre Presentation

A short presentation by Sinead Keenan to our elected members this morning. Ms. Keenan advised that Monaghan Volunteer Centre is part of the National Network of Volunteer Centres and have seen their applications double from 200 in 2021 to 400 in 2022. Reminder that they have an office located in the in Monaghan Town and can provide face-to-face meetings in the other towns of County Monaghan as requested.

A reminder also of the Annual Volunteer Awards ceremony and all elected members are welcome to attend the event in support of the recognition of their volunteers.

Cllr Conlon asked if the organization which is seeking volunteers must have insurance to cover same? Ms. Keenan advised organisation must have their own relevant insurance. The Volunteer Centre insurance only cover their own events and activities.

Ms. Woods asked is there currently an over/under supply of volunteers?

Ms. Keenan advised it depends on the role and if the requirement is specialised.

Ms. Woods thanked Ms. Keenan and the Volunteer Centre for their assistance in providing volunteers for Council organised events such as Christmas Lights, St. Patrick's Day, etc.

Cllr. Aughey thanked Ms. Keenan on behalf of all present for her presentation today.

5. Planning Presentation on Residential Zoned Land Tax

Toirleach Gourley

Lands must be fully serviced by 1st January 2022 or at the latest by 1st October 2022.

Will be published by 27th October, on display 1st November to public and close of submission on 1st January 2023.

Cllr. Connolly inquire about zoning of lands which are not serviced.

Mr. Gourley stated if it meets the criteria of the 6, then Yes.

Cllr. Connolly recommended to De-Zone this land.

Mr. Gourley N.P.F. states if they are fully serviced lands then they must be zoned.

Cllr. Connolly wonders will vacant site levies be of similar tax?

Mr. Gourley said it could be on a sliding scale and they have identified several sites in Monaghan Town going through verification process.

Cllr. Connolly asks who will collect the tax?

Mr. Gourley states Revenue collects same.

Cllr. Bennett asks are we notifying landowners?

Mr. Gourley states that there will be a Public Notice to all and that landowners must submit submissions by 1st January 2023. If letter from someone advised, they own land then his team will write to them.

Cllr. Maxwell remarks there is no incentive for vacant land and this might incentivise land owners to move on zoned land. Cllr Maxwell welcomed more development and housing.

Cllr. Gourley agrees this will spur on landowners into action and also includes villages.

Cllr. Aughey agrees with Cllr Conolly re removing of Zoning and was unaware that policy in place. He wonders what happens farming if in use as farming.

Cllr. Gourley states if you can identify if lands actively in use in Town Centre or Village (limited lands excluding residential zoned) then that will be excluded but must engage with planning.

Cllr. Conlon enquiries about silage.

Mr. Gourley said will review all cases.

Cllr. Aughey questions about Latlorcan - are MCC liable there?

Mr. Gourley advised as it is in zoned residential and fully serviced, then yes MCC will be liable.

Cllr. Aughey welcomes with Cllrs Conlon and Maxwell to get MCC moving on this and will allow deferral for planning permission.

Cllr. Aughey requests subcommittee meeting re Latlorcan sites and plan of action.

Cllr. Conlon agrees, says enough meetings, and need to present a plan of action.

Cllr. Connolly says selling these sites including zoned and serviced to encourage development.

Cllr. Conlon says as per previous meeting requests.

Ms. Woods said she would liaise with planning and housing and bring to either November or December meeting.

Ms. Woods states that other sites were hard slow sell but may sell sites to rear easier but will include in meeting.

Cllr. Treanor says public weren't aware of sale of some sites previously at Latlorcan.

Cllr. Connolly says not at Latlorcan knock down prices.

Cllr. Conlon says owned since 2012, sorted to 2016 and plan created in 2017. Sites sold at €30,000 including foundations.

Mr. Gourley states planning in but sites not activated.

6. Budget 2023

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr. Maxwell, it was agreed that the Budget proposed to be accepted.

Cllr. Maxwell requested a breakdown of the expenditure of Traffic Management for November Sub-Committee Meeting. €320K to date.

Cllr. Connolly queried unused monies within this budget and was advised by Mr. McElwain all monies collected were distributed towards events and resources within the MD as per budget breakdown.

Cllr. Connolly requested a report of overall percentage usage of the Park Magic App FOR THE November Sub-Committee meeting.

Cllr. Maxwell stated the parking fees are the cheapest in Ireland and should we review same as Cavan have a minimum charge of 50 cent.

Cllr. Connolly asked if we should have a review of the charges also.

Cllr. Maxwell asked for full review of Bye-Laws to include report on HGV's, new carpark on Broad Road, fees and parking charges, along with full review of Pay Parking.

Cllr. Connolly supported same stating all monies collected goes to good use within the community.

Ms. Woods agreed to a report provided at the November Sub-Committee meeting on the Income and Expenditure of Parking, with breakdown into as much detail as possible.

Cllr. Treanor asked for a Residential Permit Cost increase as previously agreed a number of years ago in line with the Bye-Laws Review to be presented to members in February 2023 Sub Committee Meeting.

7. Questions and Motions

Cllr. Sean Conlon will ask:

1. What progress has been made that will put in place Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic restrictions in Monaghan Town for the purpose of improving pedestrian safety and ease traffic congestion, as well as contribute to the County Council's Active Travel ambitions in improving a safer environment for all road users on the Town's narrow streets?

Response:

The MD will advance this request and have a proposal available for the December Municipal District meeting.

2. For the purpose of enforcing disability rights legislation relating to the County Council's "ACCESS FOR ALL" policies, what measures do this Council implement to ensure that vulnerable road users such as wheelchair users, the visually impaired, people with buggies, children and older pedestrians have adequate room to walk safely throughout our Town and that does not force them out onto the road?

Response:

The Council is committed to making progress on making our public realm more accessible to all of our citizens. We are currently liaising with the County Monaghan DisAbility Network who have identified a number of issues as part of Make Way Day 2022. We have agreed to meet representative of the network on site. We have also recently met with the Monaghan Vision Impaired/Blind Group and carried out repairs to the public realm at their request". The council are also considering a communications/education approach before following up with the enforcement.

8. Correspondence

Request from the Monaghan Town Team for Free Parking during Christmas Season – All members agreed free parking after 12 noon from 5th December 2023 – 2nd January 2023 inclusive. 2 Hour restrictions will still apply.

Normal Pay Parking to resume on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

9. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

Sympathies were extended to the following: -

- Cllr. Brian McKenna & Family on the passing of his sister Maura McKenna

Congratulations were expressed to the following: -

- Committee of Monaghan Street Food Festival and especially to Ms. Jenn Gonnolly for all her hard work and organisation to achieve such a fantastic event. Members noted the excellent turnout and positive reviews by all in attendance.

10. AOB

Cllr. Connolly raised the issued of presentations taking over Council Business Time and requested future presentations be conducted after business items and presentations to be mindful of time allocated.

Roads Programme 2022-2024

Mall Road – Couldn't be done as Irish Water have 2 pipelines to lay. One is completed, one to yet be completed.

Roads – Link Road from Mall Road to Macartan Road. Mr. McElwain advised that the trial, one way system is to be conducted during the school terms in order to get a full picture of any effects on the town traffic.

Cllr. Aughey raised the issue of the long delays of traffic on the Clones Road and various junctions.

Cllr. Bennett advised many using a "cut-through" from Clones Road to Heasty's Cross which is unsuitable for high level traffic and especially HGV's.

Ms. Woods advised that the Monaghan MD Executive are in meetings with the Roads section in relation to both the Emyvale Road and the Clones Road and will present potential plans to Councillors once ready. Support for these developments expressed by Cllrs. Aughey, Bennett and Connolly.

Ms. Woods advised MD will also work with Active Travel to source alternative forms of transport to a high number of users.

Cllr. Aughey asked re Rossmore Park Purchase of 22 acres. Mr. McElwain advised deposit paid and probate on estate to be finalised before contracts of sale can be finalised.

Cllr. Aughey raised the parking issues at Rooskey at recent Monaghan Harps Games where patrons to the game parked and blocked in the Rooskey housing estate, resulting in homeowners not being able to park at their properties. Cllr. Treanor advised that Monaghan Harps have appointed stewards on match days to ensure this will not occur again. Also that their carpark was not cleared of materials.

Cllr. Conlon raised the issue of high roofed vehicles access to Rossmore Park from Threemilehouse road due to padlock on overhead barrier.

Mr. McElwain advised this was for security reasons, however any bus operators or people with disability vehicles in area that requested access have been informed of the code to access the padlock key.

Mr McElwain to circulate this code to all members following meeting.

Cllr. Aughey concluded the meeting by thanking and welcoming Ms. Woods as the new Director of Services to the Monaghan Municipal District on behalf of all members. Ms. Woods thanked all members and stated she is looking forward to working with the MD Councillors, sourcing funding and providing activities to communities within the Monaghan District.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this 13th day of October 2022

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____
Meetings Administrator