

## Municipal District of Monaghan

### **Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan Municipal District held in Ballinode Community Centre, Ballinode, Co Monaghan, on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 10a.m.**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Raymond Aughey presided.

**Present:** Cllrs. Cathy Bennett, Sean Conlon, David Maxwell, Paudge Connolly, Brian McKenna and Seamus Treanor

**In Attendance:** John Murray, Head of Finance, Donal McElwain, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Nuala Woods, Acting Director of Services, Darren Flanagan, Assistant Engineer, Michelle Curran, Senior Staff Officer, Fiona McElvaney, Clerical Officer.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Raymond Aughey welcomed everyone present to Ballinode Community Centre, Ballinode.

A short presentation by Richard Sleator relating to Monaghan Rugby Club. Richard spoke about the seniors, ladies and kid's teams that are utilising the club and of the contributions by the MD to the Rugby Club in Monaghan. He also made representation relating to a walking path around Ballinode and out towards the Rugby Club.

John Murray stated that a commitment by members was made a few years ago. Mr Sleator acknowledged that the CRO position fell apart during Covid and needs restarting and are in the process to acquire the personnel.

Maria Maguire, the previous chairperson of Ballinode Community Projects spoke about the need to have a walking path around the village, also to Hollywood Lake, Killmore GAA Pitch and linking them all to the two villages of Ballinode and Scotstown.

Elaine Coyle from Ballinode Community Projects gave a presentation and advised that they have an umbrella group that includes Tidy Towns, Village Activities, volunteers that are there to re-energise and create the community spirit. Other issues within the community are speeding issues, lighting improvement needed, footpaths repairs, footpaths overgrown with moss and other maintenance within the area.

Cllr. Connolly made enquiry about previous suggestions about the footpath ring around the village. Maria Maguire said it never happened but still on the agenda to proceed and they would like to link Ballinode to other villages but would require MD assistances.

Cllr. Conlon suggest she should keep in contact with Carole Lambe MCC regarding funding streams.

Elaine Coyle expressed disappointment as planning permission was denied last week for their Digital Information System for not being in keeping with the village look and were asked to remove the screen. They had funding obtained and thought it would enhance the community spirit.

Cllr. Bennett is in support of the linkage footpaths which would be inclusive for the community and to include Rugby Club, Ballinode, Kilmore and Hollywood. She says there is consultation regarding funding footpath at moment.

Cllr. McKenna congratulates the community and welcomes speed restrictions.

Cllr. Treanor concurred about the speeding issues.

Cllr. Maxwell representing Anglers, referred to the dog waste along the swims at Quig Lough. This issue will be referred to their tidy towns committee.

Maria Maguire enquired about the Council being offered a lease from Irish Water at the Sewerage Treatment Works as they are keen for a carpark there. Mr. McElwain said MCC has been offered the lease from Irish Water and there were conditions attached. From previous discussions with the community he had taken this was not a required project and was of the opinion that it was better to allow the visitors park in the village. Funding will be required for the project. Regarding the pedestrian path to Kilmore/Hollywood a funding application was successful, and it was handed over to Active Travel to complete a feasibility study for the project. He also stated that it would require large funding for the path Ballinode, Kilmore and Hollywood. A funding application of €0.5 million was made for the Community Centre.

Cllr Connolly suggests an alternative route along the waterway and look at its feasibility. Mr. McElwain mentioned the flood plain along the river but said it was flat so easier to design and this would be considered as part of the feasibility study.

Presentation saved to Decision Time for members.

A full house thanked John for his dedication to the MD since 2014 and welcomed Nuala to her new role and wished her all the best in continuing John's high standard, legacy, and fantastic projects he was involved with.

#### **1. Confirmation of Minutes:**

Cllr Bennett mentioned previous minutes says 18<sup>th</sup> June but should read 18<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Conlon asks to amend minutes to note Cllr. Connolly raised the query regarding the Ambulance Service, not him. Same amended.

On the proposal of Cllr. Maxwell seconded by Cllr. McKenna, it was agreed that the minutes of the Municipal District of Monaghan meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 be confirmed.

#### **2. Matters arising:**

##### **Emyvale**

Cllr McKenna suggest making representation with TII relating to Emyvale accident area, was wondering if any progress on meeting or was proposals made yet. In his opinion ramps are essential and meeting with TII is essential. Mr McElwain will contact Roads to arrange.

##### **Correspondence Issued**

Cllr Connolly wondering if any response from Ambulance Quality Assurance Division, 3 separate letters sent out and no reply, suggests write to all 3 areas again for immediate response. He says must write and seek meeting with Minister of Health as MD received no reply in writing as Minister of Health give assurance of ambulances with advanced paramedic and midwife on board. This is a matter of urgency.

Cllr Treanor concurs about the ambulance situation.

Cllr Conlon would like a tracking process to put in place regarding all correspondences sent out and received to include dates letters sent out, who to, and when responses received.

Cllr Maxwell requests correspondences to be added to minutes pads.

Mr Murray will look at a tracking system to be set up by the MD Executive.

Cllr Connolly says a 6 monthly audit also for responses.

Cllr McKenna wonders if we are sending the correspondences to the wrong people?

Cllr Conlon questioned about the letter to Bus Eireann and the reopening of Box Office.

### **Hollywood Park**

Cllr Bennett enquired if there were any updates on work at Hollywood Park. Mr McElwain says the Part 8 Planning Permission will be submitted by the end of October.

Cllr Bennett enquires about Weedkiller Report and Mr McElwain said that Monaghan town paths were sprayed last week.

### **Roads**

Cllr Bennett asks about an update on the Bog / Smithborough Road from Scotstown. Mr McElwain said the engineers assessed it and 2 substantial areas to be patched and there is no funding to do the whole road.

Cllr Bennett mentioned the area where work was done at the Housing Estate in Scotstown and wonders who is responsible in fixing the area? This to be assessed

### **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.

### **Reckless Driving & Speeding**

Cllr Treanor also mentioned the issues on the Greenway at the Lock Gate Cottage, that cars are participating in reckless driving and a steel bollard is needed at the cottage and household rubbish was got burning on the new Greenway tarmac.

Regarding speeding Cllr Treanor suggests writing to the Garda regarding speeding on the Cootehill Road as a house wall was struck, this was agreed.

He says the speed from Dublin Road to Old Cross Square and problem and suggest move a speeding van to Beech Grove Lawns estate area.

Cllr McKenna also tells of wheelies at the roundabout at Bogue's Garage.

Cllr Connolly wondering if any response from Garda relating to letters sent to them about speed van at Sam's Bridge where no accidents have occurred and 2 accidents in Emyvale Village needs speed van. Mr McElwain stated that Road Section had discussions with Garda. Cllr Maxwell advised it must go through the Statutory Process first. Cllr Connolly require to write for update on process.

## **3. Report from Municipal District Co-Ordinator**

Cllr Maxwell questions what the reason for the delays at the Broad Road Car Park is and about its opening for Christmas. Mr McElwain says the consultants have a heavy load and are slow to get the design report back. Cllr Maxwell wonders will the contractors be ready to roll on 1<sup>st</sup> November and he proposes a report on the carpark at the October meeting. Cllr Conolly said they seen the plans months ago and advised Part 8 building consultants have a time frame. Mr Murry said if consultants have too many restrictions will mean consultants will not tender for the job and that we need to be flexible. Cllr Treanor mentions the option to ask local consultants to engage to assist and deliver. Cllr Maxwell suggest opening in December without Parking Machines/ Lights etc and then close in January for completion. The council's insurance cover may not permit this. Mr McElwain says the tender is to be run concurrently with the Part 8 Planning and the plan is to have the construction ready to commence as the Part 8 concludes again contractors are also are very busy. Cllr Conlon observes the problem with ESB to supply the car park and other areas.

**Roads** – Cllr Connolly requests now that the resurfacing is completed in Mullan, Knocknasave, Knocknapubble and Killycooly, that the warning writing is reinstated on the roads and the signage hidden in overgrowth needs attending. Mr McElwain says it will be investigated. Cllr Connolly says there are also other areas of road signs blocked and need to be resolved. Cllr McKenna comments on the bridge at Bragan Cross, that the culvert under the road has stones fallen out underneath and requests that it be investigated. Cllr Bennett also requires an update on both Crosses Bridge and Lennaght Bridge at Knockatallan. Cllr Conlon looks for update on works on the footpath at Sheetrim behind Drumbear Nursing Home at junction opposite electric sub-station, emails sent to roads. No replies received over the last 2 weeks.

**MTV** – Mr Murray commends the budget that the limit of Tax-Free Gifts has increased from €500 to €1,000 and that we will push to promote vouchers for same.

**Halloween** – Mr. McElwain confirms the Halloween Festival committee have withdrawn from Guinness Book Records attempt and will proceed with the Halloween Festival for 2022.

**Bridge Restrictions** – A proposal to implement a weight restriction to two bridges in Castleshane and Clontibret areas was presented to the members by Mr McElwain. This is due to bridge conditions and it will be in place until repairs are completed in 2023. It is recommended to restrict weight to 3T. The bridges are Cordevlis bridge on the L5500 and the Legnacreeve bridge on the L1510. Cllr McKenna questions is funding for repairs approved yet. Mr McElwain says it will be allocated out of next years funding. Mr Murray says it should be received.

#### **4. Questions & Motions**

Cllr Conlon ask with previous responses to queries I have submitted regarding the completion of civil infrastructure and road works at Mullach Glas, please provide an update as to when the ‘Taking in Charge’ process at both Mullach Glas and Rowantree Court will be completed?

**Response:**

**The Municipal District have tendered the civil infrastructure / resurfacing works, a contract has been awarded, and works are expected to take place by the end of the year. With regards taking in charge, the Planning Authority are waiting on the agreement of Irish Water to progress this.**

Cllr Conlon inquires what progress is occurring in relation to the implementation of flood mitigation/drainage works as first proposed in the Tobin Consulting Report of 2001 beside Monaghan Shopping Centre?

**Response:**

**Roads section are working with the TII to assess the existing pipeline to investigate an alternative design. No further funding has been obtained to advance the full scheme.**

Cllr Conlon asks from my question submitted last May. For the purpose of complying with disability legislation and Access for All principles, have this Council contacted the ESB seeking the relocation of the light pole in the middle of the footpath on the Broad Rd. in front of Kinga's Cafe. Also, please provide what date was the request sent to ESB from the Council seeking the relocation of this pole?

**Response:**

**The council had requested a quotation for the re-location of this public light from Airtricity and a number of solutions were suggested. The cost and works have been agreed and the contractor has the work scheduled for Oct 2022.**

Cllr Conlon asks from my question submitted last May. In consideration of the severe shortage of housing accommodation, can the Council owned vacant property at 4/5 Mill St. be converted into apartments that will help reduce lengthy Council housing waiting lists?

**Response:**

**The Corporate Section will present a report to the members detailing options available for this building.**

Cllr Aughey asks can the MD provide an update on the unfinished houses at Killyconnigan (adjacent to Kelly's factory)?

**Response:**

**There is extant planning permission under permission Ref. No. 19/1 to retain and complete the housing development. This permission expires in October 2024. There has been no recent engagement with the developer.**

Cllr Aughey asks can the MD investigate the resurfacing of the roads in Killyconnigan as soon as possible?

**Response:**

**The Municipal District will investigate this section of road for repairs. It is currently not included on the multi annual roads program.**

Cllr Aughey asks can the MD provide an update on the current status of the car park on the Broad Road?

**Response:**

**The Municipal District has the Carpark development submitted for Part 8 Planning; decision due at the November Council Meeting. The construction works has been tendered on e-tenders with a closing date of the 14<sup>th</sup> October.**

Cllr Aughey asks can the MD outline the progress that has been made with regard to the grant for illumination of Dawson and Rossmore Monuments in Monaghan Town?

**Response:**

**A Part 8 planning application for the Destination Town Monaghan performance space, which includes an illumination element, is currently being progressed and is planned for submission in October.**

Cllr Connolly asks what plans have Monaghan M D to put white line/stop signs at the road exiting from Emy Lough on to the Emyvale Glaslough road?

**Response:**

**The Municipal District will assess this junction and add the necessary line marking works to the current contract as required.**

**Motion:**

- (i) That this Council write to the Department of Justice seeking the provision of additional resources that will strengthen the current Gardai force with additional officers and vehicles that will provide the necessary patrol cover in combatting anti-social behaviour throughout our county, particularly in Monaghan Town.

*Cllr. Sean Conlon*

Cllr Conlon states that on 26<sup>th</sup> September the National Report issued by Garda that there is an increase of offences, anti-social behaviours, assaults of overall 14%. He appreciates the Judicial Process allows for approach to have slap on wrist. He feels JPC are implementing measures required by authorities.

This motion was seconded by Cllr Bennett and she says more gardai are needed regarding anti-social behaviour at night-time.

Cllr Treanor supported the motion also and says that it's not just the Garda problem when courts allow defendants back out despite 40/50 offences and sent to Mount Joy and released within day due to overcrowding and people feel disillusioned with the system. He gave an example of an assault in Dublin Street and how the victim was lucky to survive. He suggests Legal Aid should be deducted from wages/dole.

Cllr McKenna also supports the motion but indicates that this was an isolate incident and not a case that the town is a dangerous and unsafe place, it is not a lawless society and the figures support this. He mentions the lack of implementation of the laws and the problems can fester. He says JPC meet quarterly and he recently attended the JPC Annual Meeting which included Drew Harris. JPC presentation re anti-social behaviour everywhere, same as Monaghan County Council. JPC have allocation of resources by Department of Justice which was spread out around the country. He agrees the Jails/ prisons are overcrowded and therefore defendants allowed off and sent home. Cllr McKenna suggest to also write to Drew Harris in this motion.

Cllr Maxwell agrees to send to Drew Harris. He says the incident was a disgrace but a one off and the gardai made a huge improvement over the last 3 - 4 years and that the antisocial behaviours was overflows from private premises. He says the JPC and Gardai always looking for more support.

Cllr Connolly also agrees with the motion and that it is not an ongoing issue every weekend.

Regarding public meeting at Teach Na Daoine, gardai represented well at meeting and Gardai do respond within their limitations.

Cllr Treanor says it's not lawless but there is a hub of activity and is demoralising Gardai. He suggests writing a letter to Department of Justice to invest in new prison.

Cllr Conlon says there is a capacity issues with the criminal justice and they need to invest money into programmes to deter youths from criminality, says there are ETB courses available to encourage youth activities and additional garda resources.

**Motion:**

- (ii) Can the Municipal District request the Roads Section within MCC to engage with the TII to work together to create a plan for an Inner/Outer Relief Road connection with N2 in an effort to alleviate the traffic congestion on the Clones Road especially at Peak times? (Margaret Skinnider roundabout to Kingspan both directions)

*Cllr. Raymond Aughey*

Cllr. Maxwell seconded this motion referring to a previous plan in 2004 which was unsuccessful. Cllr. Maxwell stated support required to develop the road and allow growth to the town and also suggested a need for similar plan for the Clones Road connection the Dublin Road.

Cllr. McKenna also voiced support for this motion citing the backlog of traffic on the Clones. 2 proposals were voiced for a route at Riverside Housing Estate and a route behind the hospital to Century Homes which maybe the better option.

Cllr. Connolly confirmed his support to help alleviate the blockages of traffic within the town.

Cllr. Maxwell said Flood planes should not prevent the required growth within the town and planning of such works should be within the constraints of the town.

Cllr. McKenna raised his concerns that previous mistakes should not be repeated.

**Motion:**

- (iii) That Monaghan Municipal District take the necessary steps to ensure that the children's "Numbers Trail" is re invigorated in Rossmore Park.

*Cllr. Paudge Connolly*

This motion was seconded by Cllr. Treanor

Cllrs. Bennet, Maxwell, McKenna, Conlon and Connolly all voiced their support in succession to this motion.

Mr. McElwain confirmed the executive have given huge support to the ongoing works within the park with lots of projects and funding applications submitted to make wheelchair/disability accessible within the park.

Cllr. Aughey supported the upgrade of existing wheelchair/disability access routes.

Cllr. McKenna confirmed the cycle track within Rossmore Park is for family use including young children learning to cycle with accompanying parents walking the track.

Cllr. Connolly queried if there is plans to extend the tarmacadam throughout the remainder of the cycle track.

Mr. McElwain advised there is a substantial length of track remaining which would require substantial funding in order to tarmacadam. This funding is not available at present.

**Correspondences**

Letter received from Phyl Hughes – The Lack of Floral Display in our County Town with references to Weeds and Unkept Appearance.

Cllr. Treanor remarked how following the stopping of the use of Glycophasates was reversed a few years ago when the MD voted for the return of Roundup spraying.

Areas up to Belgium Park are overcome with weed growth.

Cllr. Treanor also raised the issue of the street gullies where water is unable to get away causing lying surface water on streets.

Cllr. Treanor agree with the correspondence sentiments.

Cllr. Connolly said weeds are often debated amongst the MD with resolution but there is frustration with the regrowth speed of these problem areas.

Whilst a supporter of biodiversity, it has the negative result of an abandoned look and whilst the whole town does not look abandoned as the letter claimed, Cllr. Connolly wanted to congratulate the businesses along Glaslough Street for their work in painting and improving the area and commend them on the fantastic results.

Cllr. Maxwell agree with the letter, agreeing that biodiversity creates a rough unkempt look. While local areas are overgrown this is with grass only and no wildflower bed in sight. Cllr. Maxwell feels the needs to target areas for a biodiversity mix.

Cllr. Maxwell feels the need for Roundup spraying twice per annum in Spring and Autumn to keep the areas clear on weeds with general maintenance within this time and would welcome a conversation on how to improve this issue for next year.

Cllr. Bennett requested a report on Glyphosate and the alternatives used. She would like the report to include the areas sprayed and the frequencies.

Cllr. Bennett asked if the author Ms. Hughes is a member of Monaghan Tidy Towns and could get involved and help improve the look and seek alternatives options with the TT for the weed-spraying issue.

Cllr. McKenna stated a need for a plan of action. He would welcome a liaison with TT in this regard.

Cllr. McKenna also asked if MD can request business be responsible to keep the area outside their premises clean, tidy and free of moss, grass and weeds.

Cllr. McKenna would like to see a team of volunteers and staff to pull weeds and grass together with the permission to use a sparingly amount of Glyphosate.

Cllr. McKenna also feels it could be a premises responsibility to put out floral displays going forward into 2023.

Mr. Murray advised that Members took the decision following Gardener presentation to reduce hanging baskets in favour of alternatives for biodiversity purposes.

Cllrs. Maxwell and McKenna asked for the minutes of this meeting to be recirculated to Members.

Cllr. Conlon advised that on the main route through town, weeds are growing through cracks in roads and footpaths.

Cllr. Conlon also noticed the visible increase in the butterfly population as a result of Biodiversity is an encouraging site and that also must continue.

Cllr. Conlon asked if the staff tasked to complete litter pick could also water plants/baskets in very early mornings?

Cllr. Treanor noted that St Macartan's Cathedral is looking wonderful and agreed that the TT need to be brought in for a consult on creating a work together programme for 2023.

Cllr. McKenna requested a better education programme to supply cards which are pollinator friendly and will help encourage better biodiversity education for baskets to include biodiversity plants for wild bees and pollinators.

Cllr. Maxwell asked if Hanging baskets are not an option, can we create alternatives? MD Invested in 3 tier planting tubs at the Diamond.

Cllr. Maxwell agreed the practice of biodiversity does not lend to the good look of the town.

Cllr. Connolly asked if MD could confirm the roles of the TT regarding weed picking, roles of C.E. Schemes and Community Service Judicial System.

### **Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations**

Sympathies were extended to the following: -

- Former Cllr. Brenda McAnespie on the passing of her father in law John McAnespie Cllr. BMK
- MCC Deputy Chief Executive Patricia Monaghan on the passing of her mother Mary Healy.



- MCC W&S Staff Sean Treanor on the passing of his mother Bernadette Treanor.
- MCC Staff Mags McCusker on the passing of her mother Margaret Byrne.
- MCC Staff Maire Deighan on the passing of her mother in law Lizzie Deighan

**A.O.B.**

Cllr. Connolly queried if a response was received from Google Maps? Requested MD write to Google maps again to restrict the road at Clontoe for lorries as vehicles are unable to pass due to being so narrow. Cllr. Connolly also requested MD write to Haulage owners to appeal to them to reroute from this road.

Cllr. Treanor enquired about the CIS/LIS schemes and the status with Tullyhirm and Killyvane lanes. Mr. McElwain advised that the LIS scheme funding was different from the CIS funding. The CIS funding was completed for this year and the two roads will have to be considered for next year.

Cllr. Maxwell advised that Monaghan Motor Club are hoping to hold an event in April 2023 and are requesting the use of the carpark from the MD again. Further information regarding the event will follow once the use of carpark is confirmed as they can then proceed with the planning of the event. The event to be held on a Sunday. It was agreed by those present to allow carpark use.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this 27<sup>th</sup> day of September 2022

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meetings Administrator