

Municipal District of Monaghan

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan Municipal District held in Council Chamber, M-Tek 1 Building, Knockaconny, Co Monaghan on Monday, 17th July 2023 at 3.15 p.m.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Cathy Bennett presided.

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

In Attendance: Peadar McGuinness, Deputising Director of Services, Donal McElwain, Municipal District Co-ordinator, Stephen Donoghue Assistant Engineer, Michelle Allister, Staff Officer.

1. Confirmation of minutes of Monaghan MD Meeting

On the proposal of Cllr. Aughey, seconded by Cllr. McKenna, it was agreed that the minutes of the Municipal District meeting held on 19th June 2023 be confirmed.

2. Confirmation of minutes of Annual General Meeting

On the proposal of Cllr. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr. Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of the Annual General meeting held on 19th June 2023 be confirmed.

3. Matters Arising

Roads

Cllr. Aughey asked Mr. McElwain did he contact Roads Section.

Mr. McElwain advised yes but had not received a detailed response.

Cllr. Bennett asked this be made a priority for the next meeting.

Hanging Baskets

Cllr. McKenna asked would the Horticulturist be attending the meeting.

Mr. McElwain advised he would attend the September meeting.

CCTV

Cllr. Bennett stated funding should be secured and CCTV installation actioned.

Mr. McElwain provided an overview of the number of cameras and advised the cost is approximately €300k, funded by €80k from MD and €40k from Dept of Justice, the shortfall as requested by the members, to be borrowed and repaid through the income of pay parking, with the project completed target date of the end of 2024.

Members all agreed it is great to see the project moving ahead.

Cllr. Conlon asked what is the process if there is an incident and a business owner wishes to view the CCTV footage?

Mr. McElwain advised normal procedures will continue to apply and the business owner would have to contact The Gardaí who will request permission to view the footage.

Coolshannagh Graveyard

Cllr. Conlon asked has there been any progress with extra capacity at the graveyard.

Proposed by Cllr. Aughey seconded by Cllr. Conlon the meeting then went into Committee.

Minutes recorded in Sub-Committee Meeting minutes.

Proposed by Cllr. Aughey seconded by Cllr. Treanor the meeting came out of Committee.

QR Codes

Cllr. Connolly asked for an update on QR Codes.

Mr. McElwain advised he has spoken with the creator of the stories behind the giants and is awaiting a response.

4. Report from Municipal District Coordinator

Sliabh Beagh Partnership – Shared Island Funding

Cllr. Bennet asked that the public consultation evening taking place 1st August in the Sliabh Beagh hotel be advertised on MCC website.

Register of Elections

Cllr. Bennett emphasised the importance of people being registered on the Electoral Register.

Monaghan Town Tours

Mr. McElwain advised there are 15 tour guides for the county most of whom are in the Monaghan Town but can do rural tours if required.

Cllr. Maxwell stated this would require a bus.

Mr. McElwain advised there is no bus.

Cllr. Conlon advised he had met with Ms. Dympna Condra and Alan Hill, Consultant and Cllr. Conlon had advised rural tours should be considered.

Rossmore Forest Park

Cllr. Maxwell said he has received complaints regarding the standard of the toilets at Rossmore. He also received a call from a member of the public complaining about wheelchair access on the path up to the toilets.

Mr. McElwain advised the path on the other side is macadamed and additional signage will be considered.

Cllr. Conlon asked that the toilets be prioritised with any future funding for Rossmore and also said there is a need for picnic benches which are shaded by the trees for times of hot weather.

ROADS

Killyvane Lane – C.I.S.

Cllr. Treanor stated Mr. Gareth McMahon said funds are available for the CIS at this location.

4. Presentation Monaghan LECP Draft Objectives & Actions

Presentation by David McGlinchey of KPMG, Nicola Payne A/Senior Executive Officer, C&E also present.

Cllr. Bennett thanked David and asked were all the actions in the last plan actioned?

Ms. Payne responded that the plan is reviewed on an annual basis and anything not actioned at the end of the plan's life time will be carried over to the new plan.

Cllr. Connolly asked how the desired outcomes are measured e.g. to achieve a decrease of 51% in emissions in line with government policy? He also asked how much involvement KPMG will have with achieving the desired outcomes?

Mr. McGlinchey said the indicators come from National Policy, Local Authorities must establish baselines and from there measures will need to be addressed. He further advised KPMG did not decide on 51%, it comes from the Climate Action Plan 2023 which states Local Authorities must establish a baseline. He also said implementation of the plan is from MCC and its partners, not KPMG.

Cllr. Conlon asked were the partners listed throughout the goals and actions involved in the consultation as its frustrating to see objectives that won't be achieved, e.g. hundreds of people could use EV points, but they are not available.

Cllr. McKenna said most of the partners listed are members of LCDC and it's up to Councillors to keep raising issues and asking at Council meetings and not waiting for a review of the LECP.

Mr. McGlinchey accepted Cllr. Conlon had a valid point and said it is important that issues are continuously raised. The LECP is a statutory document, and it is important members continue to raise issues.

5. Draft Parking Control (Pay Parking & Car Parks Bye-Laws

Proposed by Cllr. Maxwell and seconded by Cllr. Bennet the Draft Parking Control (Pay Parking) & Car Parks Bye-Laws 2023 are to go to Public Consultation.

Cllr. Maxwell proposed signage be erected around the town.

6. Questions & Motions

Questions:

Cllr. P. Connolly asked:

To ask Monaghan Municipal District for an update in relation to safety concerns expressed at our April meeting re the junction at the Chapel bridge Tyholland on the N12 and what measures have been taken to improve safety at this junction?

Response:

This junction has been treated in previous years with High Friction Surfacing on the mainline and bar markings on the side roads approaches to warn road users of the upcoming junction. The High Friction Surface is showing signs of distress in recent times. Road Resurfacing Works are planned across this junction on the N12 in Q3 2023. These works will extend from the junction (taking in the junction including the side road intersections) for a distance of 1.30km in an eastern direction towards Armagh. This contract was authorised by TII as a skid resistance issue was identified along this 1.30km section of carriageway. In addition, MCC have had discussions with TII regarding the issue of visibility available for drivers entering the national road from Local Road, L5320. It is our intention to improve the sight lines at this location through the Road Safety Improvement Scheme mechanism subject to funding allocation from TII Road Safety Section.

To ask Monaghan Municipal District for an update in relation to the Park St. & Market St. Streetscape Enhancement works?

Response:

These works which are funded under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, have been tendered, tenders received and evaluated. A letter of intent has been issued to the preferred tenderer. We are currently awaiting final documents from the contractor. It is planned that a date for commencement of works can be agreed shortly, for the contractor to commence works.

When proposed/hoped to see the Monaghan town CCTV system going live?

Response:

The letter of Authorisation from the Garda Commissioner as required under Section 38(3) of the Garda Siochana Act 2005 as amended was received in March this year. This allowed the Municipal District to progress to detail design stage and prepare the tender documents. The detail design and documents for the civil and power supply are completed and costs sought. Detail design is near complete for the procurement of the cameras, electronics and their installation.

Documentation for the servicing and operation of the system and the Data Processing agreement also, need to be completed.

An overall cost for the system is estimated at almost €300k. The Municipal District will need to secure sufficient funding to complete the project.

What plans have Monaghan Municipal District to tidy up the overgrowth along the greenway?

Response:

The Municipal District are currently trimming back all overgrowth along the Greenway. Hand trimming over hanging branches, clearing around public lights and utilising the new multipurpose machine trim the verge. Litter picks have also been carried out. All works to be completed this week.

Cllr. S. Conlon asked:

That this Council seeks from the Housing Section the criteria set down for the refurbishment of vacated Council dwellings, and the average cost of same. Also, in the circumstances where excessive damage has occurred, what financial obligation falls to the outgoing tenant in providing compensation to the Council in making repairs?

Response:

All houses received upgrade works when vacancies arise. The level of refurbishment varies on the condition the house is left in, its energy efficiency rating and prior expenditure on the property. The Housing Authority seeks to utilise all sources of revenue to improve our housing stock. The average cost on bringing stock back into stock for reletting is €15,970

Where excessive damage has occurred then the tenant will incur the loss of all/or a proportion of the deposit paid out for the tenancy. In the event the damage exceeds the deposit amount, and the tenants leaves the property without any notice the excess amount is noted on their file and if the tenant seeks social housing support again then that individual will be required to pay that amount either in full or through a payment plan prior to receiving support.

Has the tender process concluded in relation to the Market Street Improvement scheme with a contractor appointed, and is there a commencement of works scheduled?

Response:

These works which are funded under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, have been tendered, tenders received and evaluated. A letter of intent has been issued to the preferred tenderer. We are currently awaiting final documents from the contractor. It is planned that a date for commencement of works can be agreed shortly, for the contractor to commence works.

Cllr. R. Aughey asked:

Can the Municipal District outline the timing and the process with regard to the wind turbine move through the Municipal District area, when will preparations be made roundabouts and other affected areas? When is the process likely to be completed?

Response:

As per the programme received from Energia, it is proposed that the first load will be moved in mid August with the final movement scheduled towards the end of October. There will be approximately 32 days throughout this period whereby the structure components will be moved. This is an international transportation of plant and involves a lot of logistics therefore these dates need to be finalised. They have stressed this is a preliminary programme and may be subject to change.

What plans does the Municipal District have with regard to clogged storm drains within the Monaghan Town Urban Area?

Response:

This is an ongoing operation and the Municipal District have scheduled in gully and storm drain cleaning for July. Areas know to get blocked by debris have been assess again following recent heavy rainfall and have been cleared.

What is the likely start date for the improvement and enhancement works for Church Square?

Response:

The tender documents are currently being prepared and every effort is being made to have all documentation finalised by August. It is anticipated the project will be tendered in July and that the works will commence in September/October depending on the tender submissions. Due to the level of funding available this project is to be completed on a phased basis.

Can the Municipal District promote a bike safety campaign separate to Bike Week, erecting signage to advise cyclists to refrain from cycling on footpaths in the interests of safety for all.

Response:

The Department of Transport last month issued a technical briefing to address E-Scooters, E-Bikes & E-Mopeds. The document states that it will likely be in late Q3 or Q4 before they are in place. Following consultation with the Road Safety Officer it is suggested to run a campaign with local Gardaí once the new regulations are in place to inform users of micro mobility vehicles that footpath usage is prohibited, the prohibited use of bicycles can be incorporated in this campaign.

Motions:

That this Council, as a matter of urgency, produce a proposal in consultation with TII in relation to traffic safety measures at Steele's corner in Emyvale.

Motion proposed by Cllr. McKenna, seconded by Cllr. Bennett and unanimously agreed by the members. Mr. McElwain will request a meeting with Roads separate to the Municipal District meeting and also request a representative from TII attend the meeting.

That in view of the fact that accidents continue to occur on the N12 at Skinnagin bridge/Tullylush despite previous attempts to improve safety on this stretch of road, that Monaghan Municipal District calls on the TII

- A. To do a full safety audit on this 200-metre stretch of the N12.**
- B. As a matter of urgency to take the necessary measures to ensure that this stretch of road is safe & fit for purpose.**

Motion proposed by Cllr. Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Bennett and unanimously agreed by the members. Mr. McElwain will request a meeting with Roads separate to the Municipal District meeting and also request a representative from TII attend the meeting.

That this Council engage with the owners of lands in the immediate vicinity of Beechgrove Lawns Monaghan for the purpose of establishing responsibility for the extensive height of trees that are a cause of considerable concern to residents in the area.

Motion proposed by Cllr. Conlon, seconded by Cllr. Aughey and unanimously agreed by the members. Cllr Maxwell advised that Mr. Gareth McMahon is contacting the owner to ask that the trees be removed.

Can the Municipal District contact the Minister for Transport to create a discretionary road budget to be allocated for town road networks under 7000 residents?

Motion proposed by Cllr. Aughey, seconded by Cllr. McKenna and unanimously agreed by the members. Road from Mullaghmatt to Killyconnigan discussed, Mr. McElwain advised this could be considered for the Restoration Programme and advised members to make submissions for the 2024-2026 Roads Programme. Cllr. Bennett requested a breakdown of how much money has been allocated for Roads since 2008. Mr. McElwain will request that breakdown from Roads Section.

Following a spike in burglaries in the locality can the Municipal District contact the Minister for Justice and the Garda Commissioner to request more Gardaí for Monaghan Town.

Motion proposed by Cllr. Treanor, seconded by Cllr. McKenna. A letter will be issued to both the Minister for Justice and the Garda Commissioner.

7. Correspondence

Response from Sisters of St. Louis advising they will engage a relevant professional to conduct an inspection and issue a report on the condition of the wall at The Convent, they will then revert back to the Municipal District.

Response from Revenue Commissioners advising they have forwarded the request to cut the grass at the old Customs office to the OPW who are responsible for the building.

8. Votes of Sympathy/ Congratulations

A vote of sympathy was passed to Mr. Dermot Deeney, Executive Engineer on the death of his nephew Donal Deeney.

A vote of congratulations to Emyvale GFC on winning the Intermediate B Final

9. AOB

Cllr. Conlon has received complaints from a number of people regarding rats in The Mall Road and is concerned this problem will worsen when road works in The Mall Road commence.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this 17th day of July 2023

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____
Meetings Administrator