

Ceantar Bardasach Carraig Mhachaire Rois – Baile Na Lorgan

Comhairle Contae Mhuineachain



The Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblayney

Monaghan County Council

Minutes of proceedings of the Municipal District Monthly Meeting held in Carrickmacross Civic Offices, Riverside Road, Co. Monaghan on Monday 26th of June 2023 at 11:10am.

Present: Cathaoirleach Aoife McCooey

Cllrs. Colm Carthy, Noel Keelan, PJ O’Hanlon, Peter Conlon, Aidan Campbell

In Attendance: Carmel O’Hare, A/Director of Services, Damien Thornton, A/District Co-Ordinator, Matthew Lambe, District Engineer, Deirdre Power, Staff Officer, Julieann O’Reilly, Assistant Staff Officer, Nadine Casey, Clerical Officer

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Carthy, the minutes of the May 2023 Monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Monday the 22nd of May 2023, were adopted.

2.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Keelan:

Wished to put on record that the Carrickmacross Festival has been going for 23 years and wished to acknowledge the work of all involved, including Cllr. Carthy, who has been involved from day one. Commented that often, young people received bad press, and wished to acknowledge how well all in attendance behaved.

Wished to extend an invitation to local TDs to meet regarding various issues in the MD. Requested that another letter of invitation is issued, suggesting Mondays or Fridays as suitable days.

Has funding been secured for Castleblayney Fair Day?

Reply – it was agreed at the last meeting that the Members would meet to discuss the provision of additional funding to community groups.

Can a comment be made regarding funding for Twinning Organisations?

Reply – applications are to be made through the Corporate Section.

Requested an update on the provision of a Traffic Warden for the area.

Reply – The recruitment process is in progress, and it is intended that a Traffic Warden shall be in place by the end of the summer.

Cllr. Carthy:

Welcomed the addition of the railing at the Convent Lands. Noted that it remains locked and asked if plans are in place similar to Cloughvalley Park, where it is opened and closed on a daily basis.

Reply – Some safety checks are to be carried out at the playpark. This MD will assign a resource to open and close the park.

Mentioned the streetlights in Carrickmacross, commenting that we are awaiting a response from Roads Section.

Reply – It has been advised that the issue lies with the MD. It is intended that a consultant shall be engaged to undertake a survey/assessment.

Cllr. O’Hanlon sought clarification that the MD is responsible for this? Europe advised that the changes were to be implemented.

Reply – that is the advice the MD has received.

Cllr. O’Hanlon expressed disappointment in MCC for this response, stating that it is a safety issue.

Cllr. Carthy concurred with Cllr. O’Hanlon’s comments - it needs to be clear how we can improve the floodlight of the lights.

Requested an update on the twinning signage which was removed.

Reply – this signage appears to be in place.

Commented that funding has been approved for Carhaix – Carrickmacross Twinning.

Requested an update on the crack in the wall at St. Macartans Villas.

Reply – this wall has been deemed safe. The cracks will be repaired.

Stated that a water feature for Carrickmacross needs to be kept on the agenda.

Thanked Cllr. Keelan for his commendations regarding the Carrickmacross Festival, noting that the first meeting about next year is on tonight!

Stated that Kitty Hand (RIP) had been instrumental in the Festival’s Teddy Bears Picnic and going forward it will be known as “Kitty Hand’s Teddy Bears Picnic” in her memory.

Thanked the Executive, AGS, Fire Services and Civil Defence for their help.

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Expressed congratulations to the Carrickmacross Festival Committee on their successful festival and commented on the serious amount of work that goes into it and the massive economic benefit to the town.

Formally requested that a letter is written to the Festival Committee to acknowledge and thank them for all they have done. Cllr. Keelan seconded Cllr. O’Hanlon’s proposal.

Sought clarification as to whether the Convent Lands playpark is open.

Noted that it had been previously agreed that an in-committee meeting be held amongst the Elected Members to discuss various issues such as funding.

Opined that should Oireachtas Members be unable to facilitate meetings with the MD Members then a representative from each party should travel to meet them in Dublin, possibly on Mondays or Fridays.

Cllr. McCooey:

Thanked all involved in the Carrickmacross Festival.

3.0 Correspondence

i. Response from AGS re: proposed meeting

Cllr. O'Hanlon sought clarification as to whether the meeting should be held in committee or in the public forum and requested that the MD correspond with AGS to discuss same and arrange a date.

Cllr. Keelan commented that this is a sensible approach.

Cllr. Conlon stated that it is good to have on-going discussion and welcomed the response.

Cllr. Keelan mentioned a Letter to the Editor which was printed in the most recent edition of The Northern Standard - "Road Crisis in Carrickmacross". He commented that it was a well written and respectful letter which highlighted funding issues and specifically mentioned the Drumconrath Road. Cllr. Keelan stated that it is important to respond to this person via The Northern Standard and commended the letter writer for taking the time to write it. Cllr. Keelan noted that there is a mechanism to claim for small claims via IPB Insurance, the details of which can be obtained from MCC.

Cllr. Conlon agreed that funding is a huge issue. He stated that it can be as frustrating trying to explain this as it is frustrating for the individuals petitioning. Cllr. Conlon remarked that the Elected Members will continue to make representations.

Cllr. O'Hanlon commented that the Minister had a shortfall in his figures this year. He wished to acknowledge Jack Chambers TD and Michael McGrath TD.

Cllr. O'Hanlon mentioned a recent article by Cllr. Keelan which referred the Shercock Road in The Northern Standard. He commented that it had been voted against by Cllr. Keelan at a Full Council meeting in the past and stated that there has been opportunity to get this money and it is not right to blame the Government.

Cllr. Keelan responded that the Government is responsible for roads funding and stated that people don't really care who voted for what in the past. He commented that he wants to see all roads upgraded as the public deserve no less.

4.0 MD Coordinator's Report

Cllr. Campbell:

Stated he is delighted to see on-going works regarding flood alleviation at Annadrummond and requested an update about same?

Welcomed the update on Lough Nagarnaman.

Requested an update on road closures due to Castleblayney road re-surfacing.

Cllr. Carthy:

Stated he is delighted to see Rahans Lake slipway works and requested if potholes on the approach road can be added to works.

Reply – this will go on the repairs list.

Expressed disappointment re: delays at Shirley Lane Carpark and asked the Executive to get the project delivered.

Welcomed works at Woodlands, Carrickmacross.

Advised that there are two large square potholes at the Kingscourt / Magheraboy junction.

Welcomed that the Lurgans Hill footpath is substantially complete.

Requested that Bogtown Lane is tidied up.

Cllr. Keelan:

Acknowledged the report.

Commented that €16,500.00 has been spent to date on the proposed Inniskeen Bike Rental Scheme and asked if the Executive are confident that the scheme will be up and running this year?

Reply – As confident as can be expected given events to date. Staff Officer Deirdre Power is actively involved with this project and has identified an interested individual - this needs to be teased out. Other options are being explored in the meantime.

Noted the Roads in Carrickmacross rated 1 and 2.

Reply – the issue is funding.

Stated that Minister Ryan is interested in Greenways and walkways, which is great, however, roads are also important.

Made a public call to the Government, local Minister, and Oireachtas Members to invest in our road infrastructure.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Stated that the only way roads will be sorted is through the Government.

Mentioned the positive meeting with Jack Chambers TD and advised that the Elected Members are putting pressure on to get funding and continue to work behind the scenes on this matter.

Commented that one cannot compare roads in rural Monaghan to those in Dublin.

Cllr. Conlon:

Commented that our local Minister is keeping the pressure on.

Stated that it is galling that CIS funding has been cut.

Cllr. Campbell:

Asked if the Low-Cost Safety Scheme/line-marking on Muckno Street is on hold and questioned how far it will extend?

Reply – this section of roadway is to be overlaid under next year's Roads Programme. The Executive are currently exploring the possibility of switching this year's Low-Cost Safety Scheme with an alternative scheme, possibly the upgrade of the Pedestrian Crossing on McGrath Road.

Stated that the potholes raised previously are kept on the agenda.

Thanked the team for the surface dressing works in Dromore.

5.0 Q&A

Questions raised by Cllr. Aidan Campbell for the June 2023 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

1. With the imminent opening of the New Library in the refurbished Gate Lodge at the entrance to Muckno in Castleblayney and as a result this area becoming busier for parking. Can the MD look at resurfacing and relining the Car Park off the avenue and behind the Annex formerly the orchard?

Response:

The Executive are currently exploring potential sources of funding to facilitate the resurfacing and relining of the Annexe Car Park.

2. Can the MD look at all the parking facilities and traffic movement around Lough Muckno with a view to making the area, particularly going down to the Black Island/White Island, more pedestrian friendly?

Response:

Following the establishment of the new Library facility, the Executive shall endeavour to commission a safety and accessibility audit of the main amenity destination routes.

3. What is the update on the appointment of a contractor for the works on the Monaghan Way?

Response:

A Contractor has been appointed. Works are scheduled to commence within the coming week.

4. With the Environmental and economical assessment options and feedback from the public consultation process now complete and a preferred option been selected for the Ballynacarry Bridge on the N53. What is the timeline of events now regarding planning and moving this project to the next stage?

Response:

Following selection of the preferred route, the design of the new bridge structure and lead in road network has been completed. The Environmental Impact Assessment is ongoing, specifically the archaeological and cultural heritage assessment. A Lidar Survey has been completed and a Geophysical and Field Survey is programmed for 18th/19th July for the purpose of identifying potential conflicts between archaeological resources and the proposed development. In the event that the surveys inform of no conflict areas, it is currently envisaged that a Part 8 Planning Application will be lodged in early August 2023 in tandem with a planning submission to the Newry & Mourne District Council for the Northern Ireland section of the project. With regards to moving the Project beyond Planning & Design Stage, MCC are currently exploring potential funding sources from a ROI perspective, to execute the construction of the bridge, subject to grant of planning permission of course. In addition, MCC are liaising with the Dept for Infrastructure NI, with a view of gauging their capacity and commitment for entering into a shared funding mechanism for the delivery of the scheme.

Questions raised by Cllr. Aoife McCooey for the June 2023 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

5. In October 2022 this response was given in relation to road safety on the R182:
"An assessment of Need Study for a Vehicle Restraint System on the R182 at Lisdonny, undertaken in August 2022, has determined that some 90 metres of safety barrier is required at this location. The Municipal District Executive is currently progressing the detailed design of the Vehicle Restraint System, with a view to installation commencing in December 2022."
Can the MD update us on the status of this work?

Response:

The design of the Vehicle Restraint System is complete. It is intended that installation shall be completed in early Q3 2023.

6. Can the MD provide an update of the Monaghan Way on Mullyash to improve walking paths and signage in the area.

Response:

The Identification of a potential stand-alone walking loop at Mullyash was included in the Terms of Reference for the Consultants engaged to progress the current Monaghan Way upgrade project. This element of the works has been completed. The Executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to realise the delivery of the route identified.

7. Can the MD provide an update on the requested bag dispenser and dog litter bin for Oram Village please? Suggested location at Struth An Luir and Cois Cill Oram. This location has been identified by residents as a particular black spot for dog litter in the village

Response:

It is anticipated that a dog waste bin and bag dispenser shall be installed within the coming month.

Questions raised by Cllr. Colm Carthy for the June 2023 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

8. When is it expected works will begin on the bandstand for the Civic Offices site and when is it also expected that works will begin on the public consultation for Gallows Hill (Carrickmacross)?

Response:

Bandstand:

The detailed design of the proposed bandstand for the Civic Offices site is complete. It is intended that a tender for the engagement of a suitable contractor shall issue to the market within the coming weeks, with a view to construction commencing in Q3 2023.

Gallows Hill:

It is intended that initial public consultation to inform the development of a Greenspace Masterplan for the Gallows Hill area shall commence in late Q3/early Q4 2023.

9. What is the latest update on the L4816 (Enagh) road following the site meeting the Executive were to have earlier this month and what plans have been put in place to deal with repairs to the L49101 & L49102 roads in Magheraclone?

Response:

Engineering staff have inspected the L4816 (Enagh), and the Executive are currently exploring all potential sources of funding to address the issues identified.

It is envisaged that maintenance repairs to the L49101 and L49102 roads in Magheraclone shall be completed within the coming weeks.

10. Understanding that significant funding is required to carry out a full resurface of the back laneway and roads at St. Macartans Villas, will the Council carry out some temporary repairs to both to leave them safer to traverse in the short-term (Carrickmacross)?

Response:

Engineering staff shall undertake a site inspection to identify feasible maintenance repairs in light of existing road maintenance budgets.

11. Whilst I warmly welcome the resurface works carried out on the Oriel Road, Carrickmacross, recently to deal with historic cutting & trenches for services fitted previously, has the Council plans to carry out similar works to the L76003 road, Oram, which has a long-dipped trench running along it following historic services installation?

Response:

The L76003 at Oram does not form part of the current Adopted Roads Programme. Repairs works to the L76003 shall be considered should funding outside of the current Road Improvement/Maintenance grant allocations become available.

12. The Oram playpark, at An Corran, is in need of a clean-up; can I request that one be carried out and also, a latch be added to the gate that would prevent a child from opening it without a parent/guardian to help; this gate leads out onto a main road and could be dangerous?

Response:

This MD will examine the issue with the gate and complete a tidy up in the coming weeks.

Questions raised by Cllr. Noel Keelan for the June 2023 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

13. Approximately how much money is spent per annum on general road maintenance / pothole repair throughout the Carrickmacross - Castleblayney MD area?

Response:

In 2022, this Municipal District spent circa €335,000 on road maintenance patching repairs.

14. In relation to utility companies such as Uisce Éireann /Irish Water, telecommunication companies etc., what oversight and penalties is there to ensure that our roads and footpath network is repaired or replaced to the highest standard when works are completed by such companies as this has not always been the case

Response:

All road opening works carried out on regional and local roads in the County are completed under a Road Opening Licence system. Road opening and reinstatement in public roads typically occur because of continuing improvement and maintenance of infrastructure and services. Each road opening is licenced and there are different types of licences depending on the impact of the proposed works. It is only following the granting of a licence by the Local Authority the works can commence. Conditioning of each licence places an obligation on the Licence Holder to maintain the reinstatement during the guarantee period and comply with the directions of the Road Authority. Each road opening licence has charges attached. These include application charges, road asset charges and inspection charges. These charges are based on the estimated cost of permanent reinstatement by the Roads Authority. Where a deposit has been paid, it will be refundable upon satisfactory inspection. Failure by a Licence Holder to satisfactory complete permanent reinstatement obligations will result in forfeiture of the reinstatement deposit.

15. When can we expect to see the much-anticipated bicycle rental scheme operational in Inniskeen and the wider area, how many bicycles will be available under the scheme and also what was the cost of purchasing them?

Response:

The MD Executive are currently in discussions with the principal community groups in the Village surrounding the implementation of the bicycle rental scheme as a social enterprise. Pending the outcome of these discussions, it is hoped that the scheme will become operational in Q3 2023. Initially, there shall be 16 No. bicycles available under the scheme. The purchase cost of the aforementioned bicycles was €16,580

16. When can we expect to see works commencing on the public realm for Inniskeen village, for those that may not have attended the information and consultation events, what will these works entail?

Response:

The Inniskeen Village Public Realm Spatial Plan formed the basis for a successful funding application under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme for Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity enhancements to the Village Heart and St. Mary's Space areas of Inniskeen Village. Consultants, C.S. Pringle, have been appointed to progress the scheme through to construction tender stage. The scheme is currently at Design Stage. Subject to securing any necessary statutory consents, it is hoped to commence construction in Q3 2023.

What is the up-to-date position in relation to providing safe walking infrastructure from the village centre and out to Magee's corner and beyond?

Response:

On foot of the most recent presentation by the Active Travel Unit (ATU) to the Elected Members of this Municipal District, the ATU advised the National Transport Authority (NTA) of the dissatisfaction expressed by the Members in relation to the proposed shuttle system aimed at facilitating safer pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between the Village centre and Magee's Corner. The NTA has advised that at present, the funding a new pedestrian bridge at this location will not be a priority under the current Active Travel Investment Programme.

17. In advance of sufficient funding becoming available to upgrade and resurface some of the very important roadways into our village areas such as Donaghmoynne, Lisdoonan, Inniskeen, Corduff and Killanny as examples, will this Council carry out what I would call high end maintenance including dealing with hubs and hollows that have appeared on some of these roads in recent times?

Response:

Monaghan County Council actively pursue all potential sources of funding towards the rehabilitation of non-national road network. High end maintenance works to the roadways leading into this Municipal District's village shall be considered should funding outside of the current Road Improvement/Maintenance grant allocations become available.

Questions raised by Cllr. Peter Conlon for the June 2023 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

18. Has there been any follow up with the owners of the trees on the convent hill regarding cutting back branches to reduce the bird fouling on the public footpath

Response:

The Executive has been in contact with the landowner concerned and is awaiting a response.

Questions raised by Cllr. P J O'Hanlon for the June 2023 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:

19. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the progression of the car park at Ivy lane?

Response:

A variation of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 is required to progress this proposal. The variation process requires screening reports to be produced in respect of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and also an Appropriate Assessment (AA). It will be necessary to procure the services of environmental consultants in this regard and Planning Section will be issuing a request for tender for these services in the coming weeks.

20. What is the status of the Workhouse project in Carrickmacross?

Response:

It is intended that a Multidisciplinary Design Team shall be engaged in early Q3 2023, to progress the scheme through to construction readiness. The programme for the delivery of the current Category 2 enabling project anticipates a project duration of 12 months from the date of the appointment of consultants.

21. Following the recent departures of John Fox and Pdraig McBride, to whom I extend hearties congratulations on their respective promotions, when is it expected that these vacant positions will be filled?

Response:

The interview process for the position of Assistant Engineer has been completed. It is hoped that any job offers shall issue to successful candidates within the coming weeks.

6.0 Motion

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

“That this Municipal District Council seek funding through ORIS, or similar funding streams, to establish a campervan park for Carrickmacross that would be situated on council-owned lands (which are not suitable for development), would be managed by us and made available during the tourist season; and could be made available out-of-season to recognised campervan clubs.”

Both Cllr. Carthy and Cllr. Keelan spoke about the huge potential such a park could bring to the locality.

Cllr. O’Hanlon advised that we must be careful about security. It needs to be built and used for the purpose it’s meant for.

Cllr. Conlon commented that it is a growing tourism piece and advised that, in the UK / Continent, such a place would be open 12 months of the year. Suggested that a feasibility study would be useful. He stated he fully supported the motion.

Cllr. McCooey supported the motion and suggested that if the facility is there, people will use it.

7.0 CE Orders

The following CE Orders were noted: CMX-CBY 50/2023; CMX-CBY 51/2023; CMX-CBY 52/2023 and 53/2023

8.0 VOS/VOC

Votes of sympathy were extended to Peter and Margaret McDonald on the death of Peter McDonald Jnr (RIP); the Byrne family on the death of Vera Byrne (RIP); the Kieran family on the death of Kathleen Kieran (RIP) and Brian Meegan & family on the death of Bridie Meegan (RIP).

Votes of congratulations were extended to the Monaghan County Minor Team on reaching the All-Ireland Minor final and to the Monaghan County hurlers on recently winning the Lory Meagher Cup final.

9.0 A.O.B

Cllr. Carthy:

Proposed that a letter of best wishes and thanks is issued to Carrickmacross Tidy Town team. They recently received the runner -up prize in the Large Town Category of the Ireland's Best Kept Town competition. Cllr. Conlon seconded this and all the Elected Members concurred and agreed that the town looks fantastic. Cllr. Carthy also mentioned the efforts local businesses put in .

Noted the bins which were removed for tidying and questioned if it is similar situation for the bench at the Convent entrance at Church Hill?

Requested an update regarding Children at Play signs at Drummond Etra.

Asked who the contact person is for any tree-felling / hedge-cutting concerns.

Noted re-surfacing issues concerning manholes. Some are dipping and causing a nuisance noise to those living in the town centre – one in particular beside Cloughvalley Stores.

Requested a review of manholes in resurfaced areas.

Cllr. Conlon:

Advised the road markings at the entrance to Inniskeen are difficult to see due to a shaded area.

Requested an update on Cloughvalley Road Signs.

Requested that low-hanging trees at Cloughvalley Playpark are cut.

Can street lighting for the footpath at Lurgans Hill be investigated?

Cllr. Campbell:

There is damage at the pedestrian crossing at McGrath Road – is there an update on repairs?

Requested an update on LCSW at Rock Chapel (LP4800).

There are sunken manholes at Laurel hill Place – can this be investigated.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Advised that there were two big patches repaired past Kelly's of Essexford, towards Dundalk. This is at the border and not in our area, but it will be poor if this area is let go.

Asked if the pedestrian crossing at Inniskeen Chapel will be done by the end of August 2023?

Cllr. Keelan:

Commended the MD for overseeing various road projects in the district, particularly at Essexford junction.

Asked when hedge trimming will be done at the walkways in town? There are a number of footpaths where there is overgrowth.

Asked if there is a possibility of getting nets for the goalposts at Cloughvalley playpark? It is dangerous because there is no barrier to stop the footballs.
Can the Fingerpost area be re-signed and re-lined?

Cllr. McCooey:

Regarding grass cutting at the Keady turn, leaving Castleblayney. Two rows need to be done for better visibility.

The meeting concluded at 12:40

Cathaoirleach

Date

Meeting Administrator