

**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 the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2023 at 10:00am.

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Aoife McCooley

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

**Apologies:** Carmel O’Hare, Director of Services

**In Attendance:** Robert Burns, Chief Executive, Damien Thornton, A/District Co-Ordinator, Gary Toye, District Engineer, Julieann O’Reilly, Assistant Staff Officer, Sarah Moore, Clerical Officer

**1.0 Confirmation of Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr. Carthy and seconded by Cllr. Keelan, the minutes of the September 2023 Monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Monday the 25<sup>rd</sup> of September 2023, were adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Conlon, the minutes of the In Committee meeting between the elected members and An Garda Síochána, held on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, were adopted.

**2.0 Matters Arising**

**Cllr. Carthy:**

Welcomed the opening of the Convent Lands playpark.

Requested an update on the signage located at Inver College.

*Reply – This have been checked and the speed signage is in accordance with regulations.*

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Re: the R178 between Carrickmacross and Kingscourt. The Enagh Road is the link up road. What is the plan b should the road need to be closed? Asked if extra funding should be sought?

Cllr. Conlon:

Commented that the Enagh Road had been spoken about in detail last month. It needs to be reviewed and works done.

Agreed with Cllr. O'Hanlon's comments that a plan b should be looked at.

Cllr. Keelan:

Voiced his support on the Enagh Road issue.

Commented that there are roads in a dangerous state, through no fault of anybody present, as the funding received has been spent well. There is simply no money there.

Stated that Minister Ryan and our local representatives have been quiet on the matter.

Advised that he will challenge Minister Ryan on these issues when meeting him.

Cllr. Carthy:

Agreed that the Enagh Road had been spoken about at length during the last meeting where it was suggested that the Reclaimed Asphalt Scheme could be a potential solution.

Stated that there should be a uniform position from the members – if this scheme cannot be used, another one needs to be found.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Noted that the meeting with Minister Ryan will occur before the next monthly MD meeting.

It was suggested by Cllr. O'Hanlon, that between now and then, the District Coordinator and District Engineer put together a presentation, regarding the roads rated 1 -4 in this MD.

Cllr. O'Hanlon further opined that a member from each party should speak at the meeting with the Minister.

Cllr. Keelan:

Commented that that MCC Roads Section have these types of reports to hand.

Cllr. Carthy:

Commended the Executive for having the road markings completed at Cloughvalley.

Advised that "Total Motorhome Ireland" contacted him to offer assistance/advice with the development of a camper van facility.

Cllr. Keelan:

Requested that Low-Cost Safety measures are considered for Corduff Cross.

*Reply – it is intended to include the R178 / Corduff Road Junction on a schedule of schemes for consideration under the Low-Cost Safety Improvement Scheme.*

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Wished to acknowledge the work of the Executive in preparing the tender documents for the Carrickmacross Workhouse project.

**3.0 Presentation: Town Centre First Plan**

- **James Hennessey, The Paul Hogarth Company**

Cllr. Conlon:

Stated he is excited to see the presentation – it is great to see the timeline and schedule.

Asked if there is a boundary to the Town Centre Plan?

Welcomed the recent survey in town and advised that members and press will help publicise the project.

*Reply – There is value to being flexible with regard to the boundary. The focus is on the town centre but will not be tied to boundaries.*

Cllr. Carthy:

Stated that it is good that the updates to members are a running thing.

Commented on the photo of Gallows Hill and wondered if the current Masterplan could possibly be part of this.

Stated that the future is bright and that the elected members will do what they can to help.

Cllr. Keelan:

Acknowledged the work of Kevin McNally, A/Town Regeneration Officer.

Commented that we are lucky to have such an active Chamber of Commerce and Tidy Towns Committee in Carrickmacross.

Wished to note some issues in Carrickmacross, namely,

- Parking.
- Pedestrian safety - HGV ban not being enforced.
- Asked for a flavour of the public consultation.
- Vacant properties, particularly over retail properties.
- Carrickmacross Market has dwindled.
- Land at back of BOI should be investigated with a view to purchasing. Potentially a myriad of uses.

*Reply – A flavour from the public consultations included:*

- *Not as much vacancy / dereliction as other towns, but what is there is very visible.*
- *Lack of leisure facilities.*
- *Concerns about lorries, trucks, agricultural vehicles in the town.*
- *Not much for young people to do.*
- *Perception of public safety*
- *Lack of places to gather.*

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Wished to formally acknowledge and welcome Robert Burns, CE of MCC.

Commented that the Courthouse needs to be kept in use.

Mentioned the carpark at Shirley House Lane.

Stated that he is very proud of the developments in the vicinity of the Civic Offices and suggested that a direct walkway to the town is needed.

Spoke about the Nuremore Hotel. Noted that it is limited what can be done but that it is important to keep this issue on the agenda.

Cllr. Campbell:

Commented that there are a lot of funding streams available.

Stated that Carrickmacross are very lucky that they have strong retail business in the town.

Cllr. McCooey:

Advised that the elected members are here to help.

In accepting that not directly relevant to this presentation, questioned whether the members could get a report from the Vacant Homes Officer.

Cllr. Keelan:

Invited the Executive to comment on the enforcement of the HGV by-laws.

Advised that he will forward photos of recent day time HGV activity to Damien Thornton, A/Municipal District Coordinator.

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Noted that this issue had been raised and dealt with at the recent meeting with AGS.

Commented that he believes the issue seems to be worse at nighttime.

**4.0 Presentation: N53 / A37 Ballynacarry Bridge**

- **Gearóid McCarthy, Project Manager and Brian Braniff, S.E.E.**

Cllr. McCooey:

Stated she is keen to have progress made on this bridge as it is very dangerous.

Cllr. Campbell:

Complimented MCC for taking the lead and doing all the groundwork.

Stated that it is a very dangerous bridge, and it is very welcome to see progress.

Commented that it will take €250,000 plus to bring it to planning stage.

Queried the cost to complete and whether discussions with landowners have taken place?

*Reply – Total estimated cost is currently €13 million. Landowners have been met with and no issues arose – all are happy to work with us. It is hoped to get land requirements by agreement rather than CPO. One property is particularly affected, and this landowner is considering their options.*

*Public Consultation was held in Culloville, and the feedback was extremely positive.*

Expressed disappointment with the Department of Infrastructure in Northern Ireland, stating it is a cross border project, and it is very important they contribute.

*Reply – They have not contributed financially; however, they have provided information.*

Asked if there is an option to seek Peace funding?

*Reply – We currently do not have information on this funding stream.*

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Commented that MCC are left “carrying the can” because of the dysfunctional government in Northern Ireland.

Noted the commercial connectivity between the border counties and commented on the Shared Island Fund.

Stated that this project needs to be progressed – it is a safety issue.

Stated that the issue needs to be raised with Eamon Ryan.

Commented that he has a fundamental problem with taxpayers providing works for services in another jurisdiction.

*Reply – MCC have consulted with The DFI in N. Ireland, and they have always said they are not in a position to fund this. It must be noted that TII have not committed to funding – they have committed to progress the project to planning approval stage.*

Queried the timeframe and longevity/shelf-life of the design, as there is the potential for significant delays in getting the project “”across the line.

*Reply – It is a robust design and meets current standards.*

Cllr. Conlon:

Clarified that the DFI have stated that the project is “not on their radar” and commented that the lack of Executive in Northern Ireland is the cause. Stated he is disappointed to learn that “the other side” are not contributing financially.

On the proposal of Cllr. O’Hanlon and seconded by Cllr. McCooey, it was unanimously agreed that:

*“A letter be sent to Newry & Mourne District Council in relation to coming up with funding from the Northern Ireland Executive to help complete the Ballynacarry Bridge, to benefit the economy and also the serious safety issue with the bridge”.*

Cllr. Keelan:

Stated that this needs to be progressed.

Commented that the government in Northern Ireland is dysfunctional.

Remarked that when the time comes, a way will be found. The local members will do all they can to help progress the project and suggested raising the issue at respective cross border committees.

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Highlighted that Peace Funding is from Europe and that the Shared Island Fund is Irish Taxpayers money.

Stated that it is not right that Northern Ireland are not making a financial contribution and that he fundamentally disagrees with that.

Cllr. McCooey:

Stated that we should ""push on and see out our commitments.

The members will do all in their power to progress this – it should not be shelved.

Noted the importance of the infrastructure to connect up the area.

Commented that it is very positive that the landowners are all on board.

## **5.0 Correspondence**

- i. Acknowledgement from Minister for Health office re: motion sent regarding ambulance wait times.
- ii. Acknowledgment from Minister for Transport office re: motion sent regarding underspend of over €200m.
- iii. Acknowledgment from Minister for Transport office re: motion sent regarding lighting at N2 /N53.
- iv. Letter from Minister Humphrey's office re: motion sent regarding additional funding for roads.
- v. Letter from Brendan Smith TD re: motion sent regarding additional funding for roads.
- vi. Letter from Brendan Smith TD re: motion sent regarding additional funding for roads.
- vii. Acknowledgment from Minister for Transport office re: road infrastructure.
- viii. Letter form Matt Carthy TD re: proposed meetings with Cllrs.
- ix. Letter from Tuath Housing re: attending proposed meeting.

## **6.0 MD Coordinator's Report**

Cllr. Keelan:

Acknowledged the MD Coordinator's Report.

Queried how long the applications for the proposed CCTV Schemes for Castleblayney and Carrickmacross are resting with AGS for approval?

*Reply - There was a meeting with the CCTV Advisory Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> of May last. The Committee advised that they would be recommending the approval of both schemes to the Garda Commissioner's Office. We are awaiting an update from the Commissioner's Office.*

Asked for a comment from the Executive on the Inniskeen Bike Rental Scheme.

*Reply – The Executive are looking at the possibility of MCC running the scheme directly.*

Asked if there are any plans to increase the off-road parking provision in Inniskeen village.

*Reply – The development of a parking strategy forms part of the current Public Realm enhancement project.*

Stated that we need to look at the land to the rear of the BOI building in Carrickmacross.

Welcomed the works taking place in the coming weeks at the bottom of Lisanisk Hill.

#### Cllr. Campbell:

Expressed thanks for the report.

Re: Rural Regeneration Funding - commented that it is very important to keep the push on for the Market House, Castleblayney and stated he hopes it comes to fruition.

Spoke about the Active Travel unit. Stated that things seemed to have been done quicker when the MD was doing it and remarked that the progression of schemes is a very slow process. Requested that an update be sought from the Active Travel Unit on the proposed walking route at Drumillard, commenting that this proposed route no longer appears on the list of Active Travel Schemes.

#### Cllr. Conlon:

Welcomed works in Cloughvalley.

The shark's teeth on the ramps in Inniskeen have faded – you cannot see the ramp.

*Reply – this will be placed on the repairs and maintenance list.*

Commented he is delighted to see funding for Cloughvalley Playpark – children with additional needs have the same right to play.

Pleased to see the Carrickmacross Workhouse progression and thanked A/ Municipal District Coordinator Damien Thornton for his work on same.

#### Cllr. Carthy:

Thanked the Executive for the recent patching works in Carrickmacross. Noted that it is a short-term measure, and an eye needs to be kept on it.

Advised that road markings at the end of Rockdaniel Road, adjacent to the Cluainn Alainn Estate, were partially obscured, causing confusion to drivers.

#### Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Questioned if there are any additional safety plans for the Shercock Road and referred to the fact that local residents did not want ramps or cushions due to potential flooding concerns.

*Reply – There is currently nothing set in stone. Advance warning speeding signage is being investigated. Local residents did raise concerns about the potential use of cushions.*

Sought clarification on the “new road markings” at Woodlands Cross.

Advised that people are preparing for a marathon in Inniskeen and would appreciate it if the pressure can be kept on regarding the lighting as we are entering into the darker months.

Cllr. McCooey:

Queried if there is a delay on the Black Island money?

*Reply – This is progressing to the original plan.*

Asked for an update on the Mullyash Walking Loop and the sensory garden at Muckno.

*Reply – An announcement on successful funding applications generally issues around November time.*

Remarked on the Market House, CBY funding – delighted with this.

*Reply – This MD will seek an update from the Capital Projects team.*

Pointed out that it is worth noting that these projects can take years to come to fruition.

Funding was received for a crash barrier at Oram and should have been in place 12 months ago. What is the update?

*Reply – This will be investigated.*

Asked when will there be a presentation to members about Brennan's Cross, similar to the Ballynacarry presentation held today?

Commented on the extension of footpath in Carrickmacross, stating that this should be considered year on year.

## **7.0 Q&A**

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

- 1. When is it expected the long-awaited clean-up of the shuck that runs through Foxfield, Carrickmacross, will take place?**

#### **Response:**

Following an initial site assessment by engineering staff, it appears that the shuck that runs through Foxfield Estate is, for the main part, located on privately-owned lands. In the first instance, the Executive shall attempt to engage with the landowner concerned with a view to their having the issue resolved.

- 2. What is the up-to-date situation with the Bandstand for Carrickmacross?**

#### **Response:**

The detailed design of the proposed bandstand is currently subject to a design audit to ensure that the finished build provides good acoustics and may be readily secured to deter any potential anti-social behaviour. Pending the extent of any recommended design changes, it is intended that a tender for the engagement of a suitable works contractor shall issue to the market in mid-late Q4 2023.

- 3. What works have been carried out, to-date, on bringing a water feature to Carrickmacross and can the Executive confirm that it is still on our agenda?**

#### **Response:**

The provision of a water feature is included in the scope of works for the proposed Public Realm enhancement scheme for Main Street and Bridewell Lane. It is envisaged that an Urban



Designer/Public Realm Architect-led Multidisciplinary Design Team shall be engaged in early 2024 to progress this scheme.

4. When is it expected repair works on the footpaths in and around Carrickmacross will take place?

**Response:**

It is intended that repair works to footpaths in and around Carrickmacross shall commence in late October – early November 2023.

5. Following numerous complaints about the quality of the footpath along Muckno Street, Castleblayney, what plans are in place to carry out an extensive repair of the footways along both sides of the street?

**Response:**

Extensive footway repairs are currently underway on Muckno Street. It is anticipated that these works shall be completed in the coming weeks.

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

6. Has there been an agreed date for the trimming of the trees on the Convent Hill?

**Response:**

The landowner has advised that tree-trimming works shall commence in early November.

7. At what stage is the funding application for the Workhouse?

**Response:**

Monaghan County Council secured Category 2 funding under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) to initiate the development of the Carrickmacross Workhouse site to provide a Community, Tourism & Arts Hub. Category 2 funding provides for the development of project proposals through to “shovel ready” status. The programme for the delivery of this current enabling project anticipates a project duration of 12 months. A tender for the engagement of a suitably qualified multidisciplinary Design Team has issued to the market. The closing date for receipt of tender submissions is the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2023. Pending the outcome of this procurement process, it is envisaged that a Design Team shall be appointed in early 2024.

8. Funding has been provided for improvement works to the playground in Cloughvalley. Is there a timeframe for the completion of these works?

**Response:**

Monaghan County Council received funding under the *Community Recognition Fund* for the development of a sensory space and outdoor classroom adjacent to the playground in Cloughvalley. The project is currently at design stage, and it is envisaged that construction

works shall commence in early 2024. The works programme shall be confirmed once a suitable works contractor is appointed.

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

9. As a follow on from a number of on-site meetings with local residents, community representatives and our engineering staff, what plans have the Council in the time ahead to resolve the ongoing problem of serious flooding in the Donaghmoyne village area which is having a major impact on the local school and surrounding dwellings?

**Response:**

An application for funding shall be submitted under the *2024 Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works* programme to procure design consultancy services to assess the issue of flooding and develop feasible solutions. Thereafter, the Executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to advance the identified remedial measures.

10. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the provision of extra safety and traffic calming measures adjacent to the Donaghmoyne village Playpark which is heavily utilised, as requested by concerned parents and local community leaders?

**Response:**

The section of road (LT45101) adjacent to the playpark in Donaghmoyne has been included on a schedule of schemes put forward for consideration under the *2024 Safety Improvement Works on Regional and Local Roads* programme.

11. Will this council examine the possibility of carrying out improvement works to the Corduff junction on the Shercock regional road (R178) with a view to improving visibility. given this is the main access route into Corduff for those attending at the school, community centre and busy GAA grounds?

**Response:**

The Executive shall arrange for a safety assessment to be undertaken on the Corduff/R178 junction to determine any required road safety remedial measures.

12. When is it hoped to complete the public lighting programme for this year 2023 including at Lisdoonan village adjacent to the local shop and beyond, and at Inniskeen from Magees Shop and towards Finnegan Cross?

**Response:**

It is anticipated that the public lighting programme for this Municipal District shall be completed in December 2023.

13. What progress, if any, has been made in relation to getting the bicycle rental scheme for Inniskeen and the wider area operating. If an operator cannot be found, including from the local community organisations, will the council consider running the scheme itself?

**Response:**

The Executive are currently in discussions with the Department and IPB surrounding the feasibility of Monaghan County Council operating the scheme directly. Confirmation of an agreed strategy is expected within the coming weeks.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Aidan Campbell for the October 2023 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:****14. Regarding the ongoing works on the Monaghan Way walking route.****(a) What is the update on the works?****Response:**

Works to the Monaghan Way walking route, from Inniskeen to Annadrumman, are now complete.

**(b) How many new looped walks will be included in the new works?****Response:**

There are 3 No. new looped walks located along the route:

1. Inniskeen Loop (5.3km)
2. Magoney Loop (5.5km)
3. Toome Loop (4.9km)

**(c) Where will these new routes be linking into to the existing Monaghan Way?**

The Start/Finish point for both the Inniskeen and Magoney looped walks is located directly opposite the entrance to the Patrick Kavanagh Centre in Inniskeen Village. The Start/Finish point for the Toome looped walk is located in the picnic/car parking area adjacent to Lough Muckno at Annadrumman.

**(d) When is expected to have this work complete and open to the public?**

Following a recent trail inspection by *Sport Ireland Outdoors*, the Monaghan Way walking route from Inniskeen to Annadrumman, including the 3 No. new looped walks, has been added to the National Trails Register.

**15. With regards to the works due to take place at Lough Muckno and the Black Island with funding received from under Outdoor Recreation fund of €500,000.****(a) What is the update on this work?****Response:**

The Black Island enhancement project is currently at detailed design stage and pre-planning consultations have been scheduled.

**(b) Is the necessary planning permission submitted?****Response:**

It is anticipated that the planning application shall be submitted in late Q4 2023.

(c) When is it hoped to have this work commenced?

**Response:**

It is anticipated that works shall commence in February/March 2024.

(d) When is it hoped to have this work completed?

**Response:**

The project is scheduled for completion in Q2 2024.

16. With the proposed works to upgrade Ballynacarry Bridge ongoing and now the design of the new bridge complete.

(a) When is it hoped that planning will be through for this work?

**Response:**

It is proposed to submit the Part 8 planning application in Q4 2023.

(b) What is the update on the potential funding for this important project?

**Response:**

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) has confirmed funding for *Phase 4 - Statutory Processes* of the TII Project Management Guidelines.

(c) What is the update on the discussions with the Department of infrastructure in Northern Ireland around funding this project?

**Response:**

Monaghan County Council contacted the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi), Northern Ireland, in June 2023, to gauge their appetite to enter a joint funding arrangement for scheme construction, subject to required approvals throughout the planning & design phases. The Dfi advised that they are not in a position to contribute towards funding for the construction of the scheme.

17. Can the MD examine the road markings on Laurel Hill in Castleblayney to alleviate parking on private entrances during busy school drop off and pick up times?

**Response:**

The Municipal District Executive shall review the existing road markings on Laurel Hill with a view to alleviating parking at private entrances.

18. What is the update regarding the CCTV in Castleblayney?

**Response:**

Following a presentation to the National CCTV Advisory Committee on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2023, the Committee advised that they would be recommending the approval of the scheme to the Garda Commissioner's Office. The Executive are currently awaiting approval or otherwise from the Commissioner's Office.

## **8.0 VOS/VOC**

*Votes of sympathy* were extended to the Gollogly family on the death of Margaret Gollogly (RIP); Art Agnew and family on the death of Helen Agnew (RIP); Maureen & Oliver McKenna & family on the death of Josephine Meegan (RIP); Kim Thornton on the death of Jacqueline Yorke (RIP); Jean Woods on the death of Stephen Kirk-Woods (RIP) and Maud and Jim Hand on the death of Patrick Cumiskey (RIP).

*Votes of congratulations* were extended to Joe Hanratty on the achievement of his original play “No going back” at Iontas, sponsored by MCC and Monaghan Libraries; Corduff – Raferagh Active Retirement Group on the achievement of 20 years in existence and Castleblayney Faughs U17 team and management on the achievement of their championship win.

## **9.0 A.O.B**

### Cllr. Keelan:

Need to look at signage and enforcement regarding HGV's in Carrickmacross.

Can we investigate improved lining and hedge cutting issues at Essexford junction.

Two junctions require hedges to be trimmed:

- Rossdreenagh, Culloville Road
- Killanny (Nuremore)

The footpath at Beech Grove needs to be re-engineered.

The goalposts in Carrickmacross require nets.

### Cllr. Carthy:

Outdoor staff have advised that there is an increased level of dumping of used aerosol cans. This is very worrying development, and we need to get the word out to parents.

ESB plan to turn off the electricity on Farney Street on November 9<sup>th</sup> which is a Thursday. As local businesses tend to close on a Monday, can ESB be contacted to attempt to change the planned date?

*Reply – an email has issued to ESB.*

### Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Attended the recent B&C open day re: 19 new private houses. Great to see private houses for sale in Carrickmacross – there was a very positive response.

Wished to note the many grants available, particularly to first time buyers.

### Cllr. Carthy:

Commented that B&C could run a course on how to operate a development site – they have been model developers.

### Cllr. Campbell:

There have been a number of accidents on the main road between the R181 and Bocks Lower. Can the surface of this road be investigated?

Welcomed works at the Shercock Road, Castleblayney. Commented that is quite dangerous towards the end of the town, around Kingspan, due to speeding.

Requested an update on the development of a regeneration plan for lands to the rear of Main Street, Castleblayney.

*Reply – A Tender for the engagement of Consultants has issued.*

Can we look at having only one presentation per meeting due to time constraints?

Cllr. Conlon:

Some of the platforms on play equipment at the playparks pool water when wet which is a safety issue. Wondered if drilling holes might alleviate same?

Please investigate funding for the upgrade of playparks.

Cllr. McCooey:

Welcomed Robert Burns, CE of Monaghan County Council.

Monaghan County Council Chief Executive, Robert Burns, addressed the members, and advised that he will return. He informed that members that they all know where he is as he is keen to provide any support needed and commented that it is very interesting to hear about all the works in the MDs.

The meeting concluded at 13:10.

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Cathaoirleach

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Date

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Meeting Administrator