

Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee (Economic Development & Enterprise Support) meeting

held 31st May 2023 @ 4pm in Council Chamber, MTek 1,

In attendance:

Cllr. P.J. O’Hanlon (Chair)	Monaghan County Council
Cllr. Noel Keelan	Monaghan County Council
Mr. Alan Johnston	Monaghan Town Team – Business Pillar Rep
Mr. John Tobin	Carrickmacross Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Cathal Flynn	Director of Services, Planning & Economic Development
Ms. Briege Quinn	Business Advisor, Local Enterprise Office
Mr. John Reilly	Executive Engineer Housing
Finbarr Daly	Chief Executive Officer · Enterprising Monaghan
Ms. Angela Gallagher	Administrative Officer, Planning Section

In attendance remotely

Cllr. Sean Gilliland	Monaghan County Council
Cllr. David Maxwell	Monaghan County Council
Mr. Toirleach Gourley	Senior Executive Planner

Apologies

Cllr. Sean Conlon	Monaghan County Council
Mr. Patrick McCormick	Irish Farmers’ Assoc. – Agricultural Pillar Rep
Mr. Adrian Hughes	Senior Planner

Cllr David Maxwell proposed that Cllr P.J. O’Hanlon chair the meeting until Cllr. Sean Gilliland could join online; this was agreed by Cllr. Noel Keelan.

1. Previous Minutes

The minutes of meeting held on 22nd February 2023 were proposed by Cllr. Noel Keelan and seconded by Mr. Alan Johnston.

2. Matters arising

None

3. Economic Analysis Report and Activities of Enterprising Monaghan

Mr Finbarr Daly made a presentation to the SPC Committee, covering the history of Enterprising Monaghan over the past 40-50 years, outlined the key sectors in Agri-food & Engineering and the future for Monaghan.

It was agreed that a copy of the presentation would be circulated after the meeting to all SPC Members.

Cllr Noel Keelan stated that it is important to continue to sell Monaghan as a place to run a business and asked Finbar to give a comparison between Monaghan and Dublin?

Mr Finbarr Daly stated that the figures could range from 30-50% less to do business in County Monaghan.

Alan Johnston referred to the retention of the younger generation and the challenges once they leave further education. Housing is an issue and there must be huge potential for Companies to move their business out of Dublin.

Finbarr stated that he has 12 reasons to come to Monaghan outlined on their website.

Cllr Sean Gilliland referred to the Food Hubs in Ballybay which thrive and then move out to bigger premises. He asked in relation to infrastructure such as suitable buildings and facilities that Enterprising Monaghan look to attract, does Monaghan have enough? Should the Council look to get more land through the review of the County Development Plan? Also can you highlight the importance of the Roads infrastructure?

Finbarr stated that Enterprising Monaghan is focussing more on the buildings and that they could do with more industrial units in the region of 20,000 square feet & need to look at more service industries, identifying suitable land and will be meeting with the Senior Planner to discuss this for the new Development Plan.

Mr Cathal Flynn stated that he will integrate the comments from Mr Alan Johnston into the Local Economic Community Plan and LEO will work hand in hand with Enterprising Monaghan. Monaghan County Council will do its best to purchase lands to help the 5 towns grow through the zoning of lands.

4. Regeneration/Dereliction & Vacancies

Mr John Reilly gave a presentation to the committee on Dereliction and Vacant properties within County Monaghan. It was agreed that the slides will be circulated to the SPC Members after the meeting.

Cllr Noel Keelan referred to the ownership of the property and also the CPO process and asked how difficult this is.

Mr John Reilly stated that the Department are currently providing resources and are helping the Local Authorities with the process. In relation to finding the owners, the Land Register is checked, if not registered, they speak to neighbours, local Councillors or community workers. With regards the CPO process this is currently carried out by the Planning Authority, however the Housing Section is trying to get the owners to avail of the grants before the CPO process commences. John stated that the owner will be asked to complete any works, or they can be placed on the derelict sites register and the property can go through CPO process.

Mr Cathal Flynn stated that Mr Kevin McNally will be leading the Town Regeneration Team along with Ms. Maire Cullinan and A.N. other.

Cllr PJ O'Hanlon referred to the Derelict Site Levy and asked how much it is?

Mr Cathal Flynn stated that the Council decided some time ago not to put a levy on derelict sites, however this can be looked at again. Funding will be provided to Local Authorities to target vacant properties and there will be a team of 4 working on regeneration.

Cllr. Sean Gilliland referred to the Ballybay-Clones Area and stated that there was a high volume of derelict sites, approximately 53 in Ballybay if not more and said it is good to see them being dealt with and stated that from 1st May the 'Croí Conaithe Grants' there is now an extra €20,000 available bring the maximum level of grant up to €70,000.

Cllr Noel Keelan referred to the Derelict Sites Levy and stated that as there are now grants available there should be no excuses and that there should be a penalty attached to each property on the Derelict Sites Register.

5. AOB

No items raised under AOB.