

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Meeting Room, Civic Offices, Carrickmacross, Monaghan, on Monday 02 October 2023 at 2 p.m.

Chair: Cllr D. Maxwell, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs. Aughey, Bennett, Campbell, Carthy, P. Conlon, S. Conlon, Coyle, Gilliland, Keelan, McCooey, McElvaney, McKenna, O’Hanlon, P. Treanor, S. Treanor, and Truell.

Cllr P Connolly joined remotely via TEAMS

Mr. R. Burns, Chief Executive, Mr. C. Flynn, Ms. P. Monahan, Directors of Services, Mr. G. McMahon, Ms. O. McConnon, Ms. Carmel O’Hare, A/Directors of Services, Meetings Administrator, Ms. M McGarvey

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell, seconded by Cllr P Treanor it was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the Mealiff family on the death of Ross Mealiff, former member of Clones Town Council, RIP.

All Councillors associated themselves with the vote of sympathy as did the Chief Executive on behalf of the Management and Staff of the Council.

The meeting was adjourned for ten minutes as a mark of respect to the late Ross Mealiff.

The Cathaoirleach introduced and welcomed new Chief Executive, Robert Burns to Monaghan Co Council. He congratulated Mr Burns on his appointment and assured him of the full support of the elected members who look forward to working with him. All members associated themselves with the welcome to Mr Burns.

The Chief Executive stated that he was delighted to be at his first Co Council meeting and was proud and honored to be Chief Executive of Monaghan Co Council. He thanked members for confirming his appointment and placing their trust in him. Mr Burns stated that he was fortunate to have a senior executive team and staff who were dedicated, skilled and responsive and he thanked his predecessors, in particular, Patricia Monahan for helping him in his transition.

The CE referred to some of the challenges facing Monaghan and also highlighted the many advantages that the county has, in particular a strong community sector. He stated that he looked forward to working with the members and meeting the people and the communities they represented.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

Minutes of Council Meeting held on 04 September 2023

On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan seconded by Cllr S Coyle it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 04 September 2023, be confirmed.

2. Correspondence

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda for the meeting:

- Letter from Bus Eireann Siobhan Griffin, regarding access to school transport
- Email from the Private Secretary to Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Mr. Roderic O’Gorman, T.D., regarding support of the Irish Foster Care

Association

- Acknowledgement Letter from the Private Secretary to the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Micheál Martin, T.D., regarding the New Garda Rosters
- Acknowledgement Letter from the Private Secretary to the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Micheál Martin, T.D., regarding the New Garda Rosters
- Acknowledgement Letter from the Assistant Private Secretary to the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., regarding the New Garda Rosters
- Acknowledgement Letter from the Assistant Private Secretary to the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., regarding Increase on excise duty on fuel.
- Acknowledgement Letter from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Education, Ms. Norma Foley T.D., regarding access to school transport.
- Acknowledgement email from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mr. Charlie McConalogue, T.D., regarding Working Group of Dog Control publications.
- Acknowledgement Email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly T.D., regarding breakdown of Doctors and Services at the New Primary Health Services.
- Acknowledgement email from the Office of the Minister for Justice, Ms. Helen McEntee T.D., regarding the New Garda Rosters.
- Acknowledgement email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Ms. Heather Humphreys, T.D., regarding Working Group of Dog Control publications.

- Resolution from Mayo County Council regarding Build Time for Croí Cónaithe Scheme.
- Resolution from Sligo County Council regarding Free school Transport to all students, Primary, Secondary, University students.
- Resolution from Cork County Council regarding Policies to reduce road deaths.

2.1 The following additional correspondence which had been received after the agenda had issued was also circulated:

- Email from the Head of Services, Primary Care regarding the positions for New Primary Care Services.
- Resolution from Limerick County Council regarding to reconsider the Government's position in relation to the tax placed on residentially zoned land.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

The Cathaoirleach referred to correspondence he had received from Mr Denis Mulcahy, Chairman of Project Children. He stated that the Project Children organization will be celebrating 50 years in 2025 and have chosen the Monaghan Peace Campus as the optimal location to preserve the story of Project Children and to also develop future youth programs.

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell, seconded by Cllr C Bennett it was agreed to include a provision of €10,000 in Budget 2024 for 'Project Children' archive base in the new Co Monaghan Museum.

On the proposal of Cllr P Connolly, seconded by Cllr B McKenna it was agreed that in view of the most recent unacceptable wait time of 2 hours 48 minutes for an ambulance in Co Monaghan to respond to an incident, that Monaghan Co Co calls again for a meeting with the Director of Ambulance Services for Dublin N.E. are to discuss this and other similar incidents and how this may be avoided in the future.

On the proposal of Cllr R Truell, seconded by Cllr S Gilliland it was agreed that this Council write to Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Cavan / Monaghan Oireachtas members requesting an extension to the 13-month timeframe currently required to secure grants under the Croí Cónaithe scheme.

On the proposal of Cllr C Carthy, seconded by Cllr N Keelan it was agreed that this Council write to the HSE Primary Care Management requesting that all measures be taken to increase the staff of Primary Care Nursing in South Monaghan as quickly as possible to the minimum required level of 5 no. nurses.

On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan, seconded by Cllr C Bennett, it was agreed that this Council supports the Sligo Co Co motion calling on the Irish Government to provide free school transport to all students, primary, secondary and university students and all citizens up to the age of 25.

On the proposal of Cllr C. Bennett, seconded by Cllr N Keelan, it was agreed that this Council supports the Cork Co Co motion calling on national authorities to review policies that can help reverse the upward turn in road deaths, in particular the exponential growth in pedestrian deaths.

On the proposal of Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr P. Conlon, it was agreed that this Council supports the Limerick Co Co motion calling on the Minister for Housing to reconsider the Government's position in relation to the tax placed on residentially zoned land.

3. To receive a presentation from Fehily Timoney Consultants on the Lough Muckno Strategic Planning and Environmental Appraisal Report.

Ms Bernie Guinan from Fehily Timoney Consultants joined the meeting to update members on the strategic planning and environmental appraisal report for Lough Muckno. She advised that the purpose of the report was to evaluate the concepts outlined in the 2021 'A Vision for Lough Muckno Estate' report prepared by Stevens & Associates from strategic planning and environmental perspectives. During her presentation she outlined Fehily Timoney's evaluation of the two concept proposal options and concluded with a recommendation to develop a Masterplan for the site.

Ms Guinan responded to members queries during a short discussion following her presentation.

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell, seconded by Cllr N. Keelan it was agreed that a full discussion on the report and any decisions arising from it be deferred to a future Council meeting (Dec) to afford Members and Executive an opportunity to study the document in depth.

4. To agree a date for Special Meeting on New Civic Offices project.

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell, seconded by Cllr S Gilliland it was agreed to hold a Special Meeting on new Civic Offices project on Tuesday, 17 October 2023 at 10.00 am.

5. To fix a date for Statutory Budget Meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell seconded by Cllr S Gilliland it was agreed to hold the Statutory Budget meeting on Friday, 24 November 2023 at 2 pm.

6. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group Meeting on 18 September 2023.

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18 September 2023, which had been circulated.

On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan seconded by Cllr D Maxwell it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18 September 2023 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

7. To receive Management Report – September 2023

The members noted the Management Report for the month of September which had been circulated with the agenda.

8. To receive Reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events.

The members noted the reports from Cllrs McCooey, Connolly, S Treanor, S Conlon, Carthy and Keelan in relation to attendance at the following Conference/Training events:

- AILG, Overview of Planning Legislation and Policy Guidance, 17 June 2023, Avalon Hotel, Castlecomer Co. Kilkenny
- AILG, Uisce Eireann, 22nd July 2023, Sligo Radisson Blu, Sligo, County Sligo.
- EM CARO, Climate Action Economic Opportunities Local Authorities Supporting Enterprise, 26 April 2023, Tullamore Court Hotel, County Offaly.
- AILG, Autumn Seminar, 13– 14 September Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo, County Sligo.

9. Business submitted by Chief Executive

The were no matters for consideration under this item.

10. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held on 04 September 2023

There were no matters arising out of the Council meeting held on 04 September 2023.

11. To receive update on N2 National Primary Road Scheme

No further update

12. To receive update on North South Interconnector project

No further update

13. To receive update on the Ulster Cancel project

No further update

14. Questions & Replies:

Cllr C. Carthy asked:

1. **What is the current situation with the 'taking in charge' of both Conabury Hill estate, Castleblayney and Alderwood, Carrickmacross?**

Reply: Conabury Hill: A taking in charge application was received in April 2021. The Local Authority has conducted a technical assessment of the development. In addition, it has consulted with Uisce Eireann including at a meeting in August 2023, and are currently awaiting their response. The process shall be progressed upon the receipt of their comments. Since receiving the taking in charge application, the Local Authority have carried out upgrading works to the pumping station compound.

Alderwood: The Local Authority remain in contact with the developer's agent regarding resolving previously identified defects. The Planning Authority have recently been advised that the final coat of tarmac has been laid, traffic calming is in place, and road markings are almost complete. The developer has also recently provided a letter of commitment regarding the transfer of assets to Uisce Eireann. Consultation will take place with Uisce Eireann to get agreement on taking in charge water assets.

2. **Is it still expected that the design for the utilisation of the old Castleblayney Fire Station for social housing for older persons will be completed by the end of 2023; can the executive provide an update?**

Reply: It was intended that the design team for the social housing project involving the "utilisation of the old Castleblayney Fire Station for social housing for older persons" would be appointed in quarter 3 of 2023 however there has been a slight delay in the appointment due to a complexity in the application process. Initially Monaghan County Council made an application for funding for the project and this was supported by the Department of Housing however as it is intended that the project will deliver sheltered housing for older persons there is a requirement to involve an Approved Housing Body from the outset so, unfortunately, although the Department of Housing is supportive of the project, the funding application had to be redrafted and submitted by North & East Housing Association (NEHA). The revised funding application was submitted by NEHA in September 2023, and it is anticipated that approval to proceed with design will be received in October 2023. In anticipation of receiving approval Monaghan County Council and NEHA intend to proceed with initial meetings with the design team in October 2023 and work towards commencement of the project. It is intended that a programme for the project will be agreed when approval to proceed with design is in place and following the initial meetings with the design team.

3. **When is it expected that the preliminary designs for the Workhouse project, Carrickmacross, will be presented to the Council and when is it expected the designs' detailed development (stage 2) will begin?**

Reply: It is intended that a Multidisciplinary Design Team shall be engaged in Q4 2023, to progress the scheme through to construction readiness. The programme for the delivery of the current enabling project anticipates a project duration of 12 months from the date of the appointment of consultants. Broadly, the process shall involve two stages. Stage 1 (6 months) shall provide for analysis, engagement with key stakeholders, non-statutory public consultation, the development and appraisal of preliminary options and the selection of a finalised strategy. It is anticipated that preliminary designs shall be available for presentation

to the Members in Q2 2024. Stage 2 shall provide for detailed development, including environmental evaluation, of the preferred option and the progression of the scheme through Part 8 Planning procedures.

4. When will the upgrade of energy saving performance of Carrickmacross Fire Station be completed?

Reply: The phased energy upgrade at Carrickmacross Fire Station commenced with the installation of new appliance bay doors in 2022 and progressed with the commissioning of new energy efficient storage heaters in early 2023.

Following the acceptance of the WRC fire-fighter agreement, it is now planned to upgrade both welfare and muster bay area of Carrickmacross Fire Station. This work will include the enhancement of energy saving performance, and subject to funding is planned for completion in Q1 2024.

5. Following the increase in Income Limits for Social Housing at the beginning of 2023, and the increase in numbers of individuals/families now being eligible to apply, have the council been made aware of any plans to increase the housing delivery targets set for us by the Department of Housing over the coming years?

Reply: The Council has not been made aware of any proposals or plans to increase delivery targets.

ClIr S. Conlon asked:

1. To what cost value and number of Active Travel Unit projects have been submitted to Transport Infrastructure Ireland for assessment by Monaghan County Council and are waiting on for approval that will enable progressing schemes towards implementation?

Reply: The Draft Design Reports for three Active Travel schemes i.e. Emyvale Village, Ballyalbanny to Corracrin; and Corlat Roundabout to Collegiate College, have been reviewed by TII, with comments provided to MCC. The purpose of this informal review is to address design issues at an early stage, before the finalised Design Reports are submitted for official approval to TII, thereby expediting the process. Currently, the Draft Design Reports are being updated by MCC as per TII comments and reports will be submitted for formal approval within the next 2 weeks. The estimated combined cost of these schemes is €5 million.

2. Following the allocation in February of 135,000 euro towards Road Safety Improvement Works at Scotch Corner to include Signage, Vehicle actuated signage, and speed reducing 'build outs' etc., what progress has occurred since design consultants were appointed in July that will result in long overdue installation?

Reply: A Consultant has produced a design and landowners have been consulted. It is hoped to appoint a contractor by the end of October. The works will involve kerbing, drainage, improved signage, and high friction surfacing. It is hoped to complete construction in 2023.

ClIr N. Keelan asked:

1. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the preparation and completion of the community plans for our villages across the county?

Reply: The following plans are in progress:

- Smithboro (community needs survey to be circulated mid-October)
- Latton (assisting the community to prepare its own plan)

The following communities have had commitments made to them:

- Donaghmoyne, including Lisdoonan and Broomfield
- Glaslough (community/ social side of a completed economic document required)

The following plan is on hold:

- Emyvale (draft document is in place)

No further communities can be taken on at this time.

2. How many individuals / families are currently on the housing waiting list, what is the breakdown per MD area, how many individuals / families have come on to the housing waiting list since January 2023?

Reply: There are currently (22/09/2023) 1204 applicants for Social Housing support. 1058 are approved and on waiting list. The reminder are pending further processing. Since 01/01/2023 there have been 180 NEW applications Approved. The Breakdown per MD is as follows:-

MON MD	615
CMX/CBY MD	411
CLONES/BBAY MD	178

3. In relation to the recent announcement by government regarding a complete review of the speed limits on our road network, what guidance or direction has Monaghan County council received from the department as to how we proceed with this review?

Reply: To date Monaghan County Council has not received any government or department correspondence in relation to a complete review of the speed limits within the county. However, MCC do review the speed limits on the road network on a 5year cycle. The local and regional roads were reviewed in 2022 with the national roads review due to commence in 2024. These reviews are complete in accordance with the "Guidelines for setting Speed and managing limits in Ireland 2015" issued by the Department of Transport.

4. In relation to the taken in charge of housing estates by Monaghan County council, how many applications are currently under assessment and where are these estates located?

Reply: As of October 2023, the Planning Authority have 26 estates in the taking in charge process at various stages of assessment. These estates are:

Location	Address
Millbrook	Milltown, Monaghan.
Lios a Ghoirtin	Clones.
An Crannog	Glen Road, Monaghan.
The Alders	Ballybay
Conabury Hill	Castleblayney
Glaslough Village	Glaslough
Mullaghglass	Monaghan
Scotshouse Close	Scotshouse

Knocknamaddy	Ballybay
Lough na Glack	Carrickmacross
Killycard (Radhairc an Bhri)	Castleblayney
Killycard Manor	Castleblayney
Eanaigh Ealta	Clones
Sruthan Claddagh	Ballybay
Crann Nua	Carrickmacross
Dartry Court	Rockcorry
Cois Locha	Doohamlet
Telayden Heights (latest phase)	Milltown, Monaghan.
Carrowbarra Island	Smithborough
Cois Cnoic	Pound Hill, Monaghan
Alderwood	Carrickmacross
Oakland Grove	Scotshouse
Drummand Radhcairc**	Carrickmacross
Drumbear Wood (12 houses) **	Monaghan
Ardveagh**	Ballybay
Scotshouse Close**	Scotshouse
<i>**Assessment completed. Public consultation process to be commenced</i>	

5. How many planning enforcement files are currently open and awaiting a determination by the local authority as to what action if any will be undertaken, how many planning enforcement files are currently before the courts and awaiting a determination?

Reply: The Plannings Section currently have 286 cases on its Enforcement Register. This includes a significant number of historical cases which were transferred into the electronic document management system from the previous paper system. A review of these historical cases is being carried out as resources permit.

There are 23 enforcement cases within the Courts system.

Cllr A. Campbell asked:

1. When will the next phase of Housing at Radharc An Bhri in Castleblayney be opened?

Reply: Eight houses from Phase 2 Radharc An Bhri, Castleblayney (10 houses total) has already been provided by Tuath in June & September 2023. The remaining two houses of Phase 2 are proposed to be completed in Quarter 1 2024.

2. What is the update on the Active Travel Projects which are planning for the Castleblayney area?

Reply: **MN-21-0021 Light Segregation Cycle Scheme** – Monaghan Road Castleblayney. The design team are working on detailed design drawings for this scheme, and we expect to receive this in Mid Oct.

The NTA issued the new Cycle Design Manual on 1st September 2023. This replaces the

previous National Cycle Manual, published in 2011. This new Design Manual is to be followed for all schemes.

Once the design has been reviewed by the Active travel team and the MD Engineering staff it will be forwarded to the NTA for Approval to proceed to tender for construction.

MN/21/0020 Low-Cost Junction Tightening – Shercock Road/ Mile Hill Road Junction Castleblayney. A design team is to be appointed in coming weeks for the design of this location. The letter of intent has been issued to the MEAT Tenderer. This tender package is for 7 AT schemes across the county.

MN/23/0020 Urban Mobility/Sustainability AT Plans - (Castleblayney, Ballybay, Clones, Carrickmacross): Clones plan being updated by design team. This is to be used as a template for other 3 towns when approved by NTA. Advancement of reports for other towns dependent on NTA approval.

3. What is the next stage with regards to the Local Authority Climate Action Plan?

Reply: The next stage of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan process is statutory public consultation on the draft proposed plan. It is anticipated that the draft Climate Action Plan will be published in October for a 6-week period and elected members and the public will be kept up to date and informed on how to 'have their say' during this consultation process.

4. With regards to Lough Muckno and the ongoing works to improve water quality. What is the update on the Muckno Road to Recovery? What Engagements have we had with the local landowners with regards to water quality?

Reply: The Lough Muckno Road to recovery project is progressing well, with monthly monitoring due to be completed in December 2023. The first phase of the project is scientific study aimed at collecting data and carrying out investigative work on the lake to inform the development of an integrated catchment management plan. The report produced in Q1 2024, will provide us with information on internal phosphorus loads from the lake sediment and the phosphorus loads entering the lake via each of the tributaries. It will help us to target our resources in the places where it is needed most and it will also set a realistic timeframe for the lake recovery, based on the internal load. In relation to engagements with local landowners, farm Inspections were carried out in the Gentle Owens_20 and Annahale_10 tributaries in Q3 2022 and follow up inspections were carried out in Q1 2023. Prior to carrying out the inspections in the Gentle Owens_20 each farmer was issued with an information pack which included a letter, a map of the catchment area and some information leaflets. Giving the farmers information and notification of our work in the area allowed for meaningful conversations to take place during the inspections. When arriving to farms we found that a lot of farmers had read the information and were ready to ask questions about the quality of their river. Further inspections are planned in the Gentle Owens_10 waterbody in Q3/4 2023. Farmers in this catchment area will be written to in the coming weeks and provided with the information on their catchment area prior to inspections being carried out. It is hoped that we get a similar level of interest and positive engagement in the catchment this winter. Investigative assessment carried out in August 2023 showed some signs of improvement in the upper reaches of the Gentle Owens River with the return of some pollution sensitive species of mayfly which were not present in September 2022. It is hoped to build on these improvements in the coming months in this catchment area.

Over the summer months (June – September) samples were taken at 3 locations on Lough Muckno on a monthly basis and analysed for the bathing water parameters. The sample site at the bathing area at Lough Muckno failed to meet the minimum bacteriological standards on two occasions on the 3rd of July 2023 and again on the 10th of August 2023. On each occasion the public were notified of the exceedances via signs erected at the site, posts on the council's social media and results were made available on our website.

<https://monaghan.ie/environment/bathing-waters/> . Samples taken at Black Island Point and The Lough Muckno Water Sports Area were within permissible values on all sample occasions. Recently there has been an algal bloom on Lough Muckno. Algal blooms occur in response to nutrient levels (phosphorus) in the lake and are more likely to occur during warm, calm weather. Warning signs have been erected at Lough Muckno and warning notices have been posted on the council’s social media platforms to advise people of the risks associated with algal blooms.

15. Notices of Motion

Motion 1 deferred to November 2023 meeting.

16. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

It was agreed votes of sympathy would be extended to the following:

- John Reilly, Executive Engineer, Housing Section on the death of his Father, James (Jimmy) Reilly.

The Cathaoirleach congratulated Cllr PJ O’Hanlon on his recent appointment as Chairperson of Cavan and Monaghan Educational and Training Board.

17. Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan seconded by Cllr S Coyle it was agreed that the Council be represented at the following training events by the members listed.

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
AILG	“Delivering Speeches in Irish”	Online	Friday 29th September (10am - 11.30am) Friday 6th October (10am - 11.30am)	Cllr. Pat Treanor Cllr. Brian McKenna Cllr. Cathy Bennett
AILG	“Elected Member Personal Security – Positive Home, Workplace and Mobile Security Practices”	The Kilmore Hotel, Cavan	19 th October	Cllr. Colm Carthy
Celtic Conferences	The First Home Scheme - Helping Homeowners get onto the Property Ladder	O'Donovan's Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork	20th, 21st & 22nd October	Cllr. Richard Truell Cllr. Peter Conlon
Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH)	From Vision to Reality: Transforming Communities Through Placemaking with Social and Affordable Housing	Clayton Whites Hotel, Wexford	18th & 19th October	Cllr. Pat Treanor Cllr. Seamus Treanor
AILG	“Elected Member Personal Security – Positive Home,	The Rose Hotel, Tralee	21 st October	Cllr. David Maxwell Cllr. Paudge Connolly

	Workplace and Mobile Security Practices” (Out of Region)			
LAMA	Autumn Seminar – Climate Action, Sustainable Businesses and Balanced Regional Development	Ard Rí Hotel in Tuam, Co. Galway	25 th & 26 th October	Cllr. Colm Carthy Cllr. Richard Truell Cllr. Sean Conlon Cllr. David Maxwell Cllr. Seamus Coyle

The meeting concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____