

Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan, County Monaghan, on Monday 08 January 2024 at 10 a.m.

Chair: Cllr D. Maxwell, Cathaoirleach

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

Via TEAMS: Cllr Gilliland, Cllr Connolly

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

At the outset, the Cathaoirleach welcomed all to the first meeting of 2024 and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He paid tribute to the outdoor staff of Monaghan Co Co for their efforts as a result of the current severe drop in temperatures. Mr G. McMahon, A/Director of Services update members on the salting schedule.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Meetings held on 04 December 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan seconded by Cllr R Aughey it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 04 December 2023 be confirmed.

2. Correspondence

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

- Email from Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, regarding Vacant property refurbishment Grant query.
- Email from Ms. Niamh Smyth, T.D., regarding Vacant property refurbishment Grant query.
- Email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly T.D., regarding introduction of Primary Medical Certificates criteria.
- Email from Ms. Niamh Smyth, T.D., regarding Road's funding.
- Resolution from Limerick City & County Council regarding wind energy development guidelines to be updated.
- Resolution from Clare County Council regarding publishing the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme.
- Resolution from Clare County Council regarding reviewing the current model of

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

- Acknowledgement Letter from the Assistant Private Secretary to the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., regarding request for information regarding the National Grid.
- Acknowledgement email from the Assistant Private Secretary to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan TD. regarding request for information regarding the National Grid.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

Cllr N Keelan proposed, Cllr P Treanor seconded that this Council write to the Minister for Housing and Local Government and Heritage requesting that as part of the review of the Croi Connaithe Grant Aid, agricultural buildings such as old mills, outhouses, lofts etc be included in the review.

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion out of order in accordance with Section 19.3 of Standing Orders as a similar motion had been tabled at the November 2023 meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr B McKenna seconded by Cllr P Treanor it was agreed that this Council support the Clare Co Co motion calling on Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris to revisit the current model of policing as it is not fit for purpose.

3. To consider the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for the upgrade of existing Corrybrannan Playground, Ballybay

Mr A Hughes, Senior Planner outlined the Part VIII proposal circulated for the upgrade to the existing Corrybrannan playground to include removal of existing play equipment and surfacing, installation of a Multi-Use-Games-Area, installation of the newly designed accessible playground and all ancillary works. Mr Hughes advised that there were no objections received during the public consultation period.

On the proposal of Cllr H McElvaney, seconded by Cllr P Treanor, it was agreed that the Council approve the upgrade of existing Corrybrannan Playground, Ballybay in accordance as detailed in the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

4. To consider the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for recreational enhancements at Dartrey Forest, Dromore West, Dawson Grove Demense, Black Island (Dartree By) and Fairfield Demense

Mr A Hughes, Senior Planner outlined the Part VIII proposal circulated for recreational enhancements to Dartrey Forest including compacted gravel path, re-inforced gravel vehicles overlay and regularisation of existing 4 number parking spaces and one accessible parking space, directional signage, marker posts, trailhead maps, picnic tables with foundations, wooden seating, miscellaneous natural play features and all other ancillary site works. Mr Hughes advised that there were no objections received during the public consultation period.

On the proposal of Cllr R Truell, seconded by Cllr P Treanor, it was agreed that the Council approve the recreational enhancements at Dartrey Forest, Dromore West, Dawson Grove Demense, Black Island (Dartree By) and Fairfield Demense in accordance as detailed in the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

5. To consider proposed taking in charge of developments under S180 of Planning & Development Act 2000 and S11 of the Roads Act 1993

Mr A Hughes, Senior Planner outlined the proposed taking in charge of the following developments:

- Ardveagh, Ballybay
- Drummond Radhairc, Carrickmacross
- Scotshouse Close, Scotshouse
- The Alders, Ballybay

Mr Hughes advised that in relation to Ardveagh, Ballybay and Drummond Radhairc, Carrickmacross requests had been made by the developer for the public areas/services within them to be taken in charge. Following assessment by the MD Engineers, the estate has been completed to a satisfactory standard. Uisce Eireann have indicated that they have no objections to the taking in charge. He advised that the Planning Authority is satisfied that the development can be considered for taking in charge.

In relation to Scotshouse Close, Scotshouse and The Alders, Ballybay, Mr Hughes advised that these were legacy developments. Requests had been made by the residents for the public areas/services within them to be taken in charge. Uisce Eireann have indicated that they have no objections to the taking in charge.

Mr Hughes advised that no objections were received during the public consultation period.

On the proposal Cllr S Coyle seconded by Cllr H McElvaney it was agreed that the Council approve the application for Ardveagh, Ballybay in accordance with the Taking in Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Road Notice, under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), & Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993.

On the proposal Cllr PJ O'Hanlon seconded by Cllr P Conlon it was agreed that the Council approve the application for Drummond Radhairc, Carrickmacross in accordance with the Taking in Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Road Notice, under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), & Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993.

On the proposal Cllr P Treanor seconded by Cllr H McElvaney it was agreed that the Council approve the application for Scotshouse Close, Scotshouse in accordance with the Taking in Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Road Notice, under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), & Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993.

On the proposal Cllr S Coyle seconded by Cllr S Gilliland it was agreed that the Council approve the application for The Alders, Ballybay in accordance with the Taking in Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Road Notice, under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), & Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993.

6. To Consider S183 - Sale of plot of land to Scotshouse Community Childcare

Ms O McConnon, A/Director of Services outlined the S183 for the proposed disposal of a plot of ground (0.384 ha) at Scotshouse to Scotshouse Community Childcare Services for the purpose of construction of creche facilities.

On the proposal Cllr R Truell seconded by Cllr S Gilliland it was agreed that the Council approve the Disposal of Land located at Scotshouse Community Childcare, Co. Monaghan in accordance with the terms of notice dated 16 October 2023 and attached site location map under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

7. To approve recommendation for Audit Committee member replacement

The members noted the recommendation of the CPG dated 19 December 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr H McElvaney seconded by Cllr R. Truell it was agreed that Mr Alan Johnston would replace Mr Des O'Connor on the Audit Committee.

On the proposal of Cllr D Maxwell seconded by Cllr R Aughey it was agreed that a letter of appreciation issue to Mr Des O'Connor on his retirement on behalf of Monaghan Co Co.

8. To approve Newspapers for Publication of Planning Applications

On the proposal of Cllr P Conlon seconded by Cllr B McKenna it was agreed that the Council approve the following newspapers in accordance with Part 4 Article 18 (2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2006 –

- Northern Standard
- Anglo Celt
- Dundalk Democrat (Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District only)
- Irish Independent
- Irish Daily Star
- Irish Times

9. To Approve Draft LECP 2023 – 2029

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Morgan Crumlish from KPMG to the meeting to outline the Monaghan DRAFT LECP. Mr Crumlish outlined the purpose of the LECP which will cover the period 2023-2029 and will guide the sustainable, economic and community development of Co Monaghan. The plan contains 63 actions supporting the 6 Goals, 18 Objectives and associated desired outcomes. The implementation plan will be reviewed and revised after 2 years providing an opportunity to identify underperforming or misaligned actions.

Chairperson of the LCDC, Cllr C Bennett welcomed the plan and thanked everyone for their work in its delivery.

Mr Crumlish responded to member's queries and noted their feedback. It was agreed that a progress report would be presented to members in Oct/Nov 2025.

On the proposal of Cllr P Treanor seconded by Cllr PJ O'Hanlon it was agreed to approve the Draft LECP 2023-2029.

10. To review Capital Programme 2024 – 2026

Mr R Burns, Chief Executive introduced the presentation by stating that the Capital Programme is a three-year rolling programme, reviewed annually, and was presented to members along with the annual budget. He stated that the Programme represents an almost 20% increase in value compared to the 2023 programme, reflecting the ambition of

the Co Council to invest in the social and economic development of the county. The programme also reflected the need for development and the level of funding available. Mr Burns stated that the Programme includes a total 113 projects, which will require funding of some €373 million over the three-year period. Many of the projects are co-funded through the decisions of the elected members at budget time and in relation to the LPT.

The Chief Executive advised that it is planned to spend €148 million over the next 3 years on housing provision which shows serious intent around investment in housing. He stated that a significant portion of the programme would be delivered through the county's three Municipal Districts and the project delivery teams there. He concluded by stating that it is imperative for Monaghan Co Council to invest in the physical, social and economic infrastructure of the County.

Mr Rory Treanor, Executive Engineer attended the meeting and outlined the Council's capital project achievements in 2023 and then provided members with an update on the status of the various projects contained in the programme. Mr Cathal Flynn, Director of Services, stated that the 2024 Capital Programme was more than a 'wish list', it is a working programme that Monaghan Co Council are getting through. He referred to the nearing completion Monaghan Peace Campus which is a project of regional significance and will be transformative for Monaghan Town.

A discussion followed to which a number of members contributed and Executive responded. It was agreed that a report be provided to each Municipal District in relation to Derelict Sites on a regular basis.

11. To Note Monaghan Co Co's Review of NOAC Performance Indicator Report 2022

Ms M McGarvey, Meetings Administrator, gave a brief overview of the Report which had been circulated. She explained that the report prepared by Monaghan County Council sets out to compare Monaghan Co Council's performance with the highest and lowest performing local authorities in the country and against similar sized local authorities and was used to set targets for the year ahead. She stated that Monaghan Co Council continues to perform well.

A discussion followed during which queries raised by the members were replied to. Members acknowledged staff on the standards noted in the review.

12. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group Meeting on 19 December 2023.

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 19 December 2023, which had been circulated.

On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan seconded by Cllr P Treanor it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 19 December 2023 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

13. To receive Management Report - December 2023

The Chief Executive introduced the Management Report for December 2023 which had been circulated with the agenda. He referred to serviced sites at Latlorcan stating that this points to opportunities for provision of serviced sites throughout the county. In relation to staffing, he advised members of the strong pipeline of recruitment ongoing at present. He referred to the open evenings being held in the Fire Stations across the county.

The members noted the Management Report.

The Chief Executive and Directors of Services responded to queries from the elected members.

On the proposal of Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr S Coyle it was agreed that this Council write to Minister Eamon Ryan, TD requesting that a special fund be set up in relation to the salting of roads and footpaths, particularly focusing on schools, places of worship and community facilities.

14. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events

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

- AILG, Road Safety, 16 November, Clayton Hotel, Galway, Co. Galway.
- AILG, Road Safety, 18 November, The Tower Hotel, Waterford.
- LAMA, Autumn Seminar, 25 -26 October 2023, Ard Ri House Hotel, Tuam, Co. Galway.
- Celtic Conference, First Home Scheme 20 -22 October 2023, O'Donovan Hotel Clonakilty, Co. Cork.
- ICSH Conference – 18 – 19 October 2023, Clayton White Hotel, Wexford.
- IPB Strategy, 5 – 6 October 2023, Savoy Hotel, Limerick.

15. Business submitted by Chief Executive

The Chief Executive informed the members there was no matters for consideration under this item.

16. Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meeting held 04 December 2023

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

17. To receive update on N2 National Primary Road Scheme

The following correspondence was received in relation to the N2 National Primary Road Scheme.

- Email from Ms. Heather Humphreys, T.D., Minister for Rural and Community Development, regarding N2/A5 Ardee – Castleblayney project.
- Email from Mr. Brendan Smith, T.D., regarding N2/A5 Ardee – Castleblayney project.
- Email from Ms. Niamh Smith, T.D., regarding N2/A5 Ardee – Castleblayney project.

18. To receive update on North South Interconnector project

The following correspondence was received in relation to the North south Interconnector project:

- Email from Ms. Niamh Smyth, T.D., regarding the North South Interconnector issue.

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr P Treanor it was agreed that this Council write to Minister Eamon Ryan TD, An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, Tánaiste Michael Martin TD, Minister Heather Humphreys TD and to all the Oireachtas members for this constituency requesting an urgent debate take place in the Dail and Seanad in order to bring forward a policy in relation to the undergrounding of large electrical infrastructure such as the north south interconnector, in order to avoid confrontation and conflict with local communities and also to insure the timely delivery of such infrastructure.

On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr H McElvaney, it was agreed that this Council immediately seek a meeting with Minister Heather Humphreys to fully explain Minister Ryan's comments on the North South Interconnector at a recent meeting with Monaghan Co Council.

On the proposal of Cllr S Coyle, seconded by Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, it was agreed that this Council again, as it has done over the past 17 years, demand of the government and all future governments, the undergrounding of the proposed 400 kv North-South Interconnector. Eirgrid and their agents have not engaged with the affected communities as to the adverse health effects from living in close proximity to the line, the devaluation of property and land holdings value and the permanent negative effects on landscape, heritage and environment. The recent disgraceful and derisory correspondence to landowners contravenes the signed 'forms of authority' requiring correspondences only be issued to Co Monaghan anti-pylon committee and NEPPC. Landowners are not made aware of the consequences of the terms Eirgrid are seeking, should they enter into signed agreements.

Again Monaghan Co Co pledge their support to CMAPC and NEPPC for the undergrounding of the 400 kv North South Interconnector and demand of the Government, Eirgrid and all Oireachtas members in Cavan, Monaghan and Meath a pledge of same.

On the proposal of Cllr P Treanor, seconded by Cllr C Bennett it was agreed that this Council write to Minister Eamonn Ryan T.D., Taoiseach Leo Varadkar T.D., Tánaiste Micheal Martin T.D., Minister Heather Humphreys T.D. and local Oireachtas Members in relation to the two major infrastructure projects currently proposed for County Monaghan - the upgrade of the N2 and the North South 400kw Interconnector. These two projects could run parallel to each other, with the Interconnector being under grounded along the length of the N2 from Ardee to the Tyrone border (approx 70KM). The economic saving to the exchequer, the environmental sustainability and any potential conflict with local landowners could be addressed. This Council demand that the relevant Department urgently seek a Feasibility Study/ Business Assessment of this combined project and Eirgrid/ESBN are instructed to cease the current operation on the North South Interconnector until this report is complete."

19. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project.

Cllr H McElvaney advised that the Ulster Canal project is progressing at pace and acknowledged Waterways Irl.

20. Questions & Replies:

Clr C. Carthy will ask:

1. Can the executive provide details of Housing Adaption Grants for Older people and people with a disability applications since 2019 with a breakdown of the following:
 - Number of applicants for each scheme in each year?
 - Number who were successful and those who were not in each year?
 - Amount of money allocated each year and for which of the 3 grants?
 - Number of people who still await payment?

The Housing Grants Scheme statistics from 2019 to date (19/12/2023) are included in the table below. An overall allocation is received each year and is divided out according to the number of grants finalised in that particular year.

As this is a rolling grant scheme, some applications received in any given year may have been carried forward into the following year due to e.g., requests for additional information etc.

2019		Applications Received	Applications Approved	Allocation	Await Payment
	HGD	73	70	€1.8m	0
	HOP	188	176		0
	MAG	60	55		0
	Total	321	301		0
2020		Applications Received	Applications Approved	Allocation	Await Payment
	HGD	34	32	€2.0m	0
	HOP	99	94		0
	MAG	29	21		0
	Total	162	147		0
2021		Applications Received	Applications Approved	Allocation	Await Payment
	HGD	79	78	€2.0m	0
	HOP	214	218		0
	MAG	58	46		0
	Total	351	342		0
2022		Applications Received	Applications Approved	Allocation	Await Payment
	HGD	82	64	€2.3m	0
	HOP	204	146		0
	MAG	40	23		0
	Total	326	233		0
2023		Applications Received	Applications Approved	Allocation	Await Payment **
	HGD	92	79	€2.4m	2
	HOP	225	234		11
	MAG	15	19		1
	Total	332	332		14**

** 14 applications at awaiting final inspection / payment stage which will be finalised in 2024

- 2. Can the executive confirm if tender invitations were published in December for a Feasibility Study and Strategic Assessment Report for a Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre for Carrickmacross and, if so, when is it expected a preferred team will be chosen?**

The tender invitations for the engagement of professional services to prepare a 'Feasibility Study' & 'Strategic Assessment Report' for a proposed Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre in Carrickmacross was published on the E-tenders Procurement platform on the 13th of December 2023. The closing date for the return of tender submissions is the 18th of January 2024. Following receipt of valid tender submissions, the formal tender assessment process will be conducted, and it is expected that the preferred tenderer will be identified in February 2024.

- 3. Owing to an increase in hostel-type accommodation that has been seen in recent times in Co. Monaghan, can the executive confirm if these new businesses are being levied for commercial rates (similar to hotels)?**

The rating authority shall impose and collect a charge if the property concerned is occupied and the nature of that occupation is such as to constitute rateable occupation of the property. Schedule 4 of the Valuation Act 2001 provides that Relevant property not rateable includes any domestic premises. The owner of a residential property is liable for LPT rather than rates.

- 4. Will the council commit to carrying out an assessment on public lighting in our towns and villages to ensure that pedestrians are more visible to each other and to motorists?**

To ensure a safe road and street network for all road users within towns and villages, MCC incorporate a public lighting assessment into the design of all new Active Travel projects and any other projects whereby vulnerable road users will be affected. Where required, new public lighting is provided and/or existing public lighting upgraded.

- 5. Following the success of the Planet Youth scheme to open schools out of hours for youth activities, would the executive reconsider my previous request to allow for some of our public building to facilitate activities for our young people?**

Monaghan County Council are open to the idea of public buildings being available for youth activities. Details of any access would have to be agreed at a local level.

Cllr S. Conlon will ask:

- 1. For the purpose of addressing the deficit of street lighting in Glaslough and enhancing pedestrian safety, will the Council undertake to install 5 streetlamps within the village environs from Barrack Hill to the Caledon Road / New Line junction?**

The council will carry out an assessment of Glaslough Village to ascertain the current lighting situation and decide on the most relevant action thereafter.

2. Following the temporary installation of vehicle speeding monitors positioned at the New Line / Emyvale Road in Glaslough, what has the data revealed in relation to the need for traffic calming measures in the Village?

Please see below the table with a breakdown of the readings recorded from a traffic count conducted on the R185-1 (New Line) on the 14th of November to the 21st of November 2023.

Monaghan County Council Traffic Count Glaslough Village R185-1										
Location	Direction	Speed Limit	Start Date	End Date	Total No Vehicles	ADT	Mean Speed	85% Speed	AM Peak	PM Peak
Glaslough Village E:271790 N:341501	E (+)	50KPH	14/11/23	21/11/23	6613	1863	56	66	10:00- 11:00	17:00- 19:00
	W (-)				6426		52	61		
	Two Way				13039		54	63.5		

As can be seen from these readings the mean speed calculated was 54km/h and the 85th percentile speed calculated from the readings was 63.5km/h.

Cllr P. Connolly will ask:

1. In view of the fact that the oral hearing into objections to the Ulster Canal Greenway- Monaghan Town to N I border- are now heard what is the timescale for commencement & completion of this section of Greenway?

An Oral Hearing was held on 21st Nov 2023. Any Project Timelines whereby an Oral Hearing in the CPO process is called for by An Bord Pleanala (ABP), must be treated with a degree of caution as several factors are outside the control of MCC. However, based on other projects whereby an Oral Hearing was held, a period of 6-8 months is typically required for ABP to make their Determination, after which there is a 2-month statutory appeals process. Assuming no appeals, Enabling and Procurement will commence and subject to TII approval, a contractor will be appointed to commence construction. At this point in time, estimated construction commencement is Q4 2025 with a 12 month construction period.

Cllr A. Campbell will ask:

1. With regard to the Croi Conaithe Grants Scheme

How many applications has been received for this Scheme?

How many are now approved?

What plans have Monaghan County Council in place to promote this Scheme?

124 applications received to date with 69 applications approved. This scheme is regularly promoted on the Council's social media channels and Housing Section will be doing an information roadshow on this scheme throughout the County during 2024.

2. What is the update on the application by Monaghan County Council to the Department for funding under Rural Regeneration Fund for the Market House in Castleblayney?

Monaghan County Council are currently preparing relevant documentation in relation to the RRDF Category 1 funding application for the Castleblayney Market House & Market Square Project. The preparation of the funding submission will be progressed during January and submitted to the RRDF Department in advance of the closing date for applications which is the 8th of February 2024.

3. With regard to Lough Muckno and the ongoing work by Monaghan County Council with the “Muckno Road To Recovery” to improve water quality in the lake.

What progress has been made on this important project?

Has Monaghan County Council engaged with more landowners to offer advice on this ongoing project?

What are the next steps for this plan?

The first phase of the Lough Muckno Road to recovery project is in its final stages. The project is a scientific study aimed at collecting data and carrying out investigative work to help inform the development of an Integrated Catchment Management Plan. The final round of samples from the lake and the inputting tributaries were taken in December 2023.

A final report compiling all of the data gathered over the last 18 months will be produced in Q1 2024 by Hydrec Environmental. This report 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. The load apportionment element of the project will identify which parts of the catchment are contributing the highest amounts of nutrients to Lough Muckno and ultimately will allow us to target our resources in the places where it is needed most. The internal load part of the project will provide vital information on the amount of nutrients already built up in the lake sediment which will allow an estimate to be made on the timeframe for the lake recovery.

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 during 2023 to close out any remaining non-compliances identified. In November 2023, letters were issued to 43 additional Farmers in the Gentle Owens_10 waterbody. These letters were issued prior to the commencement of farm inspections. The information pack sent to each farmer included a map, information on the current water quality of the river and some general information on good land spreading practices. To date we have had great interest and positive engagement in the catchment and our winter farm inspections will continue into Q1 2024. 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 this catchment area.

In 2022, MCC made a submission to the Department to have Lough Muckno included as a Catchment Project Area For Action in Ireland's 3rd cycle River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2022-2027 to be led by Monaghan County Council and supported by LAWPRO. The 3rd cycle River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027 has yet to be published, but we remain hopeful that this will be included.

The next steps will be very much based on the conclusions of the project in Q1 2024.

4. With regard to Muckno Street in Castleblayney and some of the derelict buildings and With Monaghan County Council engagement with some of these owners.

What progress has been made to date?

What plans has Monaghan County Council put in place for a master plan to rejuvenate this area of Castleblayney?

What engagement has there been with the owners of these properties to outline all the current grant Schemes available? (Croí Conaither up to 70k)

The Vacant Homes Unit has engaged with 8 property owners on Muckno Street who are in the possession of Vacant/Derelict properties. The schemes such as Croí Conaithe and Repair and Lease were highlighted to them and valuations were obtained and offers made to the property owners to sell to the Council. These offers were not acceptable by any of the property owners.

The Council is currently developing a policy to address dereliction in the County. Subject to

the approval of this policy, it is the Council's intention to utilise the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to address the dereliction issue in this area.

Following the preparation of the necessary procurement documentation, Monaghan County Council has received 3 tenders to provide services for the preparation of a Regeneration Plan for town centre lands at Castleblayney, County Monaghan. This plan will examine the area bordered by Main Street, Muckno Street and McGrath road in Castleblayney. The Council envisages appointing the preferred consultant by the end of January 2024.

5. What progress has Monaghan County Council made in the area of making available serviced sites in the centre of towns particular Castleblayney and Carrickmacross?

Monaghan County Council has issued an expression of interest to landowners throughout the County to submit proposals to sell land for housing which includes lands that could be potentially used for serviced sites. The advert can be viewed here [Monaghan County Council Expression of Interest Sale of Houses, Land and Turnkey Development for Social Housing to Monaghan County Council 2023-2025. - Housing](#)

21. Notices of Motion

Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr PJ O'Hanlon seconded -

"That Monaghan County Council demand of the Government; the Minister for Environment, Climate, Communications & Transport, Eamon Ryan TD; the Minister for International & Road Transport & Logistics; Minister with responsibility for Postal Policy, Jack Chambers TD and the National Road Transport Authority, the immediate appointment of additional staff and extra funding to expedite Driving Test Services for first time drivers, who have undertaken huge numbers of Driving Lessons /Instruction at great cost. Many of these are young drivers need their own transportation to educational facilities, apprenticeships and work. This Council also demand the immediate expedition of NCT car testing services operated by Applus as huge delays in getting appointments for NCTs are leading to public frustration and concern for Road Safety".

Following a short discussion on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr D Maxwell proposed, Cllr A Campbell seconded -

That Monaghan County Council install signage on certain roads within the county to alert HGV drivers to unsuitable roads.

'Do not follow Sat Nav' road signage, similar to what is now provided by other County Councils, to mark out roads that are not suitable for through traffic, or where Sat Nav systems may be directing unsuitable vehicles and unfamiliar drivers along local roads not suitable for their needs."

Following a short discussion on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put it to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

22. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

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

Jennifer Maguire, Water Services on the death of her mother Frances.

23. 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 below:

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
Celtic Conference	The Finance Act 2023	McKevitt's Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth.	12th - 14th January 2024	Cllr Aoife McCooey
LAMA	Building for Success	Abbey Hotel, Donegal Town	19 th – 20 th January 2024	Cllr Peter Conlon Cllr Richard Truell Cllr David Maxwell Cllr Seán Conlon Cllr Seamus Treanor Cllr Noel Keelan Cllr Brian McKenna Cllr Aoife McCooey Cllr Paudge Connolly Cllr Seamus Coyle
Celtic Conference	“The Irish Housing Crisis - A Sustainable Option”	O'Donovan's Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork.	2nd - 4th February 2024	Cllr Seamus Coyle Cllr Paudge Connolly
Association of Irish Regions’	Regions in Focus 2024	Fitzgerald's Woodlands House Hotel & Spa, Adare, Limerick.	7 th - 8 th February 2024	Cllr Richard Truell Cllr Seán Conlon Cllr Paudge Connolly
AILG	AILG Annual Training Conference 2024	Arklow Bay Hotel, Co. Wicklow.	14 th and 15 th February 2024	Cllr Richard Truell Cllr Seán Conlon Cllr David Maxwell Cllr Colm Carthy Cllr Paudge Connolly

The Cathaoirleach concluded the meeting.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____