

# 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, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 at 11:20am.

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Aoife McCooey

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

**In Attendance:** Carmel O’Hare, Director of Services, Damien Thornton, A/District Co-Ordinator, Julieann O’Reilly, Assistant Staff Officer

Cllr. McCooey opened the meeting by expressing best wishes to Sarah Moore, Clerical Officer as she temporarily departs on maternity leave.

Cllr. Campbell echoed these sentiments and wished Ms. Moore well, as did Cllr. O’Hanlon.

All elected members concurred with the comments.

Cllr. O’Hanlon expressed frustration at the level of staff changes in the MD, remarking on the importance of stability. All elected members expressed the need for continuity.

#### **1.0 Confirmation of Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr. O’Hanlon and seconded by Cllr. Campbell, the minutes of the February 2024 Monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> of February 2024, were adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr. O’Hanlon and seconded by Cllr. Campbell, the minutes of the in-committee meeting, held on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> of February 2024, concerning the proposed disposal of lands at Drumcrew, Castleblayney and the proposed declaration of the Steadfast Industrial Estate Road as a Public Road, were adopted.

## **2.0 Presentation – MCC Housing Section**

**- Nial O'Connor, A/Senior Executive Officer; Lorcán MacCinna, Senior Executive Engineer; Emmet Sherry, Executive Engineer, Mairead McNally, Assistant Staff Officer, Michaela McCluskey, Clerical Officer**

### Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Concerned about the efficiency of using an "E-mail only" service to facilitate representations by elected members.

Remarked that in emergency situations, a telephone facility is needed.

### Cllr. Carthy:

Thanked the Housing Section for the presentation.

Agreed with Cllr. O'Hanlon's comment regarding a telephone service to facilitate representations however, noted the importance of having a written record.

Wished to acknowledge the work of the Housing Section team.

Noted that housing for delivery at Magheross has been on the list for a long time, commenting that it is down again for this year, but there does not seem to be any signs of it moving along. Queried whether there is any timeframe for delivery and acknowledged that it is Tuath Housing's project. Commented that it is an eyesore and opined that the Local Authority need to push for demolition if the project is not going to move forward.

Stated that he is looking forward to seeing progress on the old Castleblayney fire station project.

Commended the Housing Section team on the speed of the Annyalla project.

### Cllr. Keelan:

Thanked the Housing Section for all their work.

Remarked how public representatives deal with housing issues daily.

Commented how rents in general have gone through the roof.

Noted that MCC are reaching their housing targets, indeed they exceed them. Opined that target levels need to increase.

Stated that there are a cohort of people who do not qualify for social housing and cannot afford a mortgage. Queried if MCC are any further down the line regarding providing affordable housing.

Wish to note the importance of the Housing Adaptation Grants.

Remarked that the Housing maintenance section are very good to deal with, stating that the service has improved.

Commented that there seems to be an issue at times regarding the repairs of heat pumps – that a specialised person is needed for this.

Thanked Nial O'Connor, A/Senior Executive Officer for all his work.

### Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Spoke about the development at Magheross. Requested that it to be put on record that this project is not a MCC project - it is a private developer. Also, Tuath Housing have done all in their power.

Wished to acknowledge the role of Nial O'Connor, A/Senior Executive Officer. Stated that the population in Carrickmacross has risen and is forecast to exceed Monaghan Town's population in years to come. Advised that having Carrickmacross on the same HAP limits as Ballybay and Clones does not make sense, adding that Carrickmacross is so near to Co. Louth, who have increased their HAP limits. Stated that the current situation needs to be reviewed and the HAP limits and the HAP limits for Carrickmacross increased. Queried the amount of money that has been spent in Carrickmacross over the past number of years, remarking that he has no doubt it amounts to millions. Acknowledged the support from the government and thanked the Housing staff for their work.

Cllr. Campbell:

Welcomed that Housing Section staff and thanked them for their presentation. Commended Lorcán MacCinna, Senior Executive Engineer, for his work on the Annyalla housing development that are coming to fruition. Acknowledged the Coill Darach development. Advised that he is looking forward to seeing the designs for the old fire station in Castleblayney and queried if there is an opportunity to provide one-bedroom units at this location. Stated that there is a demand for these. Commented on the importance and positive impact of the Housing Adaptation Grant scheme.

Cllr. McCooey:

Thanked the Housing section for attending. Commended the amount of work being done. In relation to the proposals for the old fire station in Castleblayney, sought clarification on applicant suitability criteria querying whether the development will be for elderly people. Commented that there are a number of people in severe mortgage arrears and queried whether MCC are providing and/or promoting the Mortgage-to-rent scheme. Queried if there are plans to build houses in more rural locations citing Oram as an example.

*Nial O'Connor, A/Senior Executive Officer and Lorcán MacCinna, Senior Executive Engineer responded as follows:*

Regarding Magheross, MCC Housing Section has met with Tuath Housing, the developer and the Department several times and can advise that the approved housing body and the developer are back working together having agreed new terms. A funding application has been submitted to the department and it is hoped that this will be approved. There is potential for some of these houses to be delivered by the end of this year should all go to plan.

Regarding the proposed development at the old fire station in Castleblayney, units shall be for people over the age of 55 and people with a disability. It is sheltered accommodation so

will not be suitable for everybody. MCC are working with the HSE and disability services. The units will likely be two-bedroom units.

There is nothing confirmed regarding Affordable Housing, but MCC are looking into options.

MCC have 15 Mortgage-to-rent schemes currently in place. These are not suitable for all and are usually progressed via the banks and referral from MABS.

MCC are investigating rural housing options in the locality of Inniskeen. There is no specific demand at present for Oram.

There was approximately €300,000 spent on response maintenance in Carrickmacross.

Noted that HAP limits are set nationally and commented that even with HAP support a house can remain unaffordable.

MCC have installed heat pumps since 2016 so there is significant in-house experience in dealing with them. Also noted that the heat pumps have a long warranty in place.

Cllr. McCooey:

Advised that she had been sent an article in the Irish Independent which painted a bleak picture about homelessness in Monaghan, calling it a "homelessness crisis".

Nial O'Connor, Senior Executive Officer, advised that an advertisement had been placed seeking suitable accommodation, basically looking for a couple of secure beds to have on retainer should an emergency situation arise.

Cllr. McCooey sought clarification that the article was wrong.

Nial O'Connor, Senior Executive Officer, stated that MCC were simply seeking to manage the situation more efficiently.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Wished to acknowledge the response regarding Magheross.

Cllr. Carthy:

Commended Housing staff on the preliminary works carried out on the Annyalla site.

### **3.0 Presentation – Castleblayney to Ballybay Greenway - Clandillon Civil Consulting, Sean Fitzsimons**

#### Cllr. Campbell:

Thanked Sean for the presentation.

Advised that Mile Hill Road residents were unaware of the three route options and advised that the residents' concerns must be taken into consideration – privacy concerns, very narrow road.

Stated that there is no point in proceeding if there is no buy in from the local community,

Noted that there is currently no funding for this project.

#### Cllr. Carthy:

Agreed with Cllr. Campbells comments, stating that public buy in is needed.

#### Cllr. Keelan:

Commended Sean Fitzsimons for the amount of work done.

Concurred with Cllr. Campbell's comments, advising that public acceptance is needed.

Commented that the purpose of public consultation is to listen to people's concerns.

#### Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Noted that this project started two and a half years ago and asked why, two and a half years on, the concerns of residents have not been addressed.

#### Cllr. McCooey:

Advised that she has huge reservations about this project.

Queried if there is any imagery available to display how it will look.

Questioned the impact on planning permission in the area.

Queried how the preferred route option was arrived at.

Noted that the location is a rural/farming area and wondered if the installation of a footpath might affect farmers Basic Payment Scheme.

Asked who would be responsible for slips/trips on the Greenway, remarking it is an area where cow manure may be present.

Commented on potential privacy issues.

Suggested that the development of a greenway may encourage littering/illegal dumping and give rise to dog fouling issues in the area.

Stated that there seemed to be a lack of communication regarding the public consultation.

Elected members were unaware of the last public consultation and unaware that letters had been issued.

Advised that if the full consent of landowners is not forthcoming, she will withdraw her support for the project.

*Sean Fitzsimons, Clandillon Civil Consulting responded as follows:*

Stated that the process has been explained to local residents and that voluntary land acquisition is the preferred method. If anyone is unhappy with a package or design, a

solution will be sought. Advised that it is the designers' job to come up with a solution / plan that all are happy with.

Commented that when services are provided in an area it is actually more likely that planning permissions will be granted.

Advised that during route selection, land boundaries were followed as much as possible. Specific landowners have not been spoken to as the project is not yet at that stage.

Regarding public liability, the Greenway would be a MCC amenity.

If landowners are concerned about privacy issues, it is up to the designers to make the landowners happy.

Opined that if services are provided to an area that it may be less likely to have littering/dumping issues. Personal responsibility comes into play for this matter.

The feedback from Public Consultation was minimal but positive. Public Consultation details were advertised in local press and social media channels. It was decided not to write to individual landowners due to the sheer amount. Landowners were written to once the preferred route was selected. Advised that the route is not set in stone.

Cllr. McCooey sought clarification as to what happens if a landowner point blank refuses. Sean Fitzsimons, Clandillon Civil Consulting advised that all alternatives will be considered and noted that the opposition on the Mile Hill Road came as a surprise.

Cllr. McCooey asked if there is a possibility of land being CPO'd. Sean Fitzsimons, Clandillon Civil Consulting advised that this cannot be ruled out, but it would be a last option.

Cllr. Campbell clarified that it is a work in progress and not a done deal.

Cllr. McCooey proposed that the item is kept on the agenda. All elected members agreed with this.

Cllr. O'Hanlon wondered what would happen to funding if an agreement cannot be made and queried why taxpayers' money is being spent on a design that has no agreement.

Cllr. Campbell stated that he understood there is a 4-week consultation period and suggested reconvening after this period. He also stated that if everyone on the Mile Hill Road do not want this, MCC cannot continue with this option.

Cllr. McCooey requested that a public consultation report be provided to the elected members and suggested that the Members reconvene in May 2024 to further consider the matter.

#### **4.0 Matters Arising**

##### Cllr. Carthy:

Requested an update on the Bandstand in Carrickmacross.

*Reply – Experiencing delays with the appointed consultants.*

Requested an update on the pop-up pool for Carrickmacross.

*Reply – All in order on our end. There has been no inspection to date. We are due to meet with Swim Ireland in late April.*

##### Cllr. Campbell:

Asked if there had been a response from Minister John O’Dowd regarding the Ballynacarry Bridge following a proposal made at last month’s meeting.

*Reply - We have not received a response to date.*

Requested that a letter is re-issued.

##### Cllr. Keelan:

Requested an update on the removal of the large tree/branches in the River Fane.

*Reply – Water levels remain high but the issue remains on our maintenance list.*

Acknowledged the presence of Matt Carthy TD, Brendan Smith TD and Senator Robbie Gallagher at the earlier meeting and the apologies sent by Minister Humphreys and Niamh Smyth TD. Commented that it had been agreed at this meeting that a meeting would be sought with the local Minister at her convenience.

Noted that the roads are in an atrocious state at the moment and commented that we do not have the resources to deal with them. Remarked that it is a national issue, and the Government must properly fund our roads.

##### Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Advised that he has spoken to Minister McGrath following the last meeting and that he had given a commitment that he will speak to Minister Ryan and Minister Chambers.

Stated that, as Councillors, they can only do so much about roads.

Commented that he hopes that Minister Humphreys will facilitate a meeting.

##### Cllr. McCooey:

Requested an update on road safety measures for the Dublin Road, Castleblayney.

*Reply – There is no update at this time.*

Advised of seeing a sign in a shopping centre directing to public toilets located in it. Queried if it would be possible to collaborate with a shopping centre in Castleblayney to facilitate public toilets.

*Reply – This MD will explore this option.*

## **5.0 Consideration of Draft Schedule of MD Works 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr. McCooey and seconded by Cllr. Conlon, it was unanimously approved to adopt the Draft Schedule of MD Works 2024.

Cllr. McCooey commented that she did not see the Market House included on this and queried if the MD would provide match funding.

*Reply – No, this would be Capital funding.*

At 2.10pm, on the proposal of Cllr. Conlon and seconded by Cllr. Campbell, it was agreed that the meeting move to in-committee for a brief discussion.

At 2.15pm, on the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Conlon, it was agreed that the meeting come out of committee.

## **6.0 Correspondence**

- i. Response from Finbarr Daly, Enterprising Monaghan re: invitation to meeting.

Cllr. O’Hanlon acknowledged the response and commented that it is a good news story for Carrickmacross. Cllr. O’Hanlon advised that he commented to Mr. Daly that he will seek funding for a C:Tek III as there is a need for such a facility.

Cllr. Conlon echoed Cllr. O’Hanlon’s comments and advised that the linking of this area to the Main Street is part of the Masterplan for Carrickmacross. Cllr. Conlon also spoke about having “mini C:Teks” in the town centre.

Cllr. Carthy expressed thanks for the response and advised that updates are welcomed. Cllr. Carthy noted that Carrickmacross has always battled well against vacant units although it is a challenging issue. Cllr. Carthy stressed the importance of pushing for town centre locations also.

- ii. Ack. Letter from Taoiseach Office re: motion – funding for roads
- iii. Ack. Letter from Tánaiste Office re: motion – funding for roads
- iv. Response from TFI Local Link re: proposed Castleblayney – Oram – Newry route

Cllr. Carthy wished to highlight the importance of providing routes south of the border even if there delays in Northern Ireland.

- v. Apologies from Minister Humphreys office re: meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024
- vi. Apologies from Niamh Smyth TD office re: meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024



#### **4.0 MD Coordinator's Report**

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Queried progress with the appointment of consultants for the Carrickmacross Workhouse project.

*Reply – Consultants to be appointed late April/early May.*

Cllr. Campbell:

Commented that Friday had been a great day with the opening of the Monaghan Way and stated that a report had been presented to the elected members in the past advising them to close the Monaghan Way.

Remarked that he is glad he did not follow this advice.

Cllr. Keelan:

Remarked that he has not been in support of closing the Monaghan Way.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Commented that the past discussion had been related to funding, which then had been secured.

Cllr. Carthy:

Queried the status of the Rahan's Lake project.

*Reply – A tender for the engagement of a works contractor issued today.*

Cllr. Keelan:

Commented that there has been no progress on the CCTV Schemes since last May.

Expressed frustration that the proposed Bike Rental Scheme has not progressed.

Wished to note the importance of the MD Co-Ordinator Report.

Voiced concern at the high number of open items on the essential maintenance list (252) and advised that more resources are needed.

Stated that the N2 scheme needs to be highlighted at every opportunity and expressed concern that no funding has been received to progress it.

Cllr. McCooey:

Remarked on the great day on Friday with the visit to the C:Tek II and the launch of the Town Centre First Plan for Carrickmacross.

Commented that she looks forward to getting a similar plan for Castleblayney.

Noted that all the elected members supported the re-opening of the Monaghan Way and recalled a 2019 meeting where the Councillors agreed to seek funding to keep it open.

Requested an update on the Sensory Garden in Castleblayney and the Walking Loop on Mullyash, wondering if a letter should be written to the Department to seek an update.

Cllr. Carthy:

Wished to note the importance of Mullyash Cairn and advised that it needs a little tidy up.

Cllr. Conlon:

Requested sight of the design layout for the sensory playpark at Cloughvalley and also the design plan for Rahan's Lake also.

## **8.0 Q&A**

**Questions raised by Cllr. Colm Carthy for the March 2024 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:**

1. Have plans been finalised yet on the carrying out of a review of streetlights (visibility issues, light flood etc), specifically along Carrickmacross' Main Street and, if so, when is it expected to take place?

**Response:**

A review of the street lighting along Carrickmacross' Main Street shall be undertaken in conjunction with the detailed design of public realm enhancements for Main Street and the Bridewell Lane Area. It is envisaged that an Urban Designer/Public Realm Architect-led Multidisciplinary Design Team shall be engaged in Q2 2024 to progress the detailed design of the public realm for Main Street and the Bridewell Lane Area.

2. Has a mechanism been found yet to carry out a clearance on the stream/shuck to the front part of Foxfield estate, Carrickmacross?

**Response:**

The stream/shuck that runs through Foxfield Estate, Carrickmacross is, for the main part, located on privately owned lands. The Executive shall continue to engage with the landowner concerned with a view to their carrying out any required clearance works.

3. Has the Executive looked into additional traffic calming at the Mac-Fab road junction on the Carrick-Kingscourt road and, if so, what works are intended? Also, has the council added streetlights at the ballalley junction, same road, to our list of lighting schemes for consideration?

**Response:**

The Executive shall undertake a site assessment to determine the need for additional traffic measures at the MacFab road junction. Subject to the outcome of this assessment, the Executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to facilitate the installation any required traffic calming measures.

The Executive shall undertake an assessment to determine whether the provision of public lighting at the "Ball Alley" junction is warranted.

4. Has the council written to the owners of the Bose site, Carrickmacross, to ascertain when their plant will be in full production?

**Response:**

A letter, enquiring as to when the plant will reach full production, issued to the HR / EHS Manager of Newbaze Nutrition Ireland on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

5. Can this executive look at expanding and upgrade the provision of play areas in Castleblayney; specifically, will the council consider:
  - a) The cutting of grass in the green space in Plas and Bhri so that children in the area have a place to play?

**Response:**

The Executive shall examine the feasibility of including the green space in Plás an Bhrí in the grass cutting programme.

- b) The provision of a designated play area in Thorndale – having the green area grass cut and maintained would go some way to delivering this?

**Response:**

The Executive shall examine the feasibility of including the green space in Thorndale in the grass cutting programme.

- c) The provision of a centrally located playpark for residents in Rosevale, Knocktornagh, Coill Darach and Plas an Bhri to service the population on this side of Castleblayney?

**Response:**

The Executive shall examine the feasibility of providing a centrally located playpark for residents in Rosevale, Knocktornagh, Coill Darach and Plás an Bhrí.

- d) The upgrading of existing playgrounds in Drumillard and Ard na Lorgan?

**Response:**

The Executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to upgrade the existing playparks in Drumillard and Ard Na Lurgan.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Noel Keelan for the March 2024 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:**

6. What plans have the council to address the ongoing serious flooding issues in the Donaghmoynne village area, and also what plans have the council to repair and resurface the access roads into the Village which are in a very poor state, can local residents expect to see these important issues addressed over the course of this year?

**Response:**

In November 2023, the MD Executive applied for funding under the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works programme to address the flooding issues in the Donaghmoynne Village area. Unfortunately, the application for funding was unsuccessful. In summary, the submitted proposal spanned a 2-year timeframe:

**Year 1 (2024)** – engagement of a design consultant to assess the current drainage problems and develop feasible solutions.

**Year 2 (2025)** - implementation of the identified flood mitigation measures.

Albeit the application for funding was unsuccessful, the MD Executive is committed to engaging a design consultant to undertake analysis and design in 2024. It is anticipated that a suitably qualified design consultant shall be engaged in Q2 2024. Following completion of the flood mitigation design, the Executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to advance the implementation of the identified remedial drainage works.

The access roads entering Donaghmoynne village do not form part of the current Restoration Improvement programme. The Executive shall endeavour to carry out localised repairs to the worst affected sections of pavement, over the course of the coming year.

7. In welcoming the funding secured for extra road safety measures adjacent to the Donaghmoynne playpark, what works will be carried out at this location? and will the Council liaise with the local development group that have requested these safety measures?

**Response:**

The Executive has previously engaged with local representatives on road safety issues adjacent to the playpark. It is anticipated that a combination of signage and ramps will be installed.

8. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the Public Realm plan and parking strategy for Inniskeen Village, and also what is the up-to-date position in relation to the provision of safe walking routes throughout the village and across the river fane given that the National Transport Authority (NTA), have refused to fund a pedestrian / cycle bridge?

**Response:**

Detailed design, including the development of a car parking strategy, is nearing completion. It is envisaged that the proposed public realm enhancement works to the Village Heart and St. Mary's Space areas shall commence in mid-late Q2 2024.

Notwithstanding the current position of the National Transport Authority, the Executive shall explore all other potential sources of funding to provide a "bolt on" bridge for pedestrians and cyclists alongside the existing River Fane bridge crossing.

9. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the provision of a CCTV camera system for Carrickmacross and Castleblayney town, what is the delay in moving these important projects forward?

**Response:**

Following a presentation on both schemes 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 both schemes to the Garda Commissioner's Office. The Executive continue to await approval or otherwise from the Commissioner's Office.

10. What funding have we received for climate action and resilience schemes in this municipal district area? how many schemes have the council applied for?

**Response:**

The Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District received funding for 3 No. schemes under the 2024 Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works programme. These schemes are as follows:

- LP3720 Annadrummond, Castleblayney - €100,000
- R182 Lurganmore, Castleblayney - €80,000
- LS8660 Lisnakelly, Carrickmacross - €100,000

In total, Monaghan County Council applied for 25 No. schemes under the 2024 Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works programme.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Aidan Campbell for the March 2024 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:**

11. What is the update on the CCTV Schemes for Castleblayney and Carrickmacross?

**Response:**

Following a presentation on both schemes 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 both schemes to the Garda Commissioner's Office. The Executive continue to await approval or otherwise from the Commissioner's Office.

12. What is the update on the appointment of a consultant for the plan for the regeneration of the back lands between the Main Street and the McGrath Road in Castleblayney?
- a) What is the scope of works to be undertaken?

**Response:**

The scope of works to be undertaken provides for the development of a high-level Regeneration Plan for the backlands off the north-western side of Main Street, Castleblayney. The proposed Plan shall encompass an area of approximately 4.5 hectares bounded by Main Street, West Street, Muckno Street and McGrath Road. The proposed Plan is aimed at providing a framework to encourage the activation of backland properties, while providing guidance on viable uses, densities, layout, and design.

**b) What is the timeline for this project to take place?****Response:**

Consultants, *Shaffrey Architects*, were appointed on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 to progress the scheme. It is intended that the appointed consultant shall complete the proposed Plan within six months from the date of their appointment.

**c) What is the proposed public engagement with all the property owners in this area?****Response:**

The scope of services to be provided by the appointed consultants includes for the development of a Public Engagement Plan (PEP). The PEP will identify relevant interests and ensure that a clearly defined and structured consultation process is implemented and documented. It is anticipated that this aspect will be completed within the coming month.

**13. What is the update on the proposed work on the Ballynacarry Bridge on the N53 -****a) With the recent round of public consultation held in Culloville now complete. What is the update on the part 8 Planning Application?****Response:**

Monaghan County Council are awaiting completion of a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Report as this will form part of the Part 8 application. It is expected that this report will be completed within the coming week. It is intended that a Part 8 planning application will be submitted in May 2024.

**b) What is the timeline for progress on this plan?****Response:**

It is anticipated that the Part 8 process will be complete in Q3 2024 however, as the Northern Ireland (NI) Planning System is not time barred, the time taken to obtain a decision in NI is very much unknown. Similar size schemes in NI are currently taking approximately 40 weeks to progress through the planning process. Monaghan County Council intend to submit a planning application to Newry & Mourne District Council in May 2024. It is therefore unlikely that a planning decision will be arrived at in 2024.

**c) Have we had any correspondence back from the Department of Infrastructure in Northern Ireland about financial commitment to this major project?****Response:**

Monaghan County Council has contacted the Department of Infrastructure in Northern Ireland (DFI) on several occasions to request funding for both the design and, subject to statutory procedures and approvals, construction of the scheme. DFI have made it clear that they are not currently in a position to allocate funding to this project. To date, all funding for the planning & design of this scheme has been provided by TII.

14. With regard to the Active Travel projects in the Castleblayney/Carrickmacross MD.

a) What projects have been applied for this area?

**Response:**

The table below outlines the allocation received from the NTA for 2024 for Active Travel schemes in the Carrickmacross- Castleblayney Municipal District:

<b>NTA Active Schemes Castleblayney/Carrickmacross MD</b>				
<b>Project Code:</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>2024 Allocation</b>	<b>Current Phase</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>
MN/21/0010	Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Road AT Scheme	€75,000	2	Q1 2025
MN/21/0020	Low-Cost Junction Tightening - Shercock Rd/Mile Hill Rd Junction, Castleblayney	€100,000	2	Q4 2024
MN/21/0021	Light Segregation Cycle Scheme - Castleblayney	€35,000	3	Q4 2024
MN/23/0007	Carrickmacross R178/Oriel Rd AT Scheme	€60,000	2	Q2 2025
MN/23/0020	Urban Mobility/Sustainability AT Plans (Castleblayney, Ballybay, Clones, Carrickmacross)	€60,000	1	Q2 2025
MN/23/0009	Inniskeen Village AT Scheme	€30,000	2	Q4 2024

b) How many projects have been completed?

**Response:**

The following schemes were completed in 2023:

- MN/23/0009 - Inniskeen Pedestrian Crossing
- MN/23/0007 - Lurgans Hill Active Travel Scheme

c) What stage are all these projects at now?

**Response:**

The table above indicates the current stage of each project having regard to the NTA Project Approval Guidelines. The NTA Project Approval Guidelines require that each project is progressed through 7 phases to completion. These are as follows:

Phase 1 - Scope and Purpose

Phase 2 - Options Selection

Phase 3 - Preliminary Design

Phase 4 - Statutory Processes

Phase 5 - Detailed Design and Procurement

Phase 6 - Construction

Phase 7 - Close out and Review

d) What is the time scale for these projects to be completed?

**Response:**

Subject to NTA approvals and securing any necessary statutory consents, the anticipated completion date for each project is as outlined in the table above.

15. With the consultation now complete on the Works at Black Island to upgrade the paths, signage and enhance the area, when will this be going for planning?

**Response:**

It is intended that a Part 8 planning application will be submitted within the coming month.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Peter Conlon for the March 2024 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:**

16. Is there an update on the Courthouse in Carrickmacross?

**Response:**

In early January 2024, Monaghan County Council staff met with the Court Services Regional Manager and inspected the building.

The building is currently being maintained by the Office of Public Works. Repairs to the front façade and burner replacement on the heating system have recently been completed. It is also proposed to repaint internal sections of the building this year. There are currently no plans to provide Courts Services from the building.

The Courts services are monitoring the situation and may consider the building's future in mid-2024. They are open to having discussions with the Council regarding the future use of the building.

17. What is the latest update on Gallows hill project?

**Response:**

The Executive is currently engaged in negotiations with a prospective Design Team to progress the development of the Gallows Hill Greenspace Masterplan. It is hoped that these negotiations will be successfully completed within the coming weeks. The programme for the delivery of the project anticipates a total project duration of 12 months from the date of the appointment of a Design Team.

18. When is construction due to start on Rahans lake?

**Response:**

A tender for the engagement of a suitably qualified Works Contractor has issued to the market. It is anticipated that works shall commence in Q2 2024.

19. Has the plan for Creevy Lake been progressed?

**Response:**

The Executive are currently preparing tender documentation for the engagement of a multi-disciplinary design team. It is anticipated that a tender invite shall issue to the market within the coming weeks.

**Questions raised by Cllr. PJ O’Hanlon for the March 2024 meeting of Carrickmacross/Castleblayney Municipal District Council:**

20. A number of houses in the area experienced severe flooding on Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup> of March last, with the fire brigade having to be called. What plans has the Executive in place to engage with these homeowners and identify measures that might prevent this flooding from reoccurring?

**Response:**

The Executive intend to contact the individual homeowners over the course of the coming weeks with a view to determining the root cause of the flooding at each affected property. Thereafter, and as appropriate, the Executive shall endeavour to identify feasible flood mitigation measures and explore potential sources of funding to effect same.

21. Despite the flood alleviation works that were completed last year on the Ballybay Road, Carrickmacross, a number of houses were severely flooded following the heavy rainfall on Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup> of March last. Can this matter be investigated to make sure that this type of occurrence never happens again?

**Response:**

The Executive will carry out exploratory investigations on the drainage system on the R180 Ballybay Road, Carrickmacross to determine the cause of the flooding that occurred on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

**9.0 Director of Service Orders**

Orders Cmx-Cby 10/2024; Cmx-Cby 11/2024; Cmx-Cby 12/2024; Cmx-Cby 13/2024; Cmx-Cby 14/2024; Cmx-Cby 15/2024; Cmx-Cby 16/2024; Cmx-Cby 17/2024; Cmx-Cby 18/2024 and Cmx-Cby 19/2024 were noted.

**10.0 VOS/VOC**

*Votes of sympathy* were extended to May Burns & family on the death of Paddy Burns (RIP); Julie Lennon on the death of Sean Lennon (RIP); Angela O’Donohue & family on the death of Cormac O’Donohue (RIP); Dean Keenan & family on the death of James Duffy (RIP); Nancy McGivney & family on the death of Francie McGivney (RIP) and to Patricia Jones on the death of Peggy McPhillips (RIP).

A *Vote of Congratulations* was extended to the Our Lady’s Secondary School Castleblayney Ladies team, management team and principal Eddie Kelly, on winning the All-Ireland Post Primary Schools Senior A title.

On the proposal of Cllr. Campbell and seconded by Cllr. McCooey , it was unanimously agreed to hold a Civic Reception in Castleblayney for the All-Ireland champions.

**11.0 A.O.B**

Cllr. Keelan:

Acknowledged the success of the recent St. Patrick’s Day parade in Carrickmacross. Asked if there are any plans for funding to improve the access roads in Donaghmoyme village.

*Reply – The Executive will explore all avenues to secure funding.*

Queried if there is funding to carry out a drainage survey on Donaghmoyme Village.

*Reply – No.*



Sought clarification that funding had been applied for but that the application was unsuccessful.

*Reply – This is correct; however, the Executive is committed to completing the design of flood alleviation measures in 2024.*

Requested an update on the provision of safety nets at Cloughvalley.

Cllr. O’Hanlon:

Acknowledged and thanked MD staff for their work during the recent flash flooding event and advised that he witnessed the engineering staff on site during this event. Commented how distressing the flooding event was for homeowners and businesses.

Noted that engineers will be calling with affected homeowners within the coming days, to hopefully identify solutions that may avoid this situation reoccurring.

Cllr. Conlon:

Echoed Cllr. O’Hanlon’s sentiments and remarked that such heavy rainfall was very frightening.

Commented that MCC’s response was top class.

Suggested investigating possible funding for those affected by flooding.

Cllr. Carthy:

Wished to be associated with the previous comments and commended the MD team.

Commented that it is very harrowing for home and business owners to see such flooding.

Conveyed his disappointment with the allocations for Low-Cost Safety Schemes. Suggested that the Executive investigate alternative funding mechanisms to provide a pedestrian crossing on the Oriel Road.

Cllr. McCooey:

Wished to be associated with the previous comments.

Commended all involved with the St. Patrick’s Day Parade.

Asked if disabled parking provision can be investigated for Elm Brook.

Requested that “yellow box” markings be re-installed at the back of St. Mary’s Church in Castleblayney.

The meeting concluded at 15:05.

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Cathaoirleach

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Date

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Meeting Administrator