

**Minutes of Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, M-Tek Building, Armagh Rd, Knockaconny, Monaghan, on Monday 02 September 2024 at 10.00am**

**Chair:** Cllr C. Bennett, Cathaoirleach

**Present:** Cllrs Aughey, Campbell, Carthy, Clerkin, S. Conlon, P. Conlon, Flynn, Gibbons, Gilliland, Keelan, Maxwell, McAree, O’Hanlon, P. Treanor, S. Treanor and Truell

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

**Sympathy – Mary-Kerr Conlon, RIP:**

*At the outset the Cathaoirleach extended the sympathy of the Council to Cllr Peter Conlon and family on the late Mary-Kerr Conlon, Former County and Town Councillor who had passed away on the 15 August 2024.*

All elected members associated themselves with the vote of sympathy. The members spoke highly of Mary, stating that she had been a dedicated and hardworking community activist in Carrickmacross and the surrounding areas. They recognised her dedication and commitment to her local community through her work with the GAA, Tidy Towns Committees and the Carrickmacross Festival Committee. The members highlighted how she had broken barriers by becoming a leader for women in politics during her 25 years as an elected representative. The Chief Executive, on behalf of the executive and staff, associated himself with the vote of sympathy.

The Cathaoirleach adjourned the meeting for a short period as a mark of respect.

**Urgent Business:**

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that she had notices of urgent business as follows:

1. On behalf of Cllr. C. Bennett  
*That Monaghan County council writes to the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, Minister Charlie McConalogue, Department of Finance, Minister Jack Chambers Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform, Minister Paschal Donohoe calling for the reconvening of the National Fodder Committee and engagement with all the farming organisations and stakeholders.*

*Agriculture is the primary industry in County Monaghan and due to the inclement weather and forecasts of unsettled weather for the foreseeable future many farmers are concerned and worried about their current supply of fodder and the prospects for next winter's harvest. It is prudent to prepare for a 'worst case scenario' rather than complacency which could cause further problems and panic.*

2. On behalf of Cllr. N. Keelan  
*That Monaghan County Council writes to Ms. Norma Foley, T.D., Minister for Education and Ms. Siobhan Griffin, Regional Manager, School Transport Scheme, requesting that immediate action be taken to resolve the ongoing problems in relation to qualifying students and other students with no transport not being able to access the school transport service.*

*That Monaghan County Council writes to Ms. Norma Foley, T.D., Minister for Education and Mr. Eamon Ryan, Minister for Environment, Climate, Communications and Transport requesting that Government as a matter of policy provides a school transport scheme that will ensure that all students as far as practicable be provided with school transport. That the recommendations of the review of the school transport scheme be implemented as soon as possible in terms of choice and flexibility by eliminating the requirement to attend the nearest school, reducing the distances that is required for students to qualify for school transport etc.*

*On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan, seconded by Cllr C Carthy, it was agreed to enter 'into Committee' to discuss whether to accept the motions submitted as urgent business.*

Following a short discussion, it was agreed to take the motions of urgent business at the end of the meeting.

*On the proposal of Cllr N Keelan, seconded by Cllr S Conlon, it was agreed that the Council revert to public session.*

#### **1. Confirmation of Minutes:**

Cllr N Keelan noted a correction under Item 12 of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 08 July 2024 in relation to the undergrounding of the North-South Interconnector.

*On the proposal of Cllr R Aughey seconded by Cllr P Treanor, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 08 July 2024, as amended, be confirmed.*

#### **2. Correspondence**

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

- Letter from Ms. Emma Ball, Acting Head of Service, Primary Care, HSE, regarding the long delays that are occurring whereby medical card holders are having difficulty in accessing dental services.
- Letter from Dr. Fiona McGrath, Chief Executive, CMETB, regarding the election of Monaghan County Council members to CMETB.
- Letter from Mr. Brian Mac Fhíobhuí, Comhairle Uladh (Ulster GAA), regarding the Ulster Senior Football Championship Final.
- Acknowledgement email received from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Finance, Mr. Jack Chambers, T.D., regarding the the VAT rate for pubs and restaurants.
- Acknowledgement email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Mr. Patrick O'Donovan, T.D., regarding Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM).
- Email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., regarding additional funding of €5.9m needed to achieve proper road maintenance in Co. Monaghan.
- Acknowledgement email from the Minister for Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., regarding ash dieback.

#### **Additional Correspondence**

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

- Acknowledgement email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., regarding the resolution of Developer Provided Infrastructure (DPI) at Oisín Vale and Oisín Brian estates.

- Acknowledgement email from Ms. Nancy Smyth, Canadian Ambassador to Ireland, thanking the Cathaoirleach and all the members and staff of Monaghan County Council for the well wishes on the conclusion of her tenure.

**Proposals arising out of correspondence:**

*On the proposal of Cllr C. Bennett, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that this Council rewrites to the HSE reiterating the urgent need for dentists and orthodontists in County Monaghan. Children and medical card holders are not receiving the urgent dental treatment needed.*

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr S. Flynn, it was agreed that this Council writes to Minister Eamon Ryan, TD, Minister for Transport seeking a reversal of the decision not to grant-aid the cutting or removal of trees infected with ash dieback.*

*On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett, it was agreed that this Council writes to the Department of Health, attaching the item of correspondence from the HSE in relation to the provision of dental services which highlights the frustration being experienced by dentist representative organisations in negotiating a new contract, and that we appeal to Minister Stephen Donnelly to expedite an outcome that will secure dental services for children.*

*On the proposal of Cllr B. McAree, seconded by Noel Keelan, it was agreed that this Council writes to the Minister for Finance, Mr. Jack Chambers, T.D., to request that funding to accelerate the resolution of Developer Provided Infrastructure by Uisce Eireann be included in the Government Budgetary proposals for 2025.*

**3. To consider Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031**

Mr. A. Hughes, Senior Planner, gave a presentation to the members on the Draft County Monaghan Development Plan 2025-2031. He referred to documentation pertaining to the Plan which had been circulated to members on 30 July 2024. He drew members attention to the Lobbying Act 2015 and their roles as Designated Public Officials. He referred to the Code of Conduct for Councillors and the Code of Conduct for Employees prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act, 2001, which must be observed by both the elected members and officials in the making of a County Development Plan.

Mr. Hughes stated that two workshops in each of the five towns would be held in September and October to encourage members of the public from all areas of the County to participate in the public consultation. In addition, there will be engagement with the PPN, the LCDC and online workshops with planning agents and architects.

Mr. Hughes noted that hard copies of documents pertaining to the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 will be available in libraries, MD offices and published on the Council website.

Mr. Hughes stated that following members consideration of the Draft County Development Plan 2025-2031 at the Council meeting today, it would undergo public consultation for a period of 10 weeks until 14 November 2024. Notification that the consultation period had commenced would be advertised on local radio, published in local newspapers and on the Council's social media platforms and website. He noted that during those 10 weeks the elected members and members of the public could make submissions either in writing or

via the new online portal. He stated that he expects the Chief Executive's report with recommendations based on submissions received to be completed in January for members consideration at the February Council meeting.

The members commended members of staff for the extensive engagement and work involved in the preparation of the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 to date.

Mr. A. Hughes responded to members queries.

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr S. Gilliland, it was agreed that the Council approve the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 and commence the public consultation process.*

**4. To consider the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for Black Island, Lough Muckno**

Mr. A. Hughes referred to the Part VIII report which had been circulated in respect of proposed works to upgrade paths, signage, picnic and viewing areas at Black Island, Lough Muckno. He advised that two submissions were submitted during the public consultation period whereby matters of concern in relation to biodiversity were highlighted and these had been addressed in the Chief Executive's Report.

*On the proposal of Cllr A. Campbell, seconded by Cllr P. Gibbons, it was agreed to approve the works to upgrade paths, signage, picnic and viewing areas at Black Island, Lough Muckno, Co. Monaghan 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 the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for The Peace Link, Clones**

Mr. A. Hughes referred to the Part VIII report which had been circulated in respect of, an extension to the spectator stand and a small-scale storage building at the Peace Link, Clones, Co. Monaghan. He advised that no submissions had been received during the public consultation period.

*On the proposal Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr R. Truell, it was agreed to approve the extension to the spectator stand and the small-scale storage building at the Peace Link, Clones, Co. Monaghan as detailed in the Chief Executive's Reports prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).*

**6. To consider Taking in Charge application - Oakland Grove, Scotshouse**

The members considered the Taking in Charge application circulated for Oakland Grove, Scotshouse.

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr R. Truell, it was agreed that the Council approve the application for Oakland Grove, Scotshouse, Co. Monaghan, 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.*

**7. To consider Variation VI of County Development Plan 2019 – 2025 – Change of Land Use Zoning – Shirley House Lane, Carrickmacross**

The members considered the report which had been circulated.

Mr. D. Hurley, Senior Executive Planner, attended the meeting and outlined that the proposed variation at Shirley House Lane, Carrickmacross that relates to a change of land use zoning from Existing Residential to Town Centre Use to facilitate the sustainable development and expansion of the town centre. He noted that all necessary screenings had been carried out in accordance with statutory obligations and with full Council approval the Proposed Variation VI would undergo public consultation until 18 October 2024.

*On the proposal of Cllr C. Carthy seconded by Cllr PJ O’Hanlon it was agreed that the report on the proposed Variation VI of the County Development Plan 2019-2025 proceed to public consultation.*

**8. To approve Overdraft Accommodation in the sum of €10m**

Ms. O. McConnon, A/Director of Services, informed the members that it was necessary to have the approval of the Council for Overdraft Accommodation in the amount of €10m for the year 2025.

*On the proposal of Cllr D. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr PJ O’Hanlon, it was agreed that the Council approve Overdraft Accommodation in the sum of €10 million for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.*

**9. To consider report on Local Property Tax Adjustment Factor and Budget 2025**

The members considered the report which had been circulated.

Ms O McConnon, A/Director of Services, explained that a local authority may, as a reserved function, resolve to vary the basic rate of the Local Property Tax within its functional area by a maximum of + / - 15% and each year the rate reverts to zero %. Ms. McConnon referred to the Report on Property Tax Adjustment Factor and Budget 2025 which had circulated with the agenda and had been prepared based on a 15% variation of LPT. Ms. McConnon highlighted how the variance in LPT liability could impact on the Council’s budget and the Municipal Districts Allocations.

*Cllr PJ O’Hanlon proposed, Cllr D. Maxwell seconded that the Council retain the current rate of 15% LPT on the base rate for 2025.*

*Cllr P. Treanor proposed, Cllr C. Carthy seconded that the Council remove the 15% increase and leave the rate of increase in the LPT at zero % for 2025.*

The Cathaoirleach put Cllr O’Hanlon’s proposal to the meeting. A vote by show of hands resulted in 9 For and 8 Against. As Cllr Treanor’s proposal was a direct negative the Cathaoirleach declared Cllr O’Hanlon’s proposal carried.

**10. To fix dates for October CPG Budget Meetings**

The following dates for CPG Budget meetings were noted:

- 08 October 2024 at 2.30pm (In-person CPG Budget meeting)
- 22 October 2024 at 2.30pm (Ordinary October CPG meeting followed by CPG Budget meeting via MS Teams)
- 29 October 2024 at 2.30pm (In-person CPG Budget meeting)

#### **11. To approve nominations for appointment of external members to Audit Committee**

Ms. C. O'Hare, Director of Services, referred to the report that had been circulated in relation to the appointment of the following external members to the Audit Committee following the Local Government election in June:

- Marie Mohan, Financial Director, Greenfield Foods.
- Siobhan McArdle, Director, McArdle Transport Ltd.
- Alan Johnston, Director, Johnston & Co. Accountants Ltd.

*On the proposal of Cllr D. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr R. Aughey it was agreed that the three external members – Marie Mohan, Siobhan McArdle and Alan Johnston be appointed to the Monaghan County Council Audit Committee.*

#### **12. To consider Protocol for attendance of the Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council at functions and events**

Ms. M. McGarvey, A/Senior Executive Officer referred to the Draft Protocol for the attendance of the Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council at functions and events that had been circulated with the agenda. Ms. M. McGarvey gave a brief overview of the protocol in relation to how Monaghan County Council events and functions should be organised in respect of the Cathaoirleach and all County Council Members.

*On the proposal of Cllr D. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr N. Keelan it was agreed to approve the Draft Protocol for attendance of the Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council at functions and events.*

#### **13. To consider submissions on the Draft Scheme for the establishments of SPC's 2024 – 2029**

The members considered the Report circulated with the agenda on the 12 submissions received following the public consultation process on the Draft Scheme for the establishment of Strategic Policy Committees for the period 2024-2029 which closed on 16 August 2024.

Ms. M. McGarvey, A/Senior Executive Officer advised that subject to members approval it is proposed to make the following amendments to the Draft SPC Scheme for the establishment of SPCs 2024-2029 to reflect the submissions received following the public consultation exercise:

- The title of the 'SPC for Tourism, Rural & Community Development and Cultural Services' to be amended to 'SPC for Tourism, Rural & Community Development, An Ghaeilge & Cultural Services'
- Representation from the PPN Community and Voluntary Electoral college to be reduced from two representatives to one representative on the SPC for Transport.
- The PPN Social Inclusion Electoral college to be allocated a seat on the SPC for Transport.
- One of the two representatives on the SPC for Tourism, Rural & Community Development,

An Ghaeilge & Cultural Services’, from the PPN Community and Voluntary Electoral College, is to be actively involved in the Irish Language.

- The following wording to be included in the Scheme - ‘The Irish Language will be a cross-cutting theme across all 5 SPCs. The Council will promote the use of the Irish language in the work of all SPCs.’.

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett it was agreed that the Draft Scheme for the establishment of the Strategic Policy Committees 2024-2029, as amended above, be adopted and that the Council proceed to fill the vacant positions on each SPC.*

## **Appointment of SPC Chairs to each of the 5 SPC Committees for 2024-2029**

### **1. SPC for Housing**

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett, that **Cllr Colm Carthy** be appointed to the position of Chair of the SPC for Housing.*

### **2. SPC for Transport**

*On the proposal of Cllr PJ O’Hanlon, seconded by Cllr D. Maxwell, that **Cllr Raymond Aughey** be appointed to the position of Chair of the SPC for Transport.*

### **3. SPC for Economic Development and Enterprise**

*On the proposal of Cllr A. Campbell, seconded by Cllr D. Maxwell, that **Cllr Sean Gilliland** be appointed to the position of Chair of the SPC for Economic Development and Enterprise.*

### **4. SPC for Environment and Climate Change**

*On the proposal of Cllr D. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr A. Campbell, that **Cllr Richard Truell** be appointed to the position of Chair of the SPC for Environment and Climate Change.*

### **5. SPC for Tourism, Rural & Community Development, An Ghaeilge & Cultural Services**

*On the proposal of Cllr S. Flynn, seconded by Cllr P. Gibbons, that **Cllr Sean Conlon** be appointed to the position of Chair of the SPC for Tourism, Rural & Community Development, An Ghaeilge & Cultural Services.*

## **14. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group**

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 20 August 2024, which had been circulated.

### **Civic Reception - Fleadh Cheoil nah Éireann 2024**

*On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr S. Gilliland, it was agreed that a civic reception would be afforded to gold medal winners at Fleadh Cheoil nah Éireann 2024 following the October Council meeting on Monday 07 October commencing at the later time of 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building.*

### **Uisce Eireann Workshop**

Following a short discussion, the members agreed to facilitate the Uisce Eireann workshop at the November Council meeting.

*On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr S. Gilliland, it was agreed the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 20 August 2024 and the recommendations contained*

*therein be approved.*

#### **15. To seek agreement to advertise for Expression of Interest – Annahagh Industrial Lands Development**

The members noted the update from Mr. C. Flynn, Director of Services, in relation to the proposed development of 36 acres of land at Annahagh, Monaghan. Mr. C. Flynn informed the members that the proposed development will house a projected eight industrial units, however, the number of units and their size would be adjusted based on market demand. He stated that project is very much about supporting job creation, enterprise and employment growth in the County. Mr. Flynn advised that, with members agreement, the next step would be to advertise for Expressions of Interest to ascertain the market interest and if there is a demand for a particular size of industrial units.

Mr. C. Flynn responded to members queries.

*On the proposal of Cllr C. Bennett, seconded by Cllr S. Conlon, it was agreed to proceed with advertising to seek Expressions of Interest in respect of the proposed Annahagh Industrial Lands Development.*

#### **16. To receive Management Report – July and August 2024**

The Chief Executive introduced the Management Report for July and August 2024 which had been circulated with the agenda. He welcomed the funding awarded to undertake Town Centre Health Checks and Town Team Capacity Building for Clones, Castleblayney and Monaghan. The Chief Executive also referred to the significant level of recruitment that had taken place over the past number of months, stating that Monaghan County Council are a project driven organization and are ahead of the curve in that regard. He concluded by wishing Ms. Pamela Kerr well in her new role as the Head of the Local Enterprise Office.

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

The members noted the Management Report for July and August 2024 which had been circulated with the agenda.

*On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr C. Carthy it was agreed that projects not shortlisted for the 2024 Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards be submitted to the LAMA All-Ireland Community and Council Awards 2025.*

#### **17. To receive an update on the Peace Campus**

Ms. Christina Captieux, Peace Development Officer, attended the meeting to provide an update to members on the Peace Campus. She commenced by sharing a video that captured the celebrations of the launch of the Peace Campus on Friday 10 May 2024. Ms. Captieux gave a presentation to the members. Key points to note were:

- The Peace Campus' Strategic Plan aims to ensure the future development and sustainability of the Peace Campus for the long-term.
- In terms of operational activity, contracts have been signed with anchor tenants; Foróige, Co-Operation Ireland and the HSE, who are now in place and ready to roll-out their programmes and activities.

- It is anticipated that the Peace Campus website will be available by Q4, 2024. In the interim, information is available on the Council's website ([www.monaghan.ie](http://www.monaghan.ie)).
- Over recent weeks, a facilities management company have been appointed and their services, which include a barista style café, will be available from mid-September.
- To ensure good governance, the Peace Campus follows a Social Charter, set out by SEUPB.
- Approximately 30% of the Peace Campus' activities/programmes are aimed at youth services.
- On 21 September 2024, which coincides with UN International Day of Peace and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Museum, there will be a community open day at the Peace Campus. All infrastructure will be in place, bookings will be taken and there are a variety of activities planned throughout the day.

Ms. Captieux responded to queries from the elected members.

### **18. To receive presentation from Housing Section**

Mr. Nial O'Connor, Senior Executive Officer and Mr. Lorcán MacCinna, Senior Executive Engineer, attended the meeting to provide members with an update from the Housing section. Key points to note were:

- As part of the Capital Programme for 2024-2026, 10 additional houses are to be completed at Knockcarrick, Annyalla and 30 houses are to be completed at Coill an Rí, Carrickmacross by Q4, 2024.
- Two 'Design and Build Social Housing Projects' at Slí Lorcáin, Latlorcan, Monaghan and Slí NaCoille, Mullaghmatt, Monaghan, have been granted full planning approval and are currently at tender stage.
- In terms of Energy Efficiency, in 2023, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage provided an allocation for the upgrade of 68 properties and Monaghan County Council overachieved this target by upgrading 92 properties. The target set by the Department for 2024 was also 68 properties, however, the Housing section aim to upgrade 133 properties.
- Monaghan County Council ranked within the top 3 Local Authorities in Ireland in terms of performance since 2016 in the National Oversight and Audit Committee (NOAC) Reletting Results from 2014 to 2023.
- The Housing department are at an advanced stage in the preparation of an application to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for an Affordable Housing Scheme to be made available for Monaghan Town next year.
- A feasibility study is currently underway for a Cost Rental Scheme which proposes to provide rent 30% below the market rate.
- As part of the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027, a full review of the housing list was completed which identified 122 applicants as having a recognised disability. Working groups have been established with the disability and mental health services with the HSE and a target has been set for 20% of allocations to persons with a disability.

Mr. MacCinna and Mr. O' Connor responded to queries from the elected members.

### **19. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences/Training events**

There were no reports received.

### **20. Business submitted by Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive referred to correspondence received from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council requesting that an invitation be extended to the members of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to visit to the opening of Monaghan County Museum, Monaghan Peace Campus and the Clones Marina. In addition, he stated that, the Chair of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Visitor Experience Development Partnership (VEDP), Councillor Thomas O'Reilly, had requested that the feasibility of him hosting a joint meeting with tourism officers from Monaghan and Cavan County Councils be explored.

*On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett it was agreed to respond to Fermanagh and Omagh District Council with suitable dates to facilitate the visits and joint meeting as outlined in their correspondence.*

The Chief Executive also referred to the invitation received to the Project Children event in New York on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

*On the proposal of Cllr D. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that Leas-Cathaoirleach and a member of the Executive would represent Monaghan County Council at the Project Children Picnic + 5K event in New York on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2024.*

**Adjournment of meeting:**

As the time had reached 3.50 pm, it was agreed that the balance of the agenda would be adjourned until Monday 16 September at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meetings  
Administrator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_