

Minutes of the Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, M-Tek Building, Armagh Rd, Knockaconny, Monaghan, on Monday 04 November 2024 at 11.30am

Chair: Cllr C. Bennett, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs Aughey, Campbell, Carthy, Clerkin, P. Conlon, S. Conlon, Coyle, 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, Ms. O. McConnon, Directors of Services, Mr. G. McMahon, A/Directors of Services, Ms. M. McGarvey, Meetings Administrator, Ms. A. McMeel, Assistant Staff Officer.

1. Confirmation of Minutes held on 07 October 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Pat Treanor, seconded by Cllr David Maxwell, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 07 October 2024 be confirmed.

2. Correspondence

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

- Email response from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D., regarding the expansion of the free contraception scheme.
- Email response from Mr. Brendan Smith, T.D., with a reply from the Minister for Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan, T.D., to the question he submitted on Monaghan County Council's behalf regarding if urgent and favorable consideration will be given to the request for additional funding for the maintenance and upgrading of the County's Regional and Local Road Network.
- Letter from Mr. Ray Ryan, Property Manager, Towercom Limited, regarding the motion calling on them to stop work immediately on the mast at Eir Exchange, Railway Road (off New Street), Conabury, Castleblaney, Co. Monaghan.
- Email from Mary Kirke, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) County Secretary, on behalf of the Monaghan County Board of CCÉ, thanking Monaghan County Council and its Chief Executive, Mr. Robert Burns for hosting a Civic Reception to acknowledge the hard work and achievement of their four All Ireland Champions.
- Acknowledgement email from the office of the Taoiseach, Mr. Simon Harris, T.D., regarding the request to meet with Special Needs Active Parents (SNAP) to discuss the failure of government to provide adequate services for families and children with special needs in County Monaghan and the request for additional funding for the maintenance and upgrading of Monaghan's Regional and Local Road Network.
- Acknowledgement email received from the Office of the Department of Education regarding a request for Ms. Norma Foley, T.D., Minister for Education, to meet with Special Needs Active Parents (SNAP) to discuss the failure of government to provide adequate services for families and children with special needs in County Monaghan.
- An acknowledgement email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Transport, Mr. Eamon Ryan, M.D., regarding the request for additional funding for Monaghan's road network.
- Acknowledgement email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D., regarding the need for additional orthodontists and dentists in County Monaghan and whether there is an ongoing recruitment drive to fill these positions.

- Acknowledgement email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Public Expenditure NDP Delivery and Reform, Mr. Paschal Donohue, T.D., regarding the request for the reconvening of the National Fodder Committee and engagement with all the farming organisations and stakeholders.
- Acknowledgement email from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Finance, Mr. Jack Chamber, T.D., regarding the request for the reconvening of the National Fodder Committee and engagement with all the farming organisations and stakeholders.
- Acknowledgement email from the Office of the Minister of State, Mr. James Lawless, T.D., regarding the request for additional funding for Low-Cost Safety Scheme.
- Resolution from Roscommon County Council regarding funding for a Roadside Tree Survey to identify dead, dangerous and infected trees, and that Roscommon be put forward as a pilot for a national scheme.
- Resolution from Westmeath County Council regarding the removal of the mandatory aspect of secondary level Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) classes and that the entire SPHE curriculum be reviewed.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr S. Coyle, seconded by Cllr S. Gilliland, and agreed that this Council supports the Roscommon Co Co Motion and writes to the Department of Transport seeking funding for a Roadside Tree Survey to identify dead, dangerous and infected trees, and that Monaghan County Council also be put forward as a pilot for a national scheme.

On the proposal of Cllr D. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr. C. Bennett, it was agreed that a request from SNAP Monaghan (Special Needs Active Parents), a parent led support group for families of children with additional needs based in Co Monaghan, to attend a Council Meeting would be presented at the December CPG meeting and if agreed, an invitation would be issued to attend a full Council Meeting in the New Year.

In response to the frustration expressed by the elected members at the level of funding received for the maintenance and upgrading of the County's Regional and Local Road Network, the Chief Executive, Mr. Robert Burns responded by saying the Roads department are currently doing preparatory work to go through the SPCs on 'Road Management Strategy'. This road strategy will help inform future budgetary decisions.

3. To consider Section 183 Sale of Lands at Tullyvin Cottage, Castleblaney

On the proposal of Cllr A. Campbell, seconded by Cllr P. Gibbons, it was agreed that the Council approve the sale of lands of lands at Tullyvin Cottage, Castleblaney, in accordance with the terms of the notice dated 29th July 2024 and attached site location map in accordance with S183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

4. To consider Section 183 at 18 Oakland Grove Garden, Scotshouse

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr S. Flynn, it was agreed that the Council approve the sale of lands at 18 Oakland Grove Garden, Scotshouse, in accordance with the terms of the notice dated 1st July 2024 and attached site location map in accordance with S183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

5. **To consider Section 183 Notice - Alan Corley and Jane O Driscoll**
On the proposal of Cllr R. Truell, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that the Council approve the disposal of a derelict building at Lecklevera, Greenan's Cross, Newbliss, Co. Monaghan, in accordance with the terms of the notice dated 6th September 2024 and attached site location map in accordance with S183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

6. **To consider Section 183 Wayleave/Right of Way over lands at Latlorcan**
On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr D. Maxwell, it was agreed that the Council grant a Wayleave/Right of Way over lands at Latlorcan, Monaghan, in accordance with the terms of the notice dated 4th October 2024 and attached site location map in accordance with S183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

7. **To ratify nominations from the Sectoral Pillars/Public Participation Network to Strategic Policy Committees 2024-2029**

Ms. M. McGarvey, A/Senior Executive Officer, referred to the document circulated with the Agenda and informed members that nominations have now been received from the Sectoral Pillars and Public Participation Network for all positions on the Strategic Policy Committees 2024-2029.

On the proposal of Cllr D. Maxwell, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that positions be filled as follows:

SPC for Housing

Michael McBride	Development/Construction
April Anna Barker	Business / Commercial
Daniel Sean McKenna	PPN – Environment Electoral College
Tom Freeman	PPN Community and Voluntary Electoral College
Teresa Carolan	PPN Community and Voluntary Electoral College
Packie Kelly	PPN Social Inclusion Electoral College

SPC for Transport

Samantha Farrell	Trade Union
Emily Treanor	Business / Commercial
Gordon Read	Business / Commercial
VACANT	PPN Environment Electoral College
John Connolly	PPN Community and Voluntary Electoral College
Fergal McMahan	PPN Social Inclusion Electoral College

SPC for Economic Development & Enterprise

Tom Treanor	Agri / Farming
Fergal Duffy	Development / Construction
Pete McMahan	Business / Commercial
Eileen Collery	Business / Commercial
Ciaran McEntee	PPN Environment Electoral College
Peadar Black College	PPN Community and Vol / Social Inclusion Electoral College

SPC for Climate Action & Environment

Niall McMeel	Agri / Farming
Jean Rosney	Federation of Group Water Schemes
Emer Brennan	Business / Commercial
Liam Murtagh	PPN Environment Electoral College
Lorraine Cunningham	PPN Social Inclusion Electoral College
Alice Forde	PPN Community & Vol Electoral College

SPC for Tourism, Rural & Community Development; An Ghaeilge & Cultural Services

Packie McCarville	Business/Commercial (Tourism/Hospitality Sector)
Fiona McGuinness	Business/Commercial (Tourism/Hospitality Sector)
Emer Brennan	PPN Environment Electoral College
Carol Smyth	PPN Social Inclusion Electoral College
Noel Treanor	PPN Community and Voluntary Electoral College
Séan Ó Murchadha	PPN Community and Voluntary Electoral College

8. To approve nominations to Peace Partnership Board

Ms M McGarvey advised members that a representative from each Municipal District and from the LCDC is required on the Peace Partnership Committee. She stated that there is presently no representation from the Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD nor from the LCDC.

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett, it was agreed that membership of the Peace Partnership Committee be extended to five.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr N. Keelan, it was agreed that Cllr P. Gibbons be added to the Board (in addition to Cllr R. Truell, Cllr S. Treanor, Cllr R Aughey and Cllr C. Bennett).

9. To Receive a presentation from Comhairle na nÓg

Three members from Comhairle na nÓg attended the meeting to give a presentation on a 'Let's Talk Event 2024' that was held in St. Joseph's Pastoral Centre, where 60 people attended.

- They outlined their findings and recommendations on the 4 main areas of concern raised:
 - Lack of Activities & Amenities
 - Housing
 - Transport & Roads
 - Services in General

The members from Comhairle na nÓg responded to queries from the elected members. The Cathaoirleach, on behalf of all the members, thanked the Comhairle na Óg group for their very informative presentation.

10. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 25 October 2024, which had been circulated.

On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett, it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 25 October 2024 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

11. To receive Management Report – October 2024

The Chief Executive introduced the Management Report for October 2024 which had been circulated with the agenda.

He highlighted 'The Pride of Place' Competition which took place over the weekend, a very prestigious event and often referred to as the 'Community Oscars'. Over 500 people attended the main Gala event on Saturday in the Hillgrove Hotel, addressed by the Cathaoirleach, and he thanked her for representing Monaghan County Council so well on the night. People came from all over Ireland to attend the event, from North and South. Traditionally, the Pride of Place Awards Ceremony takes place at a gala event over a single evening. This year, for Pride of Place, the competition and awards experience was expanded over two days so as to celebrate all that is good about places, communities and culture from all across this island and showcased our county and county town. There were a number of events and workshops, including the Pride of Place Workshop, the performance of Pat McCabe's new play at the Garage Theatre 'Little White Lies', both on Friday, and the tours of Monaghan town and the Peace Campus, which were all very well attended. The feedback the Chief Executive has received from sponsors, colleagues in other Councils and from people who attended the events has been extremely positive and complimentary and the organisers will consider using the weekend idea as a template going forward. The Chief Executive thanked all staff who helped make the Pride of Place 2024 celebrations such a success and in particular the Community Department staff, who played a lead role in planning the workshops and events and making sure they went off smoothly. He expressed great pride in this event and stated that it is a testament that Monaghan County Council can run events of this scale successfully. From an economic perspective, the Chief Executive estimated the contribution to the local economy would be approximately €250k.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr C. Bennett said it was a pleasure to welcome people from all over Ireland to the event. She thanked the organising team, Gareth McMahon, Nicola Payne, Carol Lambe and Carol McMahon and the Chief Executive for bringing the event to Monaghan. She acknowledged all of the awards recipients, in particular the village of Oram, who won the top prize in their category. She acknowledged the great efforts of community groups to enhance the places where they live, socially, culturally and economically.

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

The members noted the Management Report for October 2024 which had been circulated with the agenda.

On the proposal of Cllr PJ. O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr R. Aughey, it was agreed that this Council write to the Minister for Social Protection, Rural and Community Development, Ms. Heather Humphrey's T.D. and her department requesting additional funding for the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) as based on the money we received this year it could take up to 30 years to have the lanes done.

On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr N. Keelan, it was agreed that this Council write to the Minister of Transport, Mr Eamonn Ryan T.D., and the National Transport Agency, addressing the issue of the continued underfunding of Active Travel measures throughout County Monaghan of €3 million annually, amounting to 1% of the €1 billion allocated nationally since 2020, and that we seek a considerable increase that will advance measures that have been on the agenda for close to four years, and yet to realise construction.

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

The members noted the reports from Cllr P. Treanor, Cllr C. Carthy and Cllr B. McAree, in relation to their attendance at the following Conferences/Training events:

- AILG Autumn Training, 11th & 12th September, The Hillgrove Hotel, Co. Monaghan
- LAMA Autumn Seminar, 17th – 18th October, Newgrange Hotel, Navan
- WoMeN's Regional Caucus plenary meeting, 15th October 2024, Park Hotel, Sligo

13. Business Submitted by the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive took the opportunity to provide feedback on the trip to New York to attend the launch of the *Project Children 'Move to Monaghan'* campaign at a milestone event in New York. He was joined by Cllr P. Conlon, Leas-Chathaoirleach, and County Museum Curator, Liam Bradley. Cllr P. Conlon outlined background information on the project. What started initially with 6 children expanded to over 23,000 young Catholic and Protestant children who travelled to the US for a summer holiday respite from the everyday violence and strife of their homeland over the past 20 years. Over that time, more than 12,000 families in the US hosted children.

The Monaghan County Council delegation met with Mr. Denis Mulcahy, the Project Children Chairman and his family. Denis Mulcahy has been nominated twice for the Nobel Peace Prize for his and the team's work contributing to the peace process in Northern Ireland, which is a testament of the international recognition of this project. On Sunday 20th October, the Chief Executive, Cllr P. Conlon and Liam Bradley, attended a landmark event in upstate New York, marking the official launch of the 'Move to Monaghan' campaign by Project Children. Hosted at the Rockland GAA grounds, the day featured the final Project Children Big Picnic and 5K run fundraiser, drawing participants and supporters from across the community.

The 'Move to Monaghan' campaign also focuses on promoting Monaghan as the host location for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Project Children, which will take place from 7th – 11th October 2025. This will provide huge potential to showcase Monaghan as a tourist destination.

There was a busy schedule of meetings and events for the Monaghan County Council delegation while in New York, including meetings with Irish state agencies based in New York including Enterprise Ireland and Tourism Ireland, as well as a meeting with the Irish Consulate in New York. The delegation was given a tour of the Irish Arts Centre in New York and the American Irish Historical Society and had meetings with senior managers of both organisations to discuss opportunities around educational and cultural exchange.

During the visit, the Monaghan delegation met with the Monaghan Society in New York to renew and strengthen social and cultural links with the Monaghan community based in New York.

14. Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meetings held on 07 October 2024

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr. P. Gibbons, it was agreed that given the number of school transport issues still unresolved across the county, that this Council write to Ms Siobhan Griffin (Regional School transport manager) requesting her attendance at council meeting at the earliest opportunity to discuss these outstanding issues, and also to discuss what measures will be put in place to ensure future school transport problems are avoided.

15. To receive update on N2 National Primary Road Schemes

The following correspondence was received in relation to the N2 National Primary Road Schemes:

- Acknowledgement email from Ms. Rachel Bedley, Regulatory & Administrative Executive, TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) regarding the request for funding for 2025 and an assurance that the level of TII/Department of Transport funding in 2025 and beyond will be sufficient to allow the Phase 3 design to progress and be completed without any further delays.
- Letter from the Department for Infrastructure, Western Division, regarding the A5 Western Transport Corridor (A5WTC) Notice of Intention to Proceed and enclosed was a copy of the Statutory Notice to be published during the week ending 25 October 2024.

16. To receive update on North/South Interconnector project

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr C. Bennett, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to Eirgrid requesting a response to the following question:

‘Given that a new government will be in place shortly with a new minister for The Environment, Climate, Communications and Transport, should that new Minister and Government request that Eirgrid bring forward a plan to deliver the NSI using undergrounding technology, what will Eirgrid’s response be to such a request?’

17. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project

No further update on the Ulster Canal project.

18. Questions and Replies

Cllr C. Carthy asked:

1. When is it expected that the first 6no. 4-bed units in the Clos na Droimmaine (unfinished) estate in Carrickmacross will be made available to allocate?

Reply: Having met with Tuath recently, the Housing Section does not have any confirmed delivery date for this development.

2. When is it expected that a presentation will be made to the council outlining the results of the Carrickmacross Swimming Pool Feasibility study and assessment report?

Reply: Consultancy firm S3 Solutions are currently finalising the Draft Feasibility Study and Strategic Assessment Report for a proposed Swimming Pool and Leisure Complex in Carrickmacross. Monaghan County Council expect the findings of the Draft Feasibility Study to be presented to the Municipal District Members in November 2024.

3. Seeing as the number of online planning submissions are consistently increasing each month, since its introduction, and now make up the majority of submissions, is the council considering a move to completely digitalise this process in an effort to reduce paper use?

Reply: The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) govern the form and method of how planning applications are submitted. At present the legislation allows for the submission of either paper or digital planning applications but does not prevent the submission of paper applications. The Planning and Development Act 2024 which has recently been passed by the Oireachtas and signed into law by the President, but not yet commenced, maintains this position stating that the Minister may make regulations that facilitates the making and processing of applications by electronic means. However, the Planning Section will continue to encourage and facilitate the digital submission of planning applications with a view to being in a position where all planning applications are submitted and processed electronically. The percentage of planning applications that are submitted electronically has risen steadily since the introduction of the E Planning Portal in March 2023 to 80% presently.

4. When is it expected that a full review of our roads network will be carried out to establish repair needs? And when is it expected the executives Roads plan will be presented to council members?

Reply: The new 5-year road strategy will be brought through the 1st Transportation SPC which is expected to be in November 2024.

5. Can the Housing section confirm:

- The percentage of our housing stock that has been retrofitted to an energy efficient standard (This figure may also include new stock that was built to a high standard of efficiency to begin with)?

Reply: The percentage of Monaghan County Council housing stock with a Building Energy Rating B2 or better is 44% which compares favourably with national figures that shows only 12% of houses nationally have a BER of B2 or better.

- The number of housing units still in need of retrofitting?

Reply: Monaghan County Council currently owns 1856 properties. Energy Efficiency works have been completed to housing stock in order of priority dictated by the Building Energy Rating and it remains a priority to target the worst performing housing stock. 1031 properties remain to be upgraded. The remaining housing stock to be upgraded is spread across the range of BER's, B3 to E. Of the remaining housing stock to be upgraded:

66% of the 1031 properties to be upgraded have a Building Energy Rating B3 –C

34% of the 1031 properties to be upgraded have a Building Energy Rating D – E

- The timeline for all housing stock to be upgraded or at the higher energy efficiency standard?

Reply: Works to upgrade the energy efficiency of housing stock is completed on an ongoing basis with some work being completed outside the energy efficiency retrofitting programme and funded using the response maintenance, planned maintenance and reletting budgets. The works completed result in significant improvements to the Building Energy rating of the property and put the property on the road map to B2. The shallower upgrade works completed under these programmes have significant benefits to the tenants in terms of comfort and energy usage.

The Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme is a 10-year programme for Government. Monaghan County Council is committed to upgrading all of its housing stock to a minimum Building Energy Rating of B2, subject to funding allocation from the Department and will continue to target properties in order of priority to ensure that those most in need will receive upgrades as early as possible in the programme.

Cllr P. Gibbons asked:

6. There are 2-bedroom AHB houses planned at Radhairc An Bhri, Castleblayney. Can you please advise the number of housing units to be delivered and when it is envisaged these will be finished?

**Reply: 2 X 2 bed End Terrace Bungalow
5 X 2 bed Mid Terrace Bungalow
2 X 3 bed Detached Bungalow**

It is anticipated that these units will be delivered in Q3/Q4 2025.

7. How many applicants are approved for social housing in the Annyalla area and what is the breakdown as regards housing type required? Are there plans to develop additional social and/or affordable housing in Annyalla?

Reply: There are currently 58 Applicants who have identified Annyalla as one of their areas of choice. 13 (1Bed), 18 (2Bed), 22 (3Bed), 5 (4Bed). By the end of 2024 40 new houses will have been delivered in Annyalla. There is currently no new scheme proposals for Annyalla.

8. The junction at Brennans Cross at Ardkirk on N53 is extremely busy. Can Monaghan County Council provide an update on plans for lighting at this crossroads?

Reply: MCC have submitted an application to TII for funding for installation of public lighting at this junction. We have followed this up with a reminder for a response. Installation of public lighting along the rural national road network is not within TII Design Standards and as such a Departure from Standards had to accompany our application. We will continue to follow up with TII.

9. Can an update be provided on the proposed CCTV camera systems for Castleblayney and Carrickmacross?

Reply: Following a presentation on both schemes to the National CCTV Advisory Committee on Friday the 19th 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. In relation to Hope Castle and Annex can the following be provided:
- a) Update on the work of the contractor employed to clear out the Annex and Hope Castle Buildings
Reply: MCB Civils Ireland Ltd were appointed as works contractor in August 2024 for clear-out works consisting of internal debris removal and removal of any unstable elements and finishes from Hope Castle, Annex & Adjacent Outbuilding in Lough Muckno Estate. The clear out works commenced on August 20th and were recently completed on October 21st. Monaghan County Council are currently conducting a procurement competition to engage a survey company to carry out topographical and measured building surveys to inform design proposals for relevant remedial protective works.
 - b) Update on the tender process for the Masterplan and proposed dates for next steps
Reply: A total of 4 tender submissions were received in relation to the engagement of professional services for development of a Masterplan and Development Framework for Lough Muckno and its environs. The initial tender evaluation process has been completed. Having regard to compliance with relevant procurement procedures and timelines, it is expected that the preferred tenderer will be identified in November and following this a pre-appointment meeting will be scheduled.
 - c) Update on how and when public consultation will be carried out
Reply: Extensive public consultation has been included as a key requirement of the project brief for the engagement of professional consultancy services. Public consultation events will be conducted at relevant stages of the Masterplan development.

Cllr S. Flynn asked:

11. Can Monaghan County Council provide me with their plans for serviced sites in towns and villages in County Monaghan?
Reply: Serviced site will be made available in Latlorcan, Monaghan and in Scotshouse in early 2025.
12. Can Monaghan County Council please confirm whether we have traffic calming measures in place around all schools & sporting grounds throughout the county?
Reply: MCC can confirm that there are not traffic calming measures in place around the significant number of schools and various sporting grounds throughout the County. There is a traffic policy in place and representation can be made for traffic calming measures to be considered.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

13. In terms of council contracts for the supply of goods and services, including very significant housing provision contracts, road resurfacing contracts etc - what procedures are in place to ensure that the General public achieves the best value for money possible in awarding such contracts?
Reply: Monaghan County Council complies with national procurement guidelines for the supply of Goods & Services.

Where central procurement arrangements are not available through the Office of Government Procurement, (OGP), or through the SupplyGov portal Monaghan advertise procurement competitions on the e-Tenders portal which ensures maximum exposure to the market.

14. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the preparation of the community plans for our village areas:

- How many have been completed?
- How many are outstanding?
- What are the next steps for those plans that have been completed?

Reply: Plans finished, published and launched:

- Aughnamullen
- Ballinode
- Newbliss/ Killeevan
- Oram
- Scotshouse

Plans in draft form, but needs to be updated and revised to reflect new issues arising:

- Emyvale

Plans in draft form, not signed off by community:

- Smithboro

Communities being assisted to prepare their own:

- Latton
- Glaslough
- Tydavnet
- Ballybay

Consultant-led Plans paid for by LA and complete:

- Drum
- Rockcorry

15. In terms of Monaghan County Councils statutory requirement to employ and promote the employment of persons with a disability, what efforts are we as a local authority making on this very important social inclusion issue?

Reply: Monaghan County Council complies with the 6% target for the number of employees that reported a disability by the total number of employees. New starters are issued with an NDA S3 form (Disability Status) to complete and return with their signed Contract. We also issue Staff Census Form annually to enable staff to report any deterioration in their health or new diagnosis since they completed the Staff Census in the previous year.

Monaghan County Council was one of five Local Authorities who partnered with WAM Programme in 2024. Our WAM graduates are working in Community and Library Services. Monaghan County Council was singled out for extra merit for employing two WAM graduates and received a WAM Leader Award 2024.

We will be engaging in the WAM Programme 2025.

16. Are we as a local authority winter ready in terms of salt supplies, and the machinery/equipment and other resources necessary to deal with any severe weather events including flooding issues that may occur?

Reply: MCC is ready for winter in terms of salt supplies and machinery/equipment. A severe weather plan is in place to deal with extreme weather events.

17. In relation to road safety what efforts will the council make in conjunction with landowners to ensure that hedge trimming is carried out along public roads where necessary, including at dangerous Junctions? And what efforts will the council make to ensure dangerous / dead trees are also removed?

Reply: The maintenance of hedges and tree removal is the responsibility of the landowner. Under Section 70 of the roads Act the council have power to serve notice to landowners to maintain hedges/trees that are a hazard.

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

18. What progress is occurring with plans to distribute the recently announced €4.5 million funding allocation from the EU Peace Plus Programme to communities throughout County Monaghan?

Reply: Unlike other Peace programmes the new PEACEPLUS programme does not allow for the distribution of small grants. Activities will be delivered to communities through partners such as ETB, MID and the Peace Link. As part of our action plan we also are delivering a programme to improve community facilities, with projects up to €50,000. An expression of interest was held earlier this year, and we will now start working with those groups to get the projects ready for delivery. This will be led by MCC.

19. In line with Council ambitions to enhance residential development opportunities throughout Tier 4 rural settlements and villages throughout County Monaghan, what is the current capacity status of Waste Water Treatment Plants in each of the 14 villages?

Reply:

A register indicating the available capacity at all Monaghan Waste Water Treatment Plants is available at [Monaghan | Wastewater Treatment Capacity Register | Uisce Éireann \(formerly Irish Water\)](#) Uisce Éireann advises that a Pre-Connection Enquiry should be submitted to determine the feasibility of connecting any particular site to the Uisce Éireann network, feasibility should not be inferred from the register.

20. In Annyalla there is no footpath on the section of the L3441 from the turn off to Annyalla school to the end of the street lighting on the Castleblayney side of the village. Similarly, there is an absence of footpath extending under street lighting that exists on the Monaghan side of the village. Being mindful of the enhancement of this expanding village, active travel measures and providing safe walking areas in our villages, when is it anticipated that footpaths at these locations will be installed.

Reply: Active Travel response- there is no proposed active travel scheme in this area at present.

Cllr R. Aughey asked:

21. Could the council let me know how many affordable houses are planned for our 5 major towns in the next year 2025? And what is the criteria for couples to be eligible for this scheme?

Reply: Housing Section will have an application for an Affordable Housing Scheme in Monaghan Town completed before year end for assessment by the Department of Housing and Local Government. If successful, the scheme will be announced shortly thereafter.

To be eligible for a property under the Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme, the following criteria apply:

- The combined gross household income of all of the persons making the application, is below a certain level. This is calculated by multiplying the gross household income by 4. This must be less than 85.5% of the market value of the Affordable Home. (Exceptions to this may apply in certain circumstances)
- The applicant's gross household income plus deposit plus excess savings must not exceed 95% of the market value of the home.
- The Scheme is for First-Time buyers or persons who qualify under the Fresh Start principle.
- A minimum deposit of 10% of the purchase price is required.
- Each person included in the application must have the right to reside indefinitely in the State.
- The affordable home will be principal place of residence.
- Over 18 years of age.

Monaghan County Council will assess applicants eligibility in accordance with [regulations](#) and the [Scheme of Priority](#)

19. Notices of Motion

1. Cllr C. Carthy proposed, Cllr N. Keelan seconded,

That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD, to widen the eligibility of the Primary Medical Certificate scheme to allow for applicants 'without the use of one of their hands/arms or one of their legs and who require modifications to their vehicles in order to be able to drive'.

Cllr Carthy also ask that, if passed, this motion be circulated amongst Co. Monaghan Oireactas members and also passed on to all other local authorities for their support.

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

2. Cllr S. Flynn proposed, Cllr C. Bennett, seconded,

Following on from the White Ribbon event held in Monaghan town at the start of October and also coinciding with Women's Safety Audit events throughout the county in October, that Monaghan County Council:

- (a) write to the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee and the Taoiseach Simon Harris, insisting that the government adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards domestic, sexual and gender-based violence*
- (b) request that the Legislature and the Judiciary review legislation surrounding sentencing to ensure mandatory minimum sentences are introduced*
- (c) further urge Minister McEntee to call for the urgent provision of emergency accommodation for victims of domestic violence in County Monaghan.*

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

20. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

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

- Patrick (Pat) McElroy, Smithborough, on Friday 18th October 2024 (Father of Deirdre McQuaid, IS Technical Officer, IS Department)
- Edward John Little, 26 Mount View Drive, Killygullen, Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh, on Thursday 24th October 2024 (Father of Melissa Little, Staff Officer, Corporate Services)
- James Connolly, Drumbear, Monaghan Town, Monaghan H18Y683 and formally of Lisnalee, Monaghan on Wednesday, 30th October 2024 (Father of Brendan Connolly, Craft Foreman, Housing Section)
- Michael Monahan, Tiernaneill, Monaghan (brother-in-law of Patricia Monahan)

It was agreed that votes of congratulations would be extended to:

- Scotstown GAA club on winning the Minor and Senior County Championship. The Senior team also won the Senior League at the weekend to complete the double.
- Drumhowan GAA club on winning the 2024 Monaghan GAA Junior Football Championship.
- Toome GAA club who won the Monaghan Junior football league.
- Oram Community Development and Tidy Town Association who won the All-Ireland Pride of Place award in their category.
- Táine King – her film “The Wilde Sisters” won an honourable mention award for outstanding film making as the New York Shorts International Film Festival 2024.
- Shane McLoughlin, amputee athlete, who created another Guinness World record by pulling a truck weighing 25 tonnes.
- All the MD's and various community committees on the success of the various Halloween celebrations throughout the county.

21. Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr C. Carthy, 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
AILG	For Councillors whose parent Councils are within the area of the <i>Southern Regional Assembly</i> Out of Option Region For Councillors whose parent Councils are within the Northern & Western and the Eastern & Midlands area https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/981653059727	Radisson Blu Hotel Limerick	Saturday 2 nd November 2024	
Celtic Conferences	Corporate Governance	O'Donovan's Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork	22-24 November	Cllr S. Coyle Cllr R. Truell

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____
Meetings
Administrator

Date: _____