

## 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 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2025 at 11:05am

**Present:** Cathaoirleach PJ O’Hanlon,

Cllrs. Colm Carthy, Noel Keelan, Paul Gibbons, Peter Conlon , Aidan Campbell

**In Attendance:** Cathal Flynn, Director of Services, Damien Thornton, District Co-Ordinator, Gary Toye, District Engineer Gemma Keenan, Senior Staff Officer, Julieann O’Reilly, Assistant Staff Officer

Cllr. O’Hanlon opened proceedings by discussing the recent on on-going effects of Storm Eowyn.

All elected members commended the roles of MCC staff, Blue light services, ESB and community organisations.

The elected members spoke about the issues caused by being a cashless/paperless society and all remarked that lessons need to be learned.

The problems caused by social housing stock having switched to electricity powered heating sources was also discussed.

On the proposal of Cllr. O’Hanlon and seconded by Cllr. Keelan, the following motion was unanimously agreed:

*“That a letter be sent to Minister for Housing James Brown to review the policy of Social housing been built and solely dependent on electricity”.*

It was requested that consideration be given to community centres and public buildings opening up to provide facilities.

The elected members paid tribute to all those who helped others during this time, including Oram Community Centre and many local businesses in both towns.

It was queried whether Carrickmacross Civic Centre should have a generator.

Cathal Flynn, Director of Services informed the elected members of the following:

- Information will be made available to elected members regarding community hubs today.
- Advised that the emergency response number is 1800 121 121.
- Expressed thanks to all emergency services, remarking that all organisations worked together.

Cllr. O'Hanlon asked that a letter is sent to the various organisations expressing the member's gratitude.

### **1.0 Confirmation of Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Campbell, the minutes of the in-committee meeting held on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2024, were adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Campbell, the minutes of the December 2024 monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2024, were adopted.

### **2.0 Matters Arising**

#### Cllr. Keelan:

Queried when there will be design for the proposed Park and Ride facility.

Asked if the plan for Tullyvaragh Junction can be made available for the next meeting.

Sought the re-establishment of the Dún Ard and Ballymackney bus stops for the Local Link service.

#### Cllr. Campbell:

Sought an update on the street lighting in Castleblayney, noting it is very dark now the Christmas lights are down.

### **3.0 Correspondence**

#### i. Correspondence from NTA re: Digital Display Screen

#### ii. Correspondence from Hudsons Funfair

On the proposal of Cllr. Conlon and seconded by Cllr. Carthy O'Hanlon it was unanimously agreed to grant permission for the dates requested subject to the fulfilment of usual conditions.

#### iii. Correspondence from Carrickmacross Emmets Rounders Committee

#### iv. Correspondence from Uisce Eireann

Cllr. O'Hanlon asked that a letter is issued asking UI to reconsider attending an MD meeting.

#### v. Correspondence from Chief Superintendent Alan McGovern re: CCTV

#### 4.0 Municipal Coordinator's Report

Cllr. Carthy:

Requested a change of date for the proposed meeting re: Gallows Hill.

#### 5.0 Q&A

**Questions raised by Cllr. Aidan Campbell for the January 2025 meeting of Carrickmacross - Castleblayney Municipal District:**

1. Regarding upgrading works at the Black Island to alleviate flooding and improve signage.
  - (a) When is this work to commence?
  - (b) What is the exact scope of works involved?
  - (c) How long will this works take?
  - (d) Will these works include the works for the new sensory space where funding was granted recently?

**Response:**

- (a) When is this work to commence?

It is anticipated that works will get underway week commencing Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2025.

- (b) What is the exact scope of works involved?

The works include:

- Upgrades to existing gravel paths and welcome signage
- The provision of directional signage and marker posts incorporating trailhead maps
- Improved drainage
- Replacement of existing picnic tables and wooden seating with new units and increased capacity
- The inclusion of natural viewing features at rest points

- (c) How long will these works take?

The Contractor's *Programme of Works* provides for a 19-week delivery period.

- (e) Will these works include the works for the new sensory space where funding was granted recently?

The development of a sensory space adjacent to existing playground in Lough Muckno Park is to be delivered under a separate funding stream.

2. Can the MD look at the pedestrian crossing area at the junction of Henry Street and the Square adjacent to the Market House in Castleblayney with a view to upgrading the crossing with new road markings and signage to try and address speed of the traffic in this area?

**Response:**

Existing road markings are subject to on-going review by technical staff. Any required remedial/upgrade works are scheduled on the essential repairs and maintenance list, and dealt with as soon as is reasonably practicable.

3. With the resurfacing of York Street now complete and the two new bus shelters in place. When will the new pedestrian crossing be commissioned and in use?

**Response:**

It is anticipated that the new traffic lights at the pedestrian crossing on York Street will be commissioned within the coming weeks.

4. What is the update on the works to resurface the avenue down to the Hope Castle and to create a new footpath, also the resurfacing of the Orchard area beside the Annex?

**Response:**

The Executive hopes to secure funding to progress the upgrade of the Annexe car park in 2025. It is intended that the installation of a new footpath, connecting the entrance of Lough Muckno Park to the Annexe car park, and beyond to the existing public toilets, shall form part of these works. Any necessary surface repairs to the entrance avenue shall be completed in tandem with the Annexe car park upgrade works.

5. What is the update on the upgrading of the Mullyash walking route?

**Response:**

The project is currently at design stage. It is envisaged that works shall commence in Q1 2025.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Colm Carthy for the January 2025 meeting of Carrickmacross - Castleblayney Municipal District:**

6. When is it expected that repair works will be carried out on the back access road along the rear of houses on St. Macartan's Villas, Carrickmacross?

**Response:**

It is anticipated the repair works to the rear access road at St Macartan Villas shall be completed by the end of Q3 2025.

7. Has there been any further update on the review of Street Lights along Main Street, Carrickmacross, and when is it expected to be presented to Municipal District Elected Representatives?

**Response:**

Consultants, *Molloy Consulting Engineers*, have been engaged to progress an audit of the Street Lights along Main Street, Carrickmacross. It is hoped that the outcome report from this assessment shall be made available to the Municipal District elected members in late Q1/early Q2 2025.

8. Can the MD executive consider carrying out a traffic count on the Dundalk Road, adjacent to St. Joseph's Cemetery, as this area has seen significant speeding over the years; also, when is it expected a pedestrian crossing may be added to this road, as previously muted, for safe access to the Graveyard from the town centre?

**Response:**

The Executive shall arrange for a traffic and speed survey (including a pedestrian survey) on the R178, adjacent to St. Joseph's graveyard, to determine the extent of any speeding issue, and to identify a suitable location for a pedestrian crossing to facilitate safer access to the Graveyard. Subject to the outcome of this assessment, the Executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to facilitate the installation of a pedestrian crossing and any recommended traffic calming measures.

9. Has the MD executive began the process of reviewing traffic, parking, and safe access issues around the schools in Cloughvalley and will it be bringing recommendations to the elected representatives? If this review has yet to take place, will the executive also consider looking at the same items around access to secondary schools along Patrician Drive/Rockdaniel Road/Castleblayney Road?

**Response:**

The Executive shall arrange for the engagement of a suitably qualified consultant within the coming weeks to undertake traffic management assessments at the areas outlined.

10. Is this council seeking to engage a clean-up of the Proules river, which runs through Carrickmacross, as I previously requested?

**Response:**

At present there is no funding to undertake this extensive body of work. The MD Executive has initiated discussions with Environment Section, with a view to securing funding that may facilitate localised cleaning of the Proules river where it traverses public lands.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Paul Gibbons for the January 2025 meeting of Carrickmacross - Castleblayney Municipal District:**

11. I have been advised of anti-social behaviour in The Ridge 2 site, McGrath Road, Castleblayney. I note the gate to the site has been locked but can the site be fully fenced to prevent access to this area? In addition, can vegetation be cleared from this site?

**Response:**

The Municipal District Executive, in conjunction with the Environment Section, are currently exploring funding opportunities to facilitate the installation of additional perimeter fencing to fully enclose the vacant site immediately north of "The Ridge" enterprise hub, located off McGrath Road, Castleblayney.

12. Are there plans to increase the reach of the public wi-fi scheme in Castleblayney? Coverage in Castleblayney is quite limited at present.

**Response:**

The public Wi-Fi in Castleblayney and Carrickmacross was first installed in 2016-2017. This Wi-Fi was installed initially on behalf of the members and the capital costs were funded by Carrickmacross- Castleblayney MD.

The intention at the time was to offer a Wi-Fi area that is accessible to members of the public who may not have had acceptable broadband at home. At present, the Wi-Fi covers the area along Main street/West street, the entrance to Lough Muckno and Muckno play park.

The highest levels of usage of the public Wi-Fi occurred in the early years of the scheme and usage levels have been declining in recent years. Nonetheless, it continues to offer an important service and is seen as a significant indicator for SMART towns.

It is possible to extend the public Wi-Fi into other areas, but it can be difficult to do so in areas where the local authority does not have buildings or assets. It should be noted that all existing equipment has been in place for many years and is in need of replacement and upgrade, which may also represent a significant cost.

13. The playground at Drumillard is heavily used but the equipment and park need upgrading. Are there plans to improve this facility?

**Response:**

Monaghan County Council is currently developing a *Play & Recreation Strategy* for 2025–2030. Once adopted, the strategy will facilitate the submission of proposals for the upgrading of existing facilities and the development of new play and recreation areas. Submissions for the upgrade of existing facilities will be evaluated and ranked based on the findings of independent Annual Inspection Reports.

14. The L3711 (just off the R182 Castleblayney - Oram) road has several large holes near the border which need repair. Can this be prioritised for repair?

**Response:**

The required pothole repairs on the L-3711 near the border will be included on the essential repairs and maintenance list and addressed as soon as is reasonably practicable.

15. The small section of footpath on the Monaghan Road in Castleblayney from the Applegreen/Costcutter shop to the entrance to Lidl is in very poor condition in part with potholes evident. This section is used heavily by local residents, people accessing local businesses and people exercising. Can this be prioritised for repair?

**Response:**

The small section of the footpath on the Monaghan Road in Castleblayney, from the Applegreen/Costcutter shop to the entrance to Lidl, will be included for consideration under the 2025 annual footpath repair programme.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Noel Keelan for the January 2025 meeting of Carrickmacross - Castleblayney Municipal District:**

16. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the Donaghmoyne village area and the preparation of a flood mitigation plan in advance of the access roads into the Village been upgraded and resurfaced?

**Response:**

The Executive has appointed a design consultant to advance the design of feasible flood mitigation measures. The Consultants are currently progressing initial site surveys and data collection.

17. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the request from Deery Terrace and Dunard resident's associations in Inniskeen to have some of the large trees in the estates trimmed back and removed where appropriate in the interest of road safety and general convenience?

**Response:**

An arborist has been appointed to conduct a survey of the trees at Deery's Terrace. The findings from this assessment will determine the most appropriate course of action.

The large trees in Dunard estate will receive a light pruning within the tree trimming season.

18. In relation to the Longfield Cross area on the R179 Culloville Road, what is the up-to-date position in relation to the possibility of putting in place some traffic calming measures to address the ongoing problem of excessive speeding in this area, which is a huge concern for the local residents and other road users?

**Response:**

The Executive shall arrange for a speed survey to be undertaken on the R179 Culloville Road in the vicinity of Longfield Cross, to determine the extent of any speed issues. Subject to the outcome of this assessment, the Executive shall seek to identify appropriate road safety measures for this location and explore all potential sources of funding to implement same.

19. As discussed on site with the council executive some time ago regarding the accident blackspot adjacent to the area known locally as the Finger Post on the Ballybay Road R180. What is the up-to-date position in relation to having this dangerous situation addressed?

**Response:**

The Executive have committed to undertake a safety assessment, including a speed survey, on the R180 Ballybay Road in the vicinity The Finger Post, to determine the need for traffic

calming measures. Subject to the outcome of this assessment, the Executive shall seek to identify appropriate road safety measures for this location and explore all potential sources of funding to implement same.

20. As requested by the council members has the council executive made contact with the local senior Garda and also the Garda commissioner's office in order to get approval and advance to provision of a CCTV camera system for Carrickmacross and Castleblayney town given the unacceptable delay in getting this piece of infrastructure in place which will assist in crime prevention and detection?

**Response:**

The Executive has contacted An Garda Síochána in order to expedite a decision on the proposed Community CCTV Schemes for Carrickmacross and Castleblayney Towns. The Executive continue to await approval or otherwise from the Commissioner's Office.

**Questions raised by Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon for the January 2025 meeting of Carrickmacross - Castleblayney Municipal District:**

21. When will the road works on the Kingscourt Road beside Ex-Cel Plastics be completed?

**Response:**

It is anticipated that the remedial works on the R179 Kingscourt road will be completed in Q2 2025. The Executive is currently engaging with all key stakeholders to progress a feasible design solution.

22. In relation to the wall along Bully's Acre on the Donaghmoyne Road, there is a lot of ivy growing through the wall. Can the Executive investigate this issue and make sure the wall is safe?

**Response:**

The Executive shall investigate this issue with a view to ensuring the integrity of the wall.

23. In relation to the motion that was passed to place a commemorative plaque in honour of former Town Councillor Michael Birdy (R.I.P) at McCartney's Cross, when will these works take place?

**Response:**

It is anticipated that the commemorative plaque in honour of former Urban District Councillor Michael Birdy (R.I.P) works will be installed within the coming weeks.

**Questions raised by Cllr. Peter Conlon for the January 2025 meeting of Carrickmacross - Castleblayney Municipal District:**

24. Is there a start date for the construction of the sensory park in Cloughvalley?

**Response:**

A contractor has been appointed and it is anticipated that works will commence in mid-February 2025.

25. Where are we with the feasibility study for the building commonly known as the "Bridewell"?

**Response:**

The Executive are currently preparing tender documents for the engagement of a suitably qualified consultant. It is envisaged that a tender request shall issue to the market within the coming weeks.

**26. Is there a timeframe on the safety audit on the trees on the Convent Hill?**

**Response:**

The Executive has engaged an Arborist to conduct a survey of the trees on the Convent Hill. The survey is scheduled to be undertaken in early February 2025.

**27. Is there any progress on showing the documentary “How to defuse a bomb” in Carrick?**

**Response:**

It is hoped that the Workhouse will provide a suitable venue for showcasing the documentary film. It is anticipated that this will be confirmed within the coming week.

## **6.0 CE Orders**

Orders Cmx-Cby 68/2024; Cmx-Cby 01/2025; Cmx-Cby 02/2025 and Cmx-Cby 03/2025 were noted.

## **7.0 VOS/VOC**

*Votes of sympathy* were extended to Mary Conlon on the death of John Conlon (RIP); Kenny & Cathriona Conlon & Family on the death of John Conlon (RIP); Shane Cassidy, Kim Kerley & Karen McArdle on the death of Bríd Cassidy (RIP); Breda McGuigan & family on the death of Peggie McGuigan (RIP); Carmel Duffy on the death of Paddy Cole (RIP) and Paddy McDaniel & the O'Reilly family on the death of Elaine O'Reilly (RIP).

The elected members paid tribute to the late Bríd Cassidy and the late Paddy Cole for their contributions to their local towns.

*Votes of congratulations* were extended to Lucy Connor on being awarded Netwatch Ulster Young Carer of the Year and to Patrician High School on reaching the All-Ireland U16 Volleyball National Decider.

## **8.0 A.O.B**

Cllr. Carthy:

Asked that the public lighting on O'Neill St is investigated as it is very dark near the Church and Scout Hall.

Advised that the residents of Ard an Radhairc are seeking a name boulder.

Cllr. Keelan:

Asked when MCC intend to be back out and about repairing potholes.

Advised that the Lisagore Road has opened up again.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Queried what the procedure is if a landowner refuses to cut their trees.

*Reply – MCC issue notices to such landowners.*



Cllr. Conlon:

Asked that guidance is given to landowners who wish to cut down trees along the public roadside.

Cllr. O'Hanlon warmly welcomed Cathal Flynn, Director of Service to the MD. All elected members wished to be associated with this comment.

The meeting concluded at 12:55.

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Cathaoirleach

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Date

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Meeting Administrator

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Date