

Minutes of the Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, M-Tek Building, Armagh Rd, Knockaconny, Monaghan, on Monday 01 September 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

Chair: Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs Aughey, Campbell, Carthy, Clerkin, S. Conlon, Flynn, Gibbons, Gilliland, Johnston, Keelan, McAree, McCooey, P. Treanor, S. Treanor and Truell.

Mr. R. Burns, Chief Executive, Mr. C. Flynn, Ms. C O'Hare, Ms. P. Monahan, Ms. O. McConnon, Directors of Services, Mr. N. O'Connor, A/Director of Services, Ms. M. McGarvey, Meetings Administrator, Ms. M. McMahon, Staff Officer.

MS Teams: Cllr P. Conlon

Apologies: Cllr S. Coyle

Urgent Business

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that he had received the following Notices of Urgent Business as follows:

1. On behalf of Cllr S. Flynn

'That this Council calls for a full review of school bus routes and services across County Monaghan. We request that a letter be issued to Ms. Siobhán Griffin, Regional School Transport Manager, and to the Department of Education, seeking an immediate intervention from the Minister for Education, Ms. Helen McEntee, T.D., and Bus Éireann to address routes that are currently over capacity, and to ensure that urgent steps are taken to provide additional services and seating capacity to facilitate students and their families in returning to school for the academic year 2025/2026'.

2. On behalf of Cllr P. Gibbons

'That this Council calls on the Minister for Education and Youth, Ms. Helen McEntee, T.D., and Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, Mr. Jack Chambers, T.D., to resolve the current pay dispute involving School secretaries and caretakers. It is vital that these essential workers are treated with fairness, and their employment is put on a similar status to other public servants This can be achieved by providing:

- *Pension parity as school secretaries and caretakers don't have access to public service pensions even though they work with teachers and SNAs who do, and this must be addressed*
- *A single contract of employment for secretaries and caretakers*
- *Access to sick leave and bereavement leave*

School secretaries and caretakers are the heartbeat of our school communities supporting teachers, principals, parents and most importantly students. Schools simply cannot function without them and they must be treated fairly'.

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

1. Confirmation of Council Meeting Minutes held on 07 July 2025

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr R. Aughey, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 07 July 2025, be confirmed.

2. Correspondence

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

- Letter from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. James Browne, T.D., regarding the National Planning Framework Implementation – Housing Growth Requirements.
- Response from Minister of Further and Higher Education, Mr. James Lawless, T.D., regarding higher education costs.
- Response from Mr. M. Nielssen, Executive Officer, National Council for Special Education, regarding having adequate Special Needs Assistants in place for the start of the school year.
- Response from the Private Secretary to Mr. Martin Heydon, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, regarding ACRES payments.
- Response from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohue, T.D., regarding the Israeli Bond Programme.
- Response from the Private Secretary to Minister Mr. James Browne, T.D., regarding the request for an update on the Multi-annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026
- Response from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Transport, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., regarding the request for an allocation of funding for bog roads.
- Response from Transport Infrastructure Ireland regarding additional funding for National Road Safety Schemes and Low-Cost Safety Schemes.
- Response from Private Secretary to the Minister for Health, Ms. Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, T.D., regarding cancer screening eligibility and palliative care services in the county
- Response from the Acting Head of Service, HSE regarding cancer screening eligibility and palliative care services in the County.
- Response from the National Director of the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) regarding cancer screening eligibility and palliative care services in the County.
- Response from Uisce Éireann regarding the request to expedite works at Oisín Vale and Oisín Brian estates.
- Acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport, Mr. Patrick O'Donovan, T.D., regarding review existing online safety legislation and restrictions in Ireland.
- Acknowledgement from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Housing, Mr. James Browne, regarding the request to consider all options to increase the rollout of PV panels to allow for additional power to the grid.
- Letter of gratitude from The Garda Commissioner, Mr. J. A. Harris regarding the expression of sympathy concerning the untimely death of Garda Kevin Flatley on Sunday 11 May 2025.
- Resolution from Wexford County Council regarding eliminating blanket bans on pets in tenancy agreements.

- Resolution from Clare County Council regarding the Defective Concrete Block Scheme.
- Resolution from Donegal County Council regarding affordable housing schemes.
- Resolution from Donegal County Council regarding equality legislation.
- Resolution from Waterford City and County Council regarding Carers Allowance and Benefit Reform.
- Resolution from Limerick City and County Council regarding ribbon development rules.

2.1 Additional Correspondence

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

- Response from Ms. F. Murphy, Chief Executive, HSE – National Screening Service, regarding screening programmes.
- Letter from Ms. S. Tormey, General Secretary, Irish Postmasters Union, seeking support for investment from the Government to ensure Post Offices can continue to deliver vital services.
- Resolution from Offaly County Council regarding the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- Resolution from Tipperary County Council regarding regulations for renewable energy.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr P. Gibbons, it was agreed that this Council supports the Waterford City and County Council motion calling on the Minister for Social Protection, Mr. Dara Calleary, T.D., to abolish means testing for Carers Allowance in Budget 2026. We further call on the Minister to introduce a fair and adequate payment for recipients of Carers Allowance and Carers Benefit that truly reflects the time, dedication and compassionate care that carers provide everyday across Ireland.

On the proposal of Cllr C. Carthy, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor, it was agreed that this Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. James Browne, T.D., to do all in his power to expand the rollout of Solar PV Panels throughout the state, including the provision of solar PV panels to all public building projects, social housing etc. and to further support the installation of solar PV panels on private projects throughout the state.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr C. Carthy, it was agreed that this Council responds to the Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohue, T.D., expressing our disappointment with his comments in relation to Israeli War Bonds. The Irish Government must step in and assist stopping the genocide in Palestine by legislating to block the approval by the Central Bank of Israeli.

On the proposal of Cllr B. McAree, seconded by Cllr S. Conlon, it was agreed that this Council writes again to the Minister for Education, Ms. Helen McEntee, T.D., and the NCSE asking them to investigate why children with additional needs have not been provided with appropriate SNA provisions to enable them to attend school and additionally can the NCSE/Minister outline the number of children currently being homeschooled due to the lack of SNA's as of September 2025.

On the proposal of Cllr S. Flynn, seconded by Cllr B. McAree, it was agreed that this Council calls on the Minister for Health, Ms. Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, T.D., and the HSE to provide adequate funding and staffing for additional palliative care beds in Monaghan General Hospital, with medical care available 7 days a week, ensuring that no family in County Monaghan is left unsupported at their most difficult time.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Clerkin, seconded by Cllr B. McAree, it was agreed that this Council writes to Uisce Eireann requesting clarity to their recent response whereby they stated that "Uisce Eireann currently has no remit to manage or maintain the treatment plants at Oisín Vale and Oisín Brian, and it is therefore not in a position to accept this invitation at this time". We believe that this part of the response is inaccurate, and request that officials from Uisce Eireann attend the next meeting of this Council to explain the response to the members.

On the proposal of Cllr A. Johnston, seconded by Cllr. S. Gilliland, it was agreed that this Council writes to the Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications calling on the Government to invest €15m annually in the Irish Post office Network that was requested by the Irish Postmasters Union. Post Offices are key drivers of economic renewal, maintaining the circulation of money and delivering essential local services. By doing so, Post Offices help create stronger, more vibrant Communities that can better support residents and local businesses.

3. To consider S183 Disposal to facilitate Right of Way at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan

Mr. N. O'Connor, A/Director of Services outlined the S183 for the proposed disposal of a plot of ground (0.021406ha) at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan for the purpose of facilitating a Right of Way.

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, it was agreed that the Council approve the sale of lands at Cloughvalley, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan, to facilitate a Right of Way, in accordance with the terms of the notice dated 6th June 2025 and attached site location map in accordance with S183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

4. To consider S183 Disposal of 85 Main Street, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan

In accordance with the Ethics Framework, Cllr A. Johnston declared a conflict of interest in relation to this item and therefore withdrew from the meeting room.

Mr. C. Flynn, Director of Services outlined the S183 for the proposed disposal of a property (0.0105 ha) at 85 Main Street, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan.

On the proposal of Cllr S. Gilliland, seconded by Cllr S. Flynn, it was agreed that the Council approve the sale of lands at 85 Main Street, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan, in accordance with the terms of the notice dated 16th June 2025 and attached site location map in accordance with S183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

5. To consider Taking in Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Road under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act (as amended, & Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993: Sruthan Claddagh, Meeting House Lane, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan

Mr. A Hughes, Senior Planner outlined the proposed Taking in Charge of Sruthan Claddagh, Meeting House Lane, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan. He informed the members that a request had been made by the residents for the public areas/services of Sruthan Claddagh, Meeting House Lane, Ballybay to be taken in charge. He stated that inspections had been carried out by the relevant sections of the Council, and they are satisfied that the development has been completed to the required standards. Uisce Eireann have no objection to the taking in charge. The Planning Authority is satisfied that the development can be considered for taking in charge.

On the proposal Cllr S. Gilliland, seconded by Cllr S. Flynn, it was agreed that the Council approve the application for Sruthan Claddagh, Meeting House Lane, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan in accordance with the Taking In Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Roads Notice, under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993.

6. To consider Taking in Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Road under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act (as amended, & Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993: Millbrook, Milltown Co. Monaghan

Mr. A Hughes, Senior Planner outlined the proposed Taking in Charge of Millbrook, Milltown, Co. Monaghan. He informed the members that a request had been made by the residents for the public areas/services of Millbrook, Milltown, Co. Monaghan to be taken in charge. He stated that inspections had been carried out by the relevant sections of the Council, and they are satisfied that the development has been completed to the required standards. Uisce Eireann have no objection to the taking in charge. The Planning Authority is satisfied that the development can be considered for taking in charge.

On the proposal Cllr R. Aughey, seconded by Cllr P. Clerkin, it was agreed that the Council approve the application for Millbrook, Milltown, Co. Monaghan in accordance with the Taking In Charge of Estates and Declaration of Public Roads Notice, under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993.

7. To approve proposed amendments to the Monaghan County Council Standing Orders 2024 – 2029

Ms. M. McGarvey, A/Senior Executive Officer, referred to the Draft Amendments to the Monaghan County Council Standing Orders 2024-2029 that had been circulated with the agenda. She provided members with an overview of the proposed changes following a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee on 29 July 2025 i.e., removal of references to Covid-19, paperless meetings, amendments to 14.1 Order of Business and 24.1 Deputations/Presentations and the addition of further detail under section 49. in relation to Casual Vacancies (49.2).

On the proposal of Cllr P. Conlon, seconded by Cllr A. Johnston, it was agreed to approve the proposed amendments to the Monaghan County Council Standing Orders 2024-2029.

8. To approve proposed amendment to Road Traffic Special Speed Limits in Co Monaghan Bye-Laws

Mr. B. Braniff, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads, outlined the documents circulated with the Agenda. In providing a background, he stated that under The Road Traffic Act 2024, on 07 February 2025, the default speed limit on rural, local roads defaulted from 80km/h to 60km/h. He referred to the L-3440, L3441, L3442, L3443, L444 roads which link Castleblayney Town with Annyalla village and Clontibret village and stated that following detailed assessments a special speed limit of 80km/h had been deemed more appropriate. He advised that no submissions had been received following the public consultation period which ran from 12 June to 18 July 2025.

Mr. B. Braniff responded to members queries.

On the proposal of Cllr R. Aughey, seconded by Cllr N. McCooey, it was agreed that the Road Traffic (Special Speed Limits) Regional & Local Roads County of Monaghan Byelaws (No.1) 2022 – Proposed Amendment No.1 2025 (L-3440, L3441, L3442, L3443, L444), be adopted.

9. To approve proposed Vacant Property Rates Abatement Scheme and Rates Waiver Scheme

Ms. M. Boyle, Senior Staff Officer, Finance commenced her presentation stating that in order to encourage development of vacant properties and to encourage local businesses into these properties, the Rates Section are proposing the development of a Rates Abatement Scheme and a Rates Waiver Scheme in accordance with The Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act 2019, Section 9 & 15. She stated that the objectives of the schemes are:

- To reduce the number of vacant properties in Monaghan
- To encourage new commercial ventures
- To assist in job creation and ongoing employment
- To provide rates income to Monaghan County Council that otherwise may be written off
- To facilitate the development of commercial activity, with the aim of helping to enhance the vitality, vibrancy and the economic welfare of the County
- To demonstrate the Council's commitment to the economic development and regeneration of County Monaghan.

Ms. S. McKenna, Staff Officer, Finance provided members with an overview of both schemes. Key points to note were:

Rates Abatement Scheme

In order to qualify for the Rates Abatement Scheme the property must meet one of the following criteria:

- The property must be vacant and available to let or sale and the liable person is bona fide unable to obtain a suitable tenant or reasonable rent.
- The property must be undergoing significant renovation works.
- The property is not structurally fit for purpose

Ms. McKenna outlined the Vacancy Rate Relief as follows:

Category	% Relief / Payment for Qualifying Properties
Qualified Vacant Properties with rates bill up to €2,000	100% Abatement
Qualified Vacant Properties with rates bill over €2,000	80% Abatement 20% to be paid
Vacant properties not fit for purpose or undergoing significant renovations (no rates bill threshold)	100% Abatement

Rates Waiver Scheme:

- The proposed Scheme will commence from 01 January 2026.
- It is only applicable to commercial properties that have been vacant for at least 12 calendar months prior to occupation and is county wide.
- It provides 100% waiver of Rates for the first 12 months of business trading up to a maximum of €10,000 annual rates.

- Full rates (pro-rata) are due for payment after the 12month period.
- The unit must be commercially rated.
- Eligible businesses can only avail of the Scheme once in a 5-year period, with the exception of an existing business expanding into a second or subsequent vacant property.
- The qualifying uses under this scheme are shops, offices, commercial and industrial businesses.

Ms. M. Boyle and Ms. S. McKenna responded to members queries.

On the proposal of Cllr S. Gilliland, seconded by Cllr C. Carthy, it was agreed to approve the Vacant Property Rates Abatement Scheme and Rates Waiver Scheme, as circulated.

10. To approve Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection (MFCP) Operation Plan (Revision 2025) 2023-2027

Mr. D. Brannigan, Chief Fire Officer, provided the members with an overview of the MFCP operation Plan (Revision 2025) 2023-2027, as circulated with the agenda. He stated that the revision reflected the requirement for additional staffing requirements and the addition of flexibility in the workplace following the WRC agreement that had been reached in 2023. He referred to additional amendments that had been made to Area Risk Categorisations, the Fire Prevention Plan and the Emergency Plan following recent severe weather events.

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr S. Conlon, it was agreed to approve the MFCP operation Plan (Revision 2025) 2023-2027, as circulated.

11. Nomination of 7 elected members to Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSP) in accordance with 4(2)(f) of SI 279/2025 (Section 114 Safety Partnership Regulations) of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act.

Mr. B. Eaton, Community Safety Coordinator provided members with a brief overview in relation to the planned roll out of the Monaghan Local Community Safety Partnerships. (LCSP). Key points to note were:

- LCSPs will be responsible for bringing relevant state services and the community together at local level and will play a pivotal role in addressing the challenges facing communities across the county. They will serve as collaborative platforms bringing together relevant state services, community representatives and stakeholders to identify and prioritise local safety concerns, develop local community safety plans, and coordinate multi agency efforts to address them.
- Each LCSP will have a maximum of 30 members. In terms of public sector representation, membership will include one member of staff of the Local Authority; one member of An Garda; one member of the Child and Family Agency; five community representatives; four local resident representatives and seven elected members.
- The elected members will represent the needs and concerns of their constituents, and also communicate the issues, priorities and interventions of the Partnership to the broader Council and public.
- Functions of the LCSP as set out by the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 under Section 116 includes development and adoption of a 3-year Safety Plan, Public consultation for the Safety Plan and Implementation and Review of the Safety Plan.
- The Monaghan LCSP will be supported by staff members Mr. B. Eaton, Community Safety Coordinator and Ms. S. Moore, Community Safety Administrator.

- There will be regular meetings of the Monaghan LCSP to include no fewer than four quarterly partnerships meetings, one public meeting and one closed meeting for elected representatives per annum.
- Members will be appointed for a period of three years, however, they can be reappointed after that period subject to the process within the 'Guidance for the Operation of LCSPs', as circulated with the agenda, being followed.

Mr. Eaton concluded by stating that nominations to the LCSP should reflect the elected representational spread of the full Council, with consideration given to diversity, including gender diversity. They should, as far as practicable, be representative of each Municipal District within the local authority area as outlined in the Guidance Document circulated with the agenda.

The Cathaoirleach sought nominations for 7 elected members to the Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSPs).

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Carthy, Cllrs Conlon, Flynn, Keelan and McCooey were nominated to the Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSP).

On the proposal of Cllr A. Campbell, seconded by Cllr R. Truell, Cllrs Johnston and Gilliland were nominated to the to the Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSP).

On the proposal of Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr A. Johnston, Cllr Aughey was nominated to the Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSP).

As there were no further nominations, **Cllrs Noel Keelan, Sean Conlon, Sinead Flynn, Niamh McCooey, Alan Johnston, Sean Gilliland and Raymond Aughey** were declared elected to the Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSP).

12. To approve nominations for appointment of external members to the LCDC

On the proposal of Cllr S. Flynn, seconded by Cllr A. Johnston, it was agreed that Ms. Kathleen Ward would replace Mr. Patrick McCormick as the IFA Representative and Mr. David McAdam would replace Ms. Carol Kelly as CMETB representative to cover her maternity leave, on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

13. To fix a date for statutory budget meeting

On the proposal of Cllr C. Carthy, seconded by Cllr N. Keelan, it was agreed to hold the Statutory Budget meeting on Monday 17 November 2025 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber.

14. To approve presenting the 'Freedom of Castleblayney' to the following recipients:

On the proposal of Cllr P. Gibbons, seconded by Cllr C. Carthy, it was agreed that the 'Freedom of Castleblayney' civic honour be conferred to, the 1985 Monaghan GAA Ulster Champions, Members of Big Tom's Mainliners Band (& Past Members) and Ms. Margo O Donnell.

15. To receive an update on plans and preparations for the Project Children Celebrations

Ms. Deirdriu McQuaid, County Librarian and Head of Cultural Services commenced her presentation by providing members with a brief background in relation to story behind Project Children which was founded by brothers Denis and Patrick Mulcahy in 1975 and over the intervening years saw 23,000 protestant and catholic children from Northern Ireland travelling to the United States to experience life in a different environment. She provided members with an overview of the countywide programme of events planned as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations taking place from Tuesday 07th October – Friday 10th October including, tours of North and South Monaghan, Golf at Conra Wood, screenings of the

Project Children story, promotion of the Farmers Market & Creative Crafts Market and a tour of Combilift. Ms. McQuaid highlighted that the official launch of the Project Children Exhibition will take place between 5.00-9.00pm on Wednesday 08th October and will commence with a march led by the Garda Band from the centre of Monaghan Town to the Peace Campus, where on arrival, guests will be welcomed by young musicians from Music Generation before the official launch of the new exhibition. Celebrations will conclude on Friday 10th October with a prestigious Gala Ball at the Hillgrove Hotel, bringing together Project Children delegates, hosts and community partners.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the key involvement of former elected representatives, Deputy David Maxwell and Deputy Cathy Bennett, and Ms. Catherine Flood, in the initiation of the partnership between Monaghan County Council and Project Children and thanked all staff involved for their input to the comprehensive itinerary.

16. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 19 August 2025, which had been circulated.

On the proposal of Cllr R. Aughey, seconded by Cllr S. Conlon, it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 19 August 2025 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

17.To receive Management Report – July and August 2025

The Chief Executive introduced the Management Report for July and August 2025 which had been circulated with the agenda. He referred to the restructuring of the Management Report which reflects the recent restructuring of the Executive. He highlighted changes to the Tourism, Rural and Community Development section, which now aligns more closely with the SPC and will be led by Ms. P. Monahan, Director Services and the changes to the Transport, Environment and Climate Action Directorate, led by A/Director of Services, Mr. N. O'Connor.

The Chief Executive commended the work of the Community Development Support Officers in each of the Municipal District areas; engaging with communities at parish/village level to identify their needs and develop village/area plans.

The members noted the Management Report for July and August 2025 which had been circulated with the agenda.

In response to Cllr. S. Gilliland's query, Mr. N. O'Connor, A/Director of Services, advised that an update on the R181 would be included in future Management Reports.

In response to Cllr P. Treanor's query, in relation to the implementation of the Ministerial Guidelines (National Planning Framework (NPF) – Housing Growth Requirements) Mr. A. Hughes advised that the Guidelines requires Planning Authorities to ensure that revised growth requirements are reflected in County Development Plans. In respect of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 – 2031, he advised that there will be a requirement to, inter alia, review the adopted core strategy, the associated settlement strategy and residential zonings. He stated that the Planning Section will meet with the members in September/October to discuss implementation of the Ministerial Guidelines.

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

On the proposal of Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr R. Aughey, it was agreed that this Council writes to Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. James Browne, T.D., in relation to the updating of the Rural Sustainable Development Guidelines 2005 as soon as possible.

On the proposal of Cllr S. Gilliland, seconded by Cllr A. Campbell, it was agreed that this Council request that the Roads section carry out a current survey of the R181 Lough Egish to County Bridge in relation to; Road Safety; Road Surface & Road Suitability. This is one of busiest HGV roads in the County supporting Lakeland Dairies, Manor Farms, Lough Egish Food Park, Abbotts, local businesses and road users. This road supports industry and agriculture and is in urgent need of attention and investment as there are sections that are in a very dangerous condition.

On the proposal of Cllr R. Truell, seconded by Cllr A. Johnston, it was agreed that this Council request that the Roads section examines a section of the R183 between Swann's Cross and the turn off for Ahabog on the main Ballybay to Clones Road. This section in question is extremely dangerous with no verge or hedgerow and there are pinch points, especially if two HGVs meet. We ask that the Roads section examine specific roads funding for this section to make it safer for road users by widening this section of road so that two vehicles can meet without going the road and write to the Department of Transport seeking extra funding for this project.

18. Business Submitted by the Chief Executive

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

19. Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meetings

There were no matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 07 July 2025.

20. To receive update on N2 National Primary Road Schemes

N2 Clontibret to the Border Road Scheme

Mr. N. O'Connor, A/Director of Services, advised the members that the issues raised by landowners following recent public consultation events are being considered by the Project Team and Jacobs Consulting Engineers, to review options for engineering solutions.

21. To receive update on North/South Interconnector project

Correspondence

The following correspondence relating to the North/South Interconnector project was received:

- Email from Senator Robbie Gallagher, regarding response received from the Minister for Climate, Energy and Environment, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., regarding the North/South Interconnector project.
- Email from the office of the Minister for Climate, Energy, Environment, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., regarding the request to meet with the Minister regarding the North/South Interconnector project.

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr. S. Flynn, it was agreed that this Council seeks a meeting with all Oireachtas members to discuss the North South Interconnector, given the response from the Office of the Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., advising that the Minister would not be in a position to meet with elected members.

22. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project

No further update on the Ulster Canal project.

23. Questions and Replies

Cllr C. Carthy will ask:

1. **Following the Derelict Sites Act procedures carried out on the Clos na Droimmaine (unfinished estate) in Carrickmacross, is there any update on a way forward to completing the housing on site and/or the demolition of the apartment building?**

Reply:

Monaghan County Council recently issued 4 number Section 8 (2) notices, in accordance with Derelict Sites Act 1990 (as amended), in respect of various sections of this site. A Section 8 (2) notice gives notice to the owner or occupier, of the Councils intention to enter the site onto the Derelict Sites Register.

In response to these notices, the owner of the site made a submission outlining his proposals to make the site/buildings non-derelict.

Following a detailed review of this submission, on 18th July 2025, the Council has entered these properties onto the Derelict Sites Register.

The Council understands that the developer is working on a proposal to secure funding to complete a number of the housing units and bring same into use.

2. **How many new housing applications were received by MCC in the first 6 months of 2025 and how does that figure compare to the number of allocations made to those on our list? Can a breakdown of MD's be provided also?**

Reply:

A total of 146 applications were received from January to June 2025.

Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD	Ballybay/Clones MD	Monaghan MD
58	10	78

54 new tenancies commenced in the period January to June 2025 (MCC housing stock only)

Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD	Ballybay/Clones MD	Monaghan MD
22	11	21

AHB Nominations

Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD	Ballybay/Clones MD	Monaghan MD
7	10	25

Total Hap/ Ras is 51

	Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD	Ballybay/Clones MD	Monaghan MD
HAP	24	4	13
RAS	2	2	6

3. **Has there been any further update on the Taking in Charge of the Alderwood estate in Carrickmacross?**

Reply:

The intent to take in charge this estate is to be advertised in the coming weeks. Upon expiration of this period, a taking in charge report will be put to the next available Council meeting.

4. **Following the recent announcement of the 2025 allocation of LIS funding, how many roads does the Executive envisage completing this year? And how many laneways remain on the list to be completed?**

Reply:

In 2025 Monaghan County Council received a grant allocation of €373,479 from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS). 10 lanes have been completed under this grant.

An additional grant allocation of €588,297 was announced in August. Lanes are currently being assessed, measured, and will be tendered over the coming weeks. The exact number of lanes to be completed will depend on tender values received. It is estimated that approximately 16 lanes will be completed. This will substantially exhaust the 2017/18 list of lanes.

All 272 LIS applications from 2024 need to be evaluated for eligibility and scoring to form a list for funding going forward.

5. **Will the executive, following discussion of this at previous meeting, look to introduce Disabled Access play equipment in our public playgrounds for children who use wheelchairs?**

Reply:

In planning and designing playgrounds, the executive is guided by Everybody Plays – Monaghan County Council Inclusive Playgrounds Policy. The Policy accounts for children of all abilities including those who require wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Over the course of the coming year, the executive shall arrange for a review/assessment of existing playgrounds, in the context of Everybody Plays and the Play & Recreation Strategy currently in development. Thereafter, and subject to funding availability, the executive shall seek to address any shortcomings that may be identified in the provision of inclusive playground equipment.

Cllr S. Flynn will ask:

6. **Can Monaghan County Council provide an update on the status of the proposed domestic violence refuge centre for the Cavan–Monaghan region, including whether a site has been identified, the expected timeline for delivery, and what interim measures are being put in place to support those in need until the refuge is operational?**

Reply:

Monaghan County Council has identified a possible site in Monaghan that may be suitable for a Domestic Violence Refuge. Monaghan County Council will establish the suitability of the site in close coordination and consultation with CUAN (the national agency established under the Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Agency Act 2023) and Tearmann Housing Association CLG (Part of Safe Ireland National Social Change Agency) and the Housing Agency.

Following a series of meetings and good work by all involved a Stage 1 funding application for Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) funding was submitted to Monaghan County Council by Tearmann for a Domestic Violence Refuge to be provided in Monaghan. The funding application process consists of 4 stages:

Stage 1 funding approval allows the project design to proceed subject to a suitable site being identified (in this case Monaghan County Council has identified a possible site).

Stage 2 funding approval allows the project to proceed to the Planning submission phase subject to designs being compliant and cost plan / value for money.

Stage 3 funding approval allows the project to proceed to detailed design stage and tender subject to detailed designs being compliant and detailed cost plan / value for money.
Stage 4 funding approval allows commencement of the contractor appointment process subject to tender being compliant and acceptable / value for money.

The four-stage process above usually takes 75 weeks for projects of this kind.

Monaghan County Council has assessed the Stage 1 CAS funding application received from Tearmann and is recommending approval. It is hoped that the Department of Housing (budget holder for CAS projects) will approve the project in September or October 2025.

7. **Can the Council provide a breakdown of the number of roads currently on the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) waiting list in each Municipal District, and an estimate of how many of these roads can realistically be progressed under the recent additional €588,000 allocation announced by the Government? And the total estimated funding required per year to clear the current LIS backlog over the remaining term of this Council (i.e. by 2029)?**
Reply:

There are currently 16 lanes on the 2017/18 list. It is hoped that all these lanes will be completed with the additional funding of €588,297. The breakdown per MD with these lanes is as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| • Ballybay/Clones MD | 6 |
| • Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD | 4 |
| • Monaghan MD | 6 |

In 2024 Monaghan County Council received 272 applications which need to be evaluated for eligibility and scoring to form a list for funding going forward. We would not be in a position to give an estimation on funding required until the lanes have been fully assessed.

Estimated lanes (2024 applications) per MD is as follows.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| • Ballybay/Clones MD | 93 |
| • Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD | 91 |
| • Monaghan MD | 88 |

Cllr N. Keelan will ask:

8. **When will Monaghan County Council be reopening the County Development plan in order to rezone additional lands for housing provision across the county in line with new ministerial and Government directives?** **Reply:** *Work has commenced on the preparation of background documents and data collection required for the implementation of the Ministerial Guidelines. The Planning Section has met with, and sought advice from, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as to how the process of implementing the Guidelines can be expedited. It is intended that meetings will be arranged with the Elected Members in September/October with any formal variation process following thereafter.*
9. **When is it hoped to commence work on the preparation of a master plan for the Inniskeen village Area?** **Reply:** *It had been the intention to commence work on the Tier 4 Village Plans in Q3/Q4 of this year. The delivery of these Plans may however be impacted upon by the need to allocate resources to the implementation of the Ministerial Guidelines relating to the revised housing growth requirements (NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements, July 2025). The Planning Section will be attending the Municipal District meetings in September to seek the formal agreement of the Members in respect of which villages should be the subject of the first series of village plans.*
10. **When is it hoped to have the new Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) up and running in County Monaghan given it has been over 14 months since the Joint policing**

committee (JPC) has met, and also given that some good work was done by the JPC around community safety? **Reply:** *The Guidance for the Operation of Local Community Partnerships document was received by Monaghan County Council on the 1st of August 2025. The process of recruitment of Elected members to the Monaghan Local Community Safety Partnership has commenced, with a presentation on the Partnership, and the recruitment of the seven Elected Members, being delivered to the Corporate Policy Group meeting on the 19th of August. Nomination of the Elected Members to the Partnership is on the agenda of the Monaghan County Council meeting on the 1st of September. We will also be looking for Expression of Interest from the Community sector to represent the various interest groups specified in the guidance. It is anticipated that the first meeting of the Monaghan Local Community Partnership will be held in the final quarter of this year.*

11. **Will Monaghan County Council in conjunction with The Active Travel Department of the Council and The National Transport Authority (NTA) request a review of the decision by the (NTA) NOT to fund a pedestrian and cycle bridge across the river Fane in Inniskeen which is the preferred option of the local community and also Given that the (NTA) DID fund a similar project, the Horseshoe bridge in Monaghan town which we all welcome in order to improve road safety? **Reply:** *The Active travel section sent a request to the NTA on 21/08/2025 asking them to review the decision on the active travel options selection report in November 2022.***
12. **What is the up-to-date position in relation to the local lane improvement scheme (LIS) including funding available for this current year, number of lanes on the list. When is it hoped that all the new applications will be accessed including surveyed on the ground? **Reply:** *In 2025 Monaghan County Council received a grant allocation of €373,479 from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS). From this grant 10 lanes have been completed. An additional grant allocation of €588,297 was announced in August. Lanes are currently being assessed, measured, and will be tendered over the coming weeks. The exact number of lanes to be completed will depend on the tender values received.***

It is estimated that approximately 16 lanes will be completed. This may substantially exhaust the 2017/18 list of lanes. All 272 LIS applications from 2024 need to be evaluated for eligibility and scoring to form a list for funding going forward. It is planned to commence the assessment of the new application in Q3, 2025 which will be completed by Q2, 2026.

Cllr P. Gibbons will ask:

13. **Can a speed survey be carried out on the following approach roads to Castleblayney – the Keady Road at Lakeview and the Dundalk Road at a location between the entrance to Concra and the entrance to Old Coach Road? **Reply:** *The Executive shall arrange for speed surveys to be undertaken on the Keady Road at Lakeview and the Dundalk Road between the entrance to Concra and the entrance to the Old Coach Road.***
14. **Recent speed surveys in Castleblayney showed speed issues in Rosevale and Thorndale estates in particular. Can the Executive advise on what actions are proposed in these locations in response to these findings? **Reply:** *Subject to funding availability, it is intended to install suitable traffic calming measures in Rosevale and Thorndale estates.***
15. **Can an update be given on the planned works to be undertaken at the Market House, Castleblayney including the proposed dates of beginning and completion of works? **Reply:** *Monaghan County Council received a total of five tender submissions by the deadline date of 25th August 2025. Assessment of the tender submissions have commenced and are expected to be completed by the end of September. Following the tender evaluation process,***

the Council will make a further submission to the funding Department (DRCDG) under Decision Gate 3 Approval to Proceed, seeking approval to award the construction contract. Having regard to relevant time periods for the foregoing and subject to DRCDG approval timelines under Decision Gate 3, is it envisaged that project construction may commence in late 2025/early 2026 with an estimated completion of 2 years thereafter.

- 16. Are there plans for affordable housing provision in the Castleblayney area? How many of the expressions of interest in affordable housing received by the Affordable Housing team expressed an interest in Castleblayney? Reply:** *An Affordable Purchase Housing survey conducted by Monaghan County Council showed that 19 people expressed an interest in Castleblayney as their first preference for Affordable Purchase Housing (that is 14% of the 139 expressions of interest received). The initial survey gave an indication that only 2 of the people who expressed an interest in Castleblayney might qualify for Affordable Purchase Housing, this number is too small for an Affordable Purchase Scheme however the First Home scheme www.firsthomescheme.ie which is very similar to the Affordable Purchase Scheme is already available for purchasers who cannot afford new houses that are being developed in any area. Monaghan County Council proceeded with Affordable Purchase Housing in Monaghan Town and was successful in providing and arranging the sale of 10 houses under an Affordable Purchase Housing scheme as there was considerable interest in Affordable Purchase Housing in Monaghan Town, 50% of people who responded to the survey expressed an interest in Affordable Purchase Housing in Monaghan Town. Monaghan County Council is further investigating the possibility of providing smaller numbers of Affordable Purchase Housing in private housing developments, this may include the possibility of Affordable Purchase Housing in Castleblayney if there is sufficient demand.*

Monaghan County Council is actively seeking further potential opportunities to provide Affordable Purchase Housing in partnership with private Developers and has published four newspaper adverts and four eTenders notices for a Competitive Dialogue process that will hopefully help to identify further potential opportunities to provide Affordable Purchase Housing.

The latest eTenders notice is CFT: 6356263 Fourth Competitive Dialogue: Monaghan County Council wish to tender for Development and Sale of Housing 2025 – 2026. If there is insufficient demand for Affordable Purchase Housing specifically for Castleblayney and other specific towns in County Monaghan the possibility of County-wide Affordable Purchase Housing scheme may have to be considered, such a scheme would be dependent on suitable houses being developed by Developers privately or under the Competitive Dialogue process mentioned.

- 17. Can an overview on actions to tackle dereliction in the Castleblayney area in the past 6 months be provided?**

Reply:

Since the establishment of the Town Regeneration Section in March 2024, the following actions have been undertaken to tackle dereliction in the Castleblayney area:

- Vacant/derelict properties identified – 71*
- Total number of Section 8(2) Notice of Intention to Place on Derelict Sites Register (DSR) – 29 issued*
- Total number of Section 8(7) Notice of Entry onto DSR – 16 issued (Properties on the Derelict Site Register are subject to an annual levy of 7% of the value of the property)*
- Section 22 Valuation Notice – 14 issued*

The actions undertaken in the last 6 months, to tackle dereliction in the Castleblayney area consist of:

- Section 8(2) Notice of Intention to Place on Derelict Sites Register (DSR) – 6 issued*
- Section 8(7) Notice of Entry onto DSR – 2 issued*

- Section 15 Notice of Intention to Acquire – 5 issued
Following the serving of Section 15 Notices
 - 2 properties sold independently by the owner
 - 1 property owner submitted proposals & timelines for works. Currently monitoring progress.
- Section 17 Notice Vesting Order – 1 issued
 - Estate Agent tendered for sale of property
 - Sale of property has concluded with new property owner identified – finalising sales contract ongoing

Cllr A. Johnston will ask:

- 18. (a) How much on average does the Council spend on refurbishment costs between tenancies in Council owned residences?**

Reply - In 2024, Monaghan County Council spent on average €22,614 per re-letting property prior to new tenant moving in.

(b) What are the top five expenditure items e.g. new kitchen, flooring, bathroom etc?

Reply - New kitchen, bathroom, heating system, fencing & flooring/painting are the top expenditure under re-letting works.

(c) What has Monaghan CoCo spent on refurbishment costs in the 2024 year and 2025 year to date (most recent information, if available)?

Reply:

YEAR	2025 Projected	2025 (Jan-Aug)	2024
No of properties	60	38	76
Total Re-letting Cost	€1,080,000	€474,692	€1,718,649
Average Re-letting Cost per property	€18,000	€12,492	€22,614

Cllr A. Campbell will ask:

- 19. What implications has the new directive to zone more land for housing in Monaghan on the development plan?**

Reply: The Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 has been made, and the new directive has currently no implications on zonings or policies contained within it.

The implementation of the Ministerial Guidelines (NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements, July 2025) requires Planning Authorities to ensure that revised growth requirements are reflected in County Development Plans.

In respect of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 – 2031, there will be a requirement to, inter alia, review the adopted core strategy, the associated settlement strategy, and residential zonings.

It is intended that the Planning Section shall meet with the Elected Members in September/October to discuss the implementation on the Ministerial Guidelines.

- 20. With funding now available, what plans have Monaghan County Council to provide service sites in all towns in County Monaghan?**

Reply: Although it appears that funding is now potentially available for serviced sites through the "Ready to Build Scheme" under the "Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund" the reality is that funding is only recoupable after serviced sites have been successfully sold by Local Authorities under the "Ready to Build Scheme". There is no upfront funding available to buy land for serviced sites under the "Ready to Build Scheme" which means that any acquisition of land is at Monaghan County Council's expense and risk until serviced sites are successfully sold.

Monaghan County Council has purchased land in unfinished housing developments in two small villages... two serviced sites may be provided in each small village where land has been

successfully purchased. Monaghan County Council is also considering the possibility of acquiring additional land for sale as serviced sites subject to demand and availability of funding for the acquisition, however, there is no upfront funding available for acquisition of land so any acquisition is at Monaghan County Council's expense and risk until serviced sites are successfully sold. Monaghan is a predominantly rural county with over 60% of the population living in rural areas. One-off houses accounted for 138 of the 181 Planning Permissions granted in 2024 (76%). Private un-serviced rural sites are available at relatively low cost (compared to other counties) at €30,000 to €60,000 in rural areas throughout County Monaghan and some of the population living in the rural areas have access to family-owned land at low to zero cost. In addition, the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is available to owners and prospective owners of properties that have been vacant for 2 years or more. The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is up to €50,000 for a vacant property and up to €70,000 for a derelict property and can be combined with SEAI grants to bring vacant / derelict properties into use and renovate to an energy efficient standard. Use of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant to bring existing vacant properties into use is a more financially viable and straightforward option than developing entirely new houses on serviced sites, this has been proven by the popularity of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant... to date 267 grants have been approved, the average grant is €61,697 and total value of grants approved to date is €16.5million.

Although there is concern that the demand for Serviced Sites in County Monaghan is not significant, Monaghan County Council intends to offer additional serviced sites for sale in some villages which will be a further test of the potential interest / market for Serviced Sites / Ready to Build. If the serviced sites in Monaghan Town and the villages are sold and successfully developed by purchasers, then further consideration will be given to the possibility of acquiring additional land for the provision of serviced sites. When sufficient income has been generated from the sale of serviced sites on hand then consideration can be given to using the income generated to buy additional land for provision of serviced sites under the Ready to Build Scheme.

- 21. When is it hoped that the works will commence on the upgrading of the street lighting on Main Street in Castleblayney?**

Reply:

It is envisaged that works will commence on the upgrading of the street lighting on Main Street in Castleblayney in mid-September 2025.

- 22. With regard to the process for the works to commence on the Market House in Castleblayney. When is it hoped that this work will start?**

See response to Q15.

- 23. With the new housing development due to be built on the grounds of the Old Fire Station in Castleblayney, what is the update on this project and when is it hoped for the works to commence?**

Reply:

With regards the project at the Old Fire Station Castleblayney, presently Boyd Cody Architects are finalising the Part 8 planning submission by making changes necessary based on comments from the Department's Architect. Consultation with all council sections and other consultees relevant to the planning application has been undertaken and all returned comments have been addressed.

To date, North and East Housing Association have agreed to work with Monaghan County Council on the project, site investigation has been undertaken, Stage 2 funding has been approved, designs have been developed, revised and agreed, planners have been consulted and planning pack reviewed.

The next step will be the Part 8 Planning submission in September 2025 followed by preparation of tender documents and works requirements and detailed cost plan required for an application for Stage 3 funding seeking approval to tender for the construction works/procurement of contractor. Programme of works will be agreed when a contractor has been procured and appointed following the final Department funding Stage 4 which will hopefully allow commencement of construction work on site in 2026. A more definitive timeline will be available when the Planning process and tender process have concluded.

Cllr N. McCooey will ask:

24. Could Monaghan County Council provide an update on the progress of Cois Abhainn, Ballinode? At the current stage of development, will the project be completed as expected in Q4 2025?

Reply: *There are 22 houses under construction at Cois Abhainn in Ballinode. The 14 houses in Phase 1 (numbers 1 to 14) will be completed in Q4 2025 and the 8 houses in Phase 2 (numbers 15 to 22) will be completed in Q1 2026. Phase 2 was supposed to be completed in Q4 of 2025 but progress has been delayed due to a building component supply issue. The contractor has engaged with a different supplier for the remainder of the dwellings to mitigate the issue and now expects to complete the final 8 houses in Q1 of 2026.*

25. Can Monaghan County Council provide a potential completion timeframe for the Cost Rental Scheme in Monaghan Town?

Reply:

Monaghan County Council has procured the acquisition of 16 apartments in Park Street in Monaghan Town for rental to applicants who qualify for the Cost Rental Scheme. The apartments are a mix of one-bedroom and two-bedroom A-rated high-quality properties in an exceptionally convenient town centre location within close walking distance of shops, restaurants and services. Cost Rental housing offers affordable long-term, secure rented accommodation. In County Monaghan the Cost Rental Scheme is aimed at working people who do not qualify for social housing and have a net household income of €59,000 or below. The rent paid by Cost Rental tenants is based on the cost of building, managing, and maintaining the homes. The rent for Cost Rental homes is typically 25% below regular market rents in the area. The 16 apartments are substantially complete, minor snag items are currently being addressed. The conveyancing of the properties is in progress and will hopefully conclude in September 2025. Monaghan County Council has applied to the Department for the 16 apartments to be designated as Cost Rental homes and is hopeful that the designation will be received also in September 2025 to allow the apartments to be let to people on incomes of €59,000 or below. Given the exceptionally convenient town centre location and high quality of the properties it is anticipated that the demand may exceed the number of properties available. When the properties are available to let, they will be advertised online and on Monaghan County Council's website.

26. Could the Council provide the number of drainage notices issued in the first half of 2025, both county-wide and by Municipal District?

Reply:

- In the first half of 2025, **Monaghan Municipal District** have issued no drainage notices. Throughout the year, Monaghan Municipal District staff make themselves available, and meet with landowners where drainage issues are present to agree solutions.*
- There were 28 no. drainage letters issued from 1st Jan to 30th June in the **Ballybay-Clones MD**.*
- There were no drainage notices issued by Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District in the first half of 2025.*

27. When does Monaghan County Council anticipate delivering the Play & Recreation Strategy?

Reply:

There is still some work to do on the Play & Recreation Strategy before a draft version can be presented to Elected Members for approval. There will then be a series of public consultation events held, that will help inform the final version of the strategy. It is envisaged that this will be completed early 2026.

28. Can Monaghan County Council provide an update on the ORIS funding application that was submitted in March for recreational enhancements to Castleshane Forest?

Reply:

The Castleshane Forest Project was submitted under ORIS Measure 2. The recent announcement from the Dept of Community & Rural Development on 14 August related to Project Development and Measure 1 Projects only. It is anticipated that an announcement regarding successful applications under ORIS Measures 2 & 3 will be released at a later date.

Cllr S. Conlon will ask:

- 29. Are Monaghan County Council considering measure to curtail the proliferation of the invasive plant species, Himalayan Balsam, similar to action taken in relation to Japanese Knotweed?**

Reply: *Himalayan Balsam is only one of about three hundred or so invasive species of concern in the country. The Biodiversity Officer has commissioned an Invasive Alien Species Audit of the county, it will be completed in Q4 and should give a better picture of where invasives, including Himalayan Balsam, are a problem in the county.*

- 30. Cllr R. Aughey will ask:**

While complimenting the ground staff and volunteers involved in keeping our towns and villages tidy and litter free and particularly their success in the IBAL league in Monaghan Town, it has been noted that cigarette butt litter is a persistent problem and is more prevalent at and around particular businesses and areas. The council did, in the past, organise a scheme supporting establishments with cigarette-butt bins (the "Bin Your Butt" campaign) Would the council consider revisiting this campaign?

Reply: *Environmental Services will consider an awareness campaign for cigarette and vaping litter for 2026.*

24. Notices of Motion

- 1.** In the absence of Cllr S. Coyle, consideration of Notice of Motion 24(1) was deferred to the October Council meeting.

Cllr C. Carthy proposed, Cllr P. Gibbons seconded –

- 2.** *‘That Monaghan County Council commits to highlighting the risks of skin cancer, with over 11,000 cases are diagnosed each year in Ireland, introducing a pilot scheme, through our 2026 Budget, to provide sunscreen at a number of our public outdoor amenities. These may include, but are not limited to, our local playparks, our outdoor amenities, outdoor spaces in urban zones, community spaces etc. The proposed pilot scheme should include at least one outdoor space in each of our towns and our larger village areas, and we commit to expanding the scheme once it is initiated. Similar schemes were introduced by other Local Authorities in collaboration with the HSE, including engagement with the Irish Cancer Society, and our Executive should engage with all relevant stakeholders to roll this out by early 2026’.*

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

Cllr S. Flynn proposed, Cllr N. McCooey seconded –

- 3.** *‘That Monaghan County Council calls on the Government to include a comprehensive Cost of Living Support Package for ordinary workers and families in Budget 2026. Families across Co Monaghan are under significant financial strain, facing higher utility bills and rising food prices that are putting more pressure on already stretched household budgets and writes to Taoiseach Mr. Micheál Martin, T.D., Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohoe, T.D., and Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation Mr. Jack Chambers, T.D., urging them to ensure Budget 2026 delivers real, targeted support that eases the pressure on ordinary workers and families who are being hit hard by the ever-rising cost of living’.*

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

Cllr A. Johnston proposed, Cllr P. Clerkin seconded –

4. *'That Monaghan County Council write to the Minister for Justice requesting a review and overhaul of the Garda vetting system so that the vetting process is completed within 14 days of receipt of a valid application.*

The current system is not fit for purpose, takes far too long, is clearly under-resourced and is not using modern technological solutions to improve efficiency. The current system is also restricting all manner of organisations, including voluntary groups, from adequately serving their communities and is a deterrent for good community volunteers to engage and join voluntary groups'.

Following a short debate on the motion, the Cathaoirleach put the motion to the members, and it was agreed unanimously.'

Cllr P. Clerkin proposed, Cllr S. Gilliland seconded –

5. *'That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Justice, Mr. Jim O'Callaghan, TD, to urgently consider a review of the current policy regarding the arming of members of An Garda Síochána. This request follows a series of violent and unprovoked attacks on Gardaí across the country in recent months, which have raised serious concerns about the safety and protection of those who serve on the front line of our justice system.*

In light of the increasing risk faced by members of the force while carrying out their duties, and in recognition of the changing nature of criminal threats in both urban and rural communities, it is now imperative that the Minister gives full and immediate consideration to the possibility of equipping Gardaí with enhanced protective measures. The safety of our Gardaí must be a priority. No member of the force should be left vulnerable or unprotected in the face of escalating violence'.

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

25. Votes of sympathy/congratulations

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

- Aghnamullen Pipe Band who recently celebrated 50 years and wish them continued success.
- Inniskeen Rounders Club on winning the All-Ireland Junior Ladies Championship 2025.
- WCI Blayney Blades on their 30th Anniversary.
- Gary Carville on his ordination to Diaconate for the Diocese of Clogher.
- Clontibret U10 Community Games Football Team on winning the All-Ireland series.
- Emyvale Cycling Club on the successful hosting of the National Masters T.T. and road racing event.

26. Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan seconded by Cllr S. Conlon, 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	SPC Chairs & Senior Officials Eastern, Dublin & Midland/Northern and Western	Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise	02/09/25	Cllr. R. Truell Cllr C. Carthy Cllr S. Conlon
AILG	AILG Autumn Training Seminar	Westport Woods Hotel, Westport	17/09/25 & 18/09/25	Cllr R. Truell Cllr S. Conlon Cllr P. Gibbons Cllr N. McCooey Cllr S. Coyle Cllr. P. Treanor Cllr. N. Keelan Cllr. S. Flynn
LAMA	LAMA Autumn Seminar	Amber Springs Hotel, Gorey,	16/10/25 & 17/10/25	Cllr P. Gibbons Cllr B. McAree Cllr S. Conlon
Celtic Conferences	Practical Guide to Budget 2026	Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford	10/10/25, 11/10/25 & 12/10/25	Cllr S. Treanor

Urgent Business:

- Cllr S. Flynn proposed, Cllr B. McAree seconded, that this Council calls for a full review of school bus routes and services across County Monaghan. We request that a letter be issued to Ms. Siobhán Griffin, Regional School Transport Manager, and to the Department of Education, seeking an immediate intervention from the Minister for Education, Ms. Helen McEntee, T.D., and Bus Éireann to address routes that are currently over capacity, and to ensure that urgent steps are taken to provide additional services and seating capacity to facilitate students and their families in returning to school for the academic year 2025/2026’.*

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

2. *Cllr P. Gibbons proposed, Cllr N. McCooey seconded, that this Council calls on the Minister for Education and Youth, Ms. Helen McEntee, T.D., and Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, Mr. Jack Chambers, T.D, to resolve the current pay dispute involving School secretaries and caretakers. It is vital that these essential workers are treated with fairness, and their employment is put on a similar status to other public servants*

This can be achieved by providing:

- *Pension parity as school secretaries and caretakers don't have access to public service pensions even though they work with teachers and SNAs who do, and this must be addressed*
- *A single contract of employment for secretaries and caretakers*
- *Access to sick leave and bereavement leave*

School secretaries and caretakers are the heartbeat of our school communities supporting teachers, principals, parents and most importantly students. Schools simply cannot function without them and they must be treated fairly'.

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

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____
Meetings
Administrator

Date: _____