

Minutes of the Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, M-Tek Building, Armagh Rd, Knockaconny, Monaghan, on Monday 02 March 2026 at 10.15 a.m.

Chair: Cllr PJ O’Hanlon, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs Aughey, Carthy, Clerkin, P. Conlon, Flynn, Gibbons, Gilliland, Johnston, Keelan, 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. McMahan, Staff Officer.

MS Teams: Cllrs S. Conlon and McAree

Apologies: Cllrs Campbell and Coyle

2026 LAMA All-Ireland Community and Council Awards

At the Outset, the Cathaoirleach, Cllr PJ O’Hanlon, referred to the Local Authority Energy Decarbonisation Award that was won by Monaghan County Council at the 2026 LAMA All Ireland Community & Council Awards Ceremony which took place on 28 February 2026. He stated that the award recognises the Council’s Innovation in Road Maintenance and commended all of those involved in the Reclaimed Asphalt project, particularly, the Chief Executive, Directors of Service, Mr. K. West, Acting Senior Engineer, Roads and Mr. D. Toner, Acting Senior Executive Engineer, Roads. He concluded by conveying his gratitude to Cllr. S. Conlon, LAMA Representative, for the professional way in which he carried out his role as flag bearer representing Monaghan County Council during a flag parade which formed part of the 2026 LAMA Awards ceremony.

Mr. N. O’Connor, A/Director of Services, congratulated all those involved in the project stating that it was a fantastic achievement. He commended the Roads Section for their innovativeness in bringing a new product to the market which can be used on roads, significantly reducing costs and carbon emissions.

Mr. K. West, Acting Senior Engineer, Roads, thanked Mr. N. O’Connor, A/Director of Services, the Executive and the Elected Members’ for their support in bringing an idea to fruition and also for their support in the development of the Pilot Roads Maintenance Strategy 2025-2030. He paid tribute to his previous Directors of Service, Ms. P. Monahan and Mr. G. McMahan, for their support towards the project.

The Chief Executive commended all involved in the project, particularly Mr. K. West who led the project with his team in Roads. He stated that it gives him a great source of comfort and satisfaction to know that staff are willing to explore the potential for new approaches that improve efficiencies and support Ireland’s National Climate Action Goals. He concluded by congratulating all of those involved in winning the Local Authority Energy Decarbonisation Award.

Cllr. S. Conlon concurred with the comments made by members in respect of the achievement by the roads team in winning the Local Authority Energy Decarbonisation Award.

A number of members joined in congratulating all involved in winning the 2026 LAMA Local Authority Energy Decarbonisation Award.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Council Meeting held on 09 February 2026

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr A. Johnston, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 09 February 2026 be confirmed.

2. To consider the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for the replacement of the Ballynacarry Bridge on N53 Concession Road, Ballynacarry, Co. Monaghan

Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner, referred to the Part VIII report which had been circulated in respect of the proposed replacement of the Ballynacarry Bridge on N53/A37, Concession Road, Ballynacarry, Co. Monaghan. The development comprises the replacement of the Ballynacarry Bridge which is on the N53 National Secondary route / A37 Main 'A' route (Concession Road) and the realignment of a 1.3km portion of the N53/A37 road which crosses the River Fane. The existing multi-arch bridge is to be retained in situ, and immediately adjoining road sections altered and repurposed. The scheme is to progress as a multi-authority project involving Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Monaghan County Council (MCC) and the Department for Infrastructure (DFI), Northern Ireland. Mr. Gourley advised the members that no third-party submissions/observations were received during the public consultation period, and he recommended that members proceed with the proposal.

On the proposal Cllr P. Gibbons, seconded by Cllr P. Conlon, it was agreed to approve the replacement of the Ballynacarry Bridge on N53/A37, Concession Road, Ballynacarry, Co. Monaghan and realignment of the N53/A37 road which crosses the River Fane as detailed in the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

3. To consider the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for the pavement and embankment reconstruction and the diversion of existing water courses to accommodate pavement upgrades, through the means of the realignment of the stream north of the N54 at Altartate Glebe and Clonkeen (Cole), Co. Monaghan

Mr. T. Gourley, Senior Executive Planner, referred to the Part VIII report which had been circulated in respect of pavement and embankment reconstruction and the diversion of existing water courses to accommodate pavement upgrades, through means of the realignment of the stream north of the N54 at Altartate Glebe and Clonkeen (Cole), Co. Monaghan. Mr. Gourley advised that no third-party submissions/observations were received during the public consultation period, and he recommended that members proceed with the proposal.

On the proposal Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr R. Truell, it was agreed to approve the pavement and embankment reconstruction and the diversion of existing water courses to accommodate pavement upgrades, through means of the realignment of the stream north of the N54 at Altartate Glebe and Clonkeen (Cole), Co. Monaghan, as detailed in the Chief Executive's Report prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

4. To consider the Chief Executive's recommendations on the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements

Ms. M. McKearney, Senior Executive Planner, referred to the Chief Executive's Report: National Planning Framework (NPF) Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements, which had been circulated. Ms. McKearney stated that Members would be familiar with

the process relating to the document and the background work which had taken place to prepare it. The document relates to the zoning of additional lands for residential use and policy changes to align with revised Housing targets and the CE report commits to paper the intended approach of the Council. It is an additional step added to the normal variation process and includes providing a copy of this document to both the Minister for Housing and the OPR if agreed with Members.

By way of providing a background, Ms. McKearney advised the members that the first revision of the NPF was approved in April 2025 and set high level policies for national, growth and development. It has updated population and housing targets across Ireland – critically seeking to plan for approximately 50,000 additional homes per annum to 2040. The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage wrote to all CE's of LA in 2025 seeking an urgent review of County development plans to reflect the revised Housing Growth Targets.

In terms of zoning & policy this means:

- Additional land is required for Tier 1-3 settlements which is set out at Page 10, table 6 of the Report.
- The Inclusion of additional policy for Tier 4 villages pending the adoption of Tier 4 village plans is required.

Ms. McKearney highlighted the Chief Executive's recommendations which are outlined on page 11 of the report. In terms of next steps, she stated that the planning authority were seeking members' consent on the approach presented and the CE recommendations contained within it; to Issue the Chief Executive's recommendations on the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements to the Minister and OPR; and to undertake environmental assessments to the lands proposed to be zoning and any text or policy changes.

Ms. McKearney concluded by stating that following the environmental assessments and environmental consultations the planning authority intends to seek members agreement to proceed to public consultation at the May County Council meeting.

5. To consider Section 183 Rectification of Boundaries at No.37 Rockdaniel Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan

Mr. C. Flynn, Director of Services, referred to the proposed disposal of lands at No. 37 Rockdaniel Road Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan– site area 0.0019 hectares. He advised the members that the disposal relates to rectification of boundaries to enable the sale of the property to proceed.

On the proposal of Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr P. Conlon, it was agreed that the Council approve the disposal of lands at No. 37 Rockdaniel Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan, in accordance with the terms of the notice dated 16th December 2025 and attached site location map in accordance with S183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

6. To approve 2026 Grant Funding Allocations

Ms. O. McConnon, Director of Services, referred to the new policy in respect of Festivals and Events that was devised last year. She advised the members that one of the policy objectives is to ensure that as many community groups and individuals benefit from Monaghan County Council grants as possible. The grants amounts are set by the elected

members as part of the annual budget adoption process. One purpose of the revised policy was to coordinate the application, evaluation, processing and approval of the following grants:

- Tourism Fund
- Community Development Fund
- Environment and Biodiversity Fund
- Seachtain na Gaeilge Fund
- Arts Grants

In accordance with the Ethics Framework, Cllr Johnston declared a possible conflict of interest in relation to this item and withdrew from the meeting room whilst the matter was being dealt with.

Tourism Fund

Members noted the Reports circulated which recommended the allocation of funding under the Tourism Focused Festival & Event Fund 2026 and the Failte Ireland Regional Festivals & Participative Events Funding Scheme 2026.

Ms. D. Condra, Tourism and Marketing Executive, advised that the total budget to assist in the delivery of these projects is:

Monaghan County Council Tourism Focused Festival & Event Fund 2026: €15,000
Failte Ireland Regional Festivals & Participative Events Funding Scheme 2026: €5,000

16 applications were received under the Tourism Focused Festival & Event Fund 2026. Upon review of the applications, there was one duplicate submission, and 7 applications were deemed more suitable under the Community Development Fund. Similarly, 3 applications received under the Community Development Fund were deemed more suitable for the Tourism Fund, therefore, a total of 11 applications were evaluated.

It is proposed to fund 9 applications to the value of €15,000, under the Monaghan County Council Tourism Focused Festival & Event Fund 2026.

3 applications were received under the Failte Ireland Regional Festivals & Participative Events Funding Scheme 2026.

It is proposed to fund 2 applications to the value of €5,000, under the Failte Ireland Regional Festivals & Participative Events Funding Scheme 2026.

In accordance with the Ethics Framework, Cllr McCooey declared a possible conflict of interest in relation to this item and withdrew from the meeting room whilst the matter was being dealt with.

Community Development Fund

Members noted the Reports circulated which recommended the allocation of funding under the Community Development Fund 2026.

Ms. N. Payne, Senior Executive Officer, Community, advised that the total budget to assist in the delivery of these projects is €100,000. 139 applications were received representing a 20% increase on 2025. 8 applications were transferred as they were deemed more

suitable to alternative funding streams i.e. Tourism, Environment, Sports Capital Fund. 2 applications were deemed ineligible as one was not a community group and the other was not an eligible project. 1 application was excluded as reporting requirements had not been fulfilled in 2025. 2 applications were duplications that had applied for funding under the Environment Fund.

It is proposed to fund 126 applications to the value of €100,489 under the 2026 Community Development Fund.

Environment and Biodiversity Fund

Members noted the Reports circulated which recommended the allocation of funding under the Environment and Biodiversity Fund 2026.

Mr. N. Malone, Administrative Officer, Environment, advised that the total budget to assist in the delivery of these projects is €90,000. 89 applications were received.

It is proposed to fund 89 applications to the value of €90,000 under the 2026 Environment and Biodiversity Fund.

Seachtain na Gaeilge

Members noted the Reports circulated which recommended the allocation of funding under the Seachtain na Gaeilge Fund.

Mr. N. O'Connor, A/Director of Services, advised that with the approval of the Coiste Gaeilge Committee, as the Seachtain na Gaeilge runs from 1-17 March, 29 applications were funded to the value of €4,070 under the Seachtain na Gaeilge Fund.

Arts Fund

The members considered the report from the Arts Officer recommending the allocation of grants under the Arts Partnership Funding Scheme 2026 and Artist Support Scheme 2026.

Mr. Mac Conghail stated that it is proposed to fund, 6 applications under the Arts Partnership Funding Scheme 2026 to the value of €78,000 and 22 applications under the Artist Support Scheme 2026 to the value of €21,000.

On the proposal Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr C. Carthy, it was agreed that the Council approve the allocation of the 2026 grants under the Tourism Fund, Community and Development Fund, Environment and Biodiversity Fund, Seachtain na Gaeilge Grants, Arts Partnership Funding Scheme and Artist Support Scheme, as per the Reports circulated with the agenda.

7. To approve Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026

Ms M. McGarvey, A/Senior Executive Officer, stated that, under Section 50 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, Local Authorities are required to prepare an Annual Service Delivery Plan for each financial year. The Draft ASDP 2026, translates long-term strategic objectives of the Corporate Plan 2024-2029 into actionable, monitored, and evaluated tasks across all service departments including internal support services like Human Resources, Finance, Corporate and Information Systems. Ms. McGarvey highlighted that Pages 7 to 51 of the report circulated outlines the key targets for 2026 across all departments.

Ms. McGarvey concluded by conveying her thanks to the staff and Directors for their co-operation in preparing this plan and Ms. Michelle McBride for all her work in producing the final draft.

In response to Cllr P. Treanor's query, it was agreed that further opportunities to use the Irish Language would be explored.

On the proposal of Cllr R. Aughey, seconded by Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, it was agreed that the Draft Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2026 as circulated, be approved.

8. To consider Audit Committee Reports

The Members noted the following Audit Committee Reports, all of which had been circulated to the Members:

- The Annual Financial Statement 2024 and The Local Government Auditors Report on the Accounts of Monaghan County Council for year ended 31 December 2024.
- The Audit Committee Annual Report on Performance and Effectiveness 2025.
- The Audit Committee Charter 2026.
- The Audit Committee Work Programme 2026

On the proposal of Cllr R. Aughey, seconded by Cllr P. Gibbons it was agreed that the Audit Committee Annual Report on Performance and Effectiveness 2025, Audit Committee Charter 2026 and the Audit Committee Work Programme 2026, as presented, be approved.

9. To consider recommendations and minutes from Corporate Policy Group – 18 February 2026.

The members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18 February 2026, which had been circulated.

On the proposal of Cllr S. Conlon, seconded by Cllr R. Aughey, it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18 February 2026 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

10. To receive Management Report – February

The Chief Executive introduced the Management Report for February 2026 which had been circulated with the agenda. He provided members with an update in relation to the recent funding allocations for roads from the Department of Transport and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). Key points to note were:

- The total amount of funding between the Department of Transport regional and local roads allocations and TII's national roads allocations is €27,373,413.
- In terms of the regional and local roads, €17,231,600 was allocated. At a high level, a 4.5% decrease on last year.
- There was a 5% increase in respect of the 4 key areas; Restoration Maintenance; Restoration Improvement; the Supplementary Element; and the Discretionary Element.
- Funding under the Specific Improvement grant has decreased by €455,000.

The Chief Executive stated that discussions were ongoing with officials/technical advisers in the Department of Transport and indications have been made that a number of additional pilot roads projects/initiatives will be funded.

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

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

In response to Cllr Treanor's query, regarding recent figures which demonstrate an increase in the no. of planning permissions having been granted for houses and how these were progressing, Mr. C. Flynn, Director of Services advised that he would look into the possibility of providing figures from the Building Control section in relation to commencement notices in future Management Reports.

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr S. Flynn, it was agreed that this Council, seeks a meeting with Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., at the earliest opportunity in order to discuss the short, medium and long-term funding needs for the maintenance and upgrading of our local and regional road network. In anticipation of the meeting request being accepted, it is proposed that an all-party delegation including the Director of Service and Senior Roads Engineers led by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr PJ O'Hanlon attend the Minister's office or agree a place and time convenient to all.

On the proposal of Cllr R. Truell, seconded by Cllr S. Gilliland, it was agreed that this Council, requests that the roads department, as part of the 2026 Road Works Programme, undertakes a review of current pothole repair practices and implement a more effective and durable long-term repair strategy for roads throughout the county. In light of recent abnormal weather conditions, road surfaces, particularly local roads, have deteriorated to a very poor state. The existing repair methods have not proven sufficiently resilient to adverse weather and a more robust approach is required. This should include the proper removal of loose material, infilling with suitable dense bitumen macadam and the effective sealing of pothole repairs.

On the proposal of Cllr R. Aughey, seconded by Cllr PJ O'Hanlon it was agreed that this Council, given that County Monaghan is the biggest producer of poultry in Ireland with the smallest farm size, calls on the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mr. Martin Heydon, T.D., to roll-out an Economic Compensation Scheme in Ireland, similar to the Scheme provided by the French Government, to protect poultry farmers income when they are impacted by Avian Influenza outbreaks.

On the proposal of Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr P. Conlon, it was agreed that this Council call on the Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Mr. Peter Burke, T.D., to re-introduce the Increased Cost of Business (ICOB) Grant for all SMEs for the calendar year 2026 and beyond. This grant is urgently needed as a contribution toward rising costs faced by businesses.

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

The members noted the reports from Cllrs Coyle, Flynn, Keelan, McAree and McCooey in relation to their attendance at the following conference/training events:

- LAMA Spring Seminar - The Connacht Hotel, Galway – 28 & 29 January 2026
- Celtic Conferences – Misinformation, Disinformation and Fake News – O’Donovan’s Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork – 06 - 08 February 2026.

12. Business Submitted by the Chief Executive

There were no matters for consideration under this item.

13. Matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th February 2026

There were no matters arising out of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th February 2026.

14. To receive update on N2 National Primary Road Schemes

No further update on the N2 National Primary Road.

15. To receive update on North South Interconnector project

In response to Cllr Keelan’s query, the Chief Executive advised that an update following his recent meeting with representatives from Eirgrid would be provided to members at the next Council meeting.

Correspondence

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

- Acknowledgement email from the Office of the Taoiseach regarding correspondence relating to Eirgrid.
- Response from Senator Robbie Gallagher regarding correspondence relating to Eirgrid.

16. To receive update on the Ulster Canal project

No further update on the Ulster Canal project.

17. Correspondence

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

- Response from Uisce Éireann, regarding connection and supply issues on the Lough Eglis Regional Water Supply Scheme.
- Response from IHA Manager - Cavan Monaghan, HSE, regarding funding for the Errigal Truagh Special Needs Extension.
- Response from Consumer Services Officer, HSE, regarding the new children’s respite unit.
- Response from the Road Safety Authority regarding legislation for e-bikes and e-scooters.
- Acknowledgement email from the office of the Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, Mr. Dara Calleary, T.D., regarding a review of the funding model for Irish Language organisations.
- Acknowledgement email from the office of the Minister for Transport, Mr. Darragh O’Brien, T.D., regarding Bord Bia.

- Acknowledgement email from the office of the Minister for Transport, Mr. Darragh O'Brien, T.D., regarding the request for additional and exceptional roads funding support for urgent repair and remedial works as a result of Storm Chandra.
- Acknowledgement email from the office of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. James Browne, T.D., regarding the request for additional and targeted funding for flood relief and flood prevention works.
- Acknowledgement email from the office of the Minister of State, Mr. Kevin Boxer Moran, T.D. regarding additional funding for flood relief and flood prevention works.
- Resolution from Clare County Council regarding a recent appeal from the Irish Beekeepers' Association.
- Resolution from Wexford County Council regarding legislation outlawing the use of anonymous social media accounts.
- Resolution from Wexford County Council regarding insurance for properties located in designated flood risk zones.
- Resolution from Wicklow County Council regarding the Government's decision to ratify CETA and in particular the Investor Court System (ICS).

Additional Correspondence:

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

- Resolution from Westmeath Council regarding income thresholds for social housing and HAP.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr S. Flynn, seconded by Cllr C. Carthy it was agreed that this council, in support of the Westmeath County Council resolution, writes to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. James Browne, T.D., calling on the Minister to increase the income thresholds for social housing provision and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).

18. Notices of Motion

1. Cllr S. Flynn proposed, Cllr S. Conlon seconded:

'That this Council, writes to the Department of the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Minister for Defence, to express its opposition to the Government's proposal to abolish or amend the Triple Lock governing the overseas deployment of Irish Defence Forces personnel. The Triple Lock requires that overseas missions involving more than twelve Defence Forces personnel receive the approval of the Government, Dáil Éireann, and a United Nations mandate from either the UN Security Council or the UN General Assembly. This mechanism was introduced following the rejection of the Nice Treaty in 2001 and reaffirmed after the initial rejection of the Lisbon Treaty, as part of solemn commitments given to the Irish people to protect Ireland's policy of military neutrality. Furthermore, this Council rejects any attempt to dismantle the Triple Lock, viewing such proposals as a breach of trust with the Irish people and a serious undermining of Ireland's neutrality.'

Following a short debate on the motion, a vote by show of hands resulted in

For: 8

Against: 8

As there was an equal division of votes, the Cathaoirleach stated that he was exercising

his casting vote against the motion.

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion defeated.

2. Cllr N. McCooley proposed, Cllr P. Treanor seconded:

‘That this council calls upon Government to enact legislation to systematically, sustainably and steadily increase the provision of Irish-medium education so that future generations of Irish children will have the opportunity to be educated through their national language, if they so desire.’

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

3. Cllr S. Conlon proposed, Cllr S. Gilliland seconded:

‘For the purpose of expediting the Taken-in Charge process where applications have previously been submitted by residents or developers, I ask that this Council write to Uisce Eireann seeking to determine what are the causes of delay at the following locations, and has this Council a role in completing the process at, Mullach Glas, Monaghan (applied in 2020), The Meadows, Emyvale (applied in 2023) and Cluain Ard, Monaghan (applied in 2024).’

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

19. Questions and Replies

Cllr. A. Campbell asked:

1. What is the update on the progress of the Ballynacarry Bridge?

Reply: Planning applications have been lodged in both NI and ROI (Part 8). In relation to the Part 8, Plans and Particulars were on display until the 10th of January 2026. A presentation to facilitate securing Part 8 planning consent will be made at next Monday, 2nd March full council meeting.

2. Regarding the N2 upgrade from Ardee to Castleblayney. What is the latest progress on these works? Reply:

The N2 Ardee to Castleblayney Road Scheme received no funding in 2023/2024/2025, and the project has been suspended for 3 years. An allocation of €500,000 for 2026 was announced on the 17th February 2026. Although, we were well progressed through the Phase 3 Design & Environmental Evaluation process at the time of suspension in 2023, it is likely that changes to design standards, policies, and the passing of time, will require elements of the design to be reviewed and reworked, and additional surveys and studies will be required. Jacobs Engineering Ireland (Jacobs) are the consulting engineers designing this project. With funding available for 2026, Monaghan County Council can now re-engage with Jacobs and TII to develop and agree an updated project delivery plan, programme and costs. This process is likely to take a number of months.

3. Regarding water quality in “Lough Muckno” and with all the work under “Muckno Road to Recovery Plan” what is the latest update on these works?

Reply:

- Monaghan County Council are an associate partner on the PEACE 5.3 plus “Protecting our Shared Waters”. The role of Monaghan County Council as Associate Partner will be to provide local expertise on the Fane catchment and to support the selection of a demonstration farm which can be used for knowledge exchange purposes. Staff from MCC attended an initial meeting with the project partners in February 2026 and will continue to provide local expertise and support to the project.
- Environment staff are currently exploring funding opportunities to develop a cross-border collaborative work plan for the inputting river catchments which are contributing the most significant loads of P to Lough Muckno. Further meetings are proposed with the aim of potentially submitting a funding application if an appropriate funding avenue is available.

- Lough Muckno has been included as a Priority Area for Action in Ireland's Water Action Plan (2022-2027). Work is underway at a national and regional level to develop water action plans for all sectors and agencies involved in water framework directive implementation.
- Catchment characterisation and inspections are ongoing in the County Water and the Gentle Owens River Catchment areas. The project has highlighted these areas as the catchment areas contributing the most significant loads to Lough Muckno. Farm inspections are due to commence in the Fane 10 catchment upstream of Lough Muckno in the coming weeks.
- Due to the cross-border nature of the contributing tributaries to Lough Muckno, staff from water team met with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency twice in 2025 and further collaboration is planned for 2026.

4. With Monaghan LEO and Teagasc coming together to run a programme for farm family members to help them diversify to new business opportunities. What is the details of these events?

Reply: In 2025, the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Monaghan partnered with Teagasc and other stakeholder agencies to deliver the Farm Business Options Training Programme. This initiative supports farmers seeking to improve on-farm income or diversify into areas such as renewable energy, artisan food production, organics, and rural tourism. The multi-week programme provides participants with practical guidance in business planning, one-to-one mentoring, and direct links to the relevant support agencies. It is delivered with contributions from LEO Monaghan, Monaghan Integrated Development, Teagasc, and entrepreneurs who have successfully diversified their own farm enterprises. The 2026 programme is currently under review. Full details, including programme content, start date, and venues will be published once finalised. It is expected that information will be issued in advance of the programme's commencement in Autumn 2026. In addition, LEO Monaghan continues to provide a range of training and mentoring supports for individuals wishing to establish a new enterprise, including the Start Your Own Business programme.

5. With regard to the Market House in Castleblaney. What is the latest update on from the Department on this project?

Reply: Monaghan County Council's submission under *Decision Gate 3 (DG3) - Approval to Proceed*, remains under consideration by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG). The Executive is continuing to engage with the Department on the matter, however the Department have not confirmed a timeline for a decision on the DG3 submission. The commencement of construction works is contingent on DRCDG approval to proceed to contract award.

Cllr. C. Carthy asked:

6. When is it expected the Taking in Charge process for Alderwood, Carrickmacross, will be presented to members for ratification?

Reply: The intention of the Local Authority to take this development in charge was advertised, with the public consultation period expiring on 23 Jan 2026. While a matter for attention relating to storm drainage has been identified, it is hoped that this can be resolved and that a recommendation to take in charge Alderwood can be presented to the April Council meeting.

7. Are any plans in place to deliver serviced sites in Carrickmacross for housing?

Reply: There are no immediate plans to provide serviced sites in Carrickmacross for housing. It appears that the provision of Affordable Purchase Housing and modestly-sized and reasonably-priced private houses in housing developments and the grants for Vacant Homes are more popular options than provision of serviced sites at present. However, the possibility of providing serviced sites in Carrickmacross may be considered further following a review in Quarter 2 of 2026.

8. Are plans being put in place to carry out significant road repairs this year following damage caused by recent flooding?

Reply: Each Municipal District has prepared estimated costs for the necessary repair works, and these have been submitted to the Department of Transport (DOT) with a request for additional financial support. Whilst awaiting a response from the Department, the Council is committing €100,000 per MD to undertake works deemed most urgent, commencing immediately, as well as accelerating Annual Roads Programme.

9. Has the LEO an update on the rollout of the new version of their online trading voucher scheme and will they outline how it is being used by businesses throughout the county?

Reply: In 2024, the Trading Online Voucher Scheme closed to new entrants and was replaced by the Grow Digital Voucher. This scheme supports businesses with less than 50 employees to adopt digital tools that improve efficiency, expand customer reach, and strengthen competitiveness. It provides 50% funding for eligible software costs, from €500 to €5,000, including e-commerce platforms, CRM systems, accounting tools, booking and payment systems, and software configuration and training.

The scheme operates through a two-stage process - completion of a Digital for Business assessment,

followed by a Grow Digital Voucher application based on the consultant's recommendations. Businesses throughout County Monaghan are using the scheme to upgrade online sales systems, introduce digital booking and payment tools, improve customer management, and streamline internal workflows. Applicants come from a wide range of sectors, including accountancy, consultancy, retail, hospitality, and engineering/joinery.

In 2025, 12 businesses in the county were approved for Digital for Business support, with 3 progressing to a Grow Digital application. In 2026, 8 businesses have been approved to date, with one applying for Grow Digital.

- 10. Can the executive outline projects in 2025 (and expected projects for 2026) that will benefit from development contributions made at planning stage? Reply:** Below is list of projects proposed to be partially funded in 2025 and 2026 subject to available funds:

- Peace Campus, Monaghan
- My Open Library Monaghan, Castleblayney & Clones
- Ballybay Market House, Ballybay
- Scotstown Car Park, Scotstown
- Lough Muckno Gate Lodge 2 - final payment

Cllr. N. McCooey asked:

- 11. Can Monaghan County Council provide an update on the application for the installation of a VRS on the N12 at Skinnagin Bridge, Tyholland, and confirm whether we have received any correspondence?**

Reply: The Feasibility & Options Report is with Road Safety Section of TII for review and approval, once approval has been given and funding has been allocated, then the installation of the barrier can be undertaken at Skinnagin.

- 12. Can Monaghan County Council confirm how many road defects were reported in January and February 2026, in comparison to the same months in 2025, both countywide and per Municipal District (MD)?**

Reply: The number of defects reported in Jan-Feb 25 were 203, BCMD 82, CCMD 70, MMD 51. In the same period in 2026 there were 414, BCMD 227, CCMD 107, MMD 80.

- 13. Can Monaghan County Council confirm the total number of road defects reported in 2025, both for the county overall and per MD?**

Reply: Overall, there were 902 defects reported. BCMD 430, CCMD 302 and MMD 170.

- 14. Can Monaghan County Council confirm the number of applicants on the housing list who have selected Clontibret or Knockatallon as their first-choice location?**

Reply: Applicants may choose a maximum of 3 areas of choice, the listing of areas of choice is not a priority listing i.e. all areas of choice specified on the application form are deemed to be of equal priority.

Total applicants seeking rehousing in Clontibret 21

Total applicants seeking rehousing in Knockatallon 3

Cllr. P. Gibbons asked:

- 15. Can details of all supports provided by Monaghan County Council for retail businesses be provided?**

Reply: LEO Monaghan provides a range of supports for retail businesses in the county. These include:

- **Energy Efficiency Grant** - Assists businesses in introducing sustainable and energy efficient measures. Funding of up to €10,000 or 75% of eligible expenditure (whichever is lower) is available to companies that have completed the Green for Business Programme. Eligible expenditures include LED lighting, smart energy controls, energy-efficient refrigeration, heat pumps, motors, and meter monitoring efficient measures. Funding of up to €10,000 or 75% of eligible expenditure (whichever is lower) is available to companies that have completed the Green for Business Programme.
- **Grow Digital Voucher** - Provides 50% funding, from €500 to €5,000, for new software, digital tools, and related training. The voucher helps businesses improve efficiency, reach new customers, and enhance digital competitiveness. Companies may receive up to two vouchers to a combined maximum of €5,000.

- **Lean for Business** - Supports businesses in adopting Lean principles to improve performance and competitiveness. Participants work with a consultant to identify inefficiencies and new ways of working. This support is valued at up to €5,000 per participant.
- **Training and Mentoring** - LEO Monaghan also offers ongoing sector wide supports. See link to review and book [extensive training programmes and one to one mentoring support](#) which are all available to retail enterprises.-wide training programmes and one-to-one mentoring to support retail enterprises. In addition to above micro finance Ireland loans can be applied for the LEO Monaghan office.

16. Does Monaghan County Council have a role in the provision of electric vehicle charging points? If so, can this role be clarified? Can details of electric vehicle charging points in Castleblayney be provided including location and age of charging unit, along with plans for additional new units and upgrades of existing unit?

Reply: Yes, Monaghan County Council have a role in the provision of electric vehicle charging points. Monaghan County Council are responsible for delivering on the objectives of the Regional and Local Charging Network Plan 2025-2030. The Regional and Local Charging Network Plan 2025-2030 outlines a pathway to delivering charging infrastructure where it is needed most – at neighbourhoods, destinations and key transport routes. Monaghan County Council are currently preparing a Strategy and Implementation Plan for the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. ZEVI (Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland) have compiled information on existing charging infrastructure in the county which will be shared with Monaghan County Council in the coming weeks via ZEVI's online Network Planning Map.

17. Recent changes to rent pressure zones have been announced. This may have an impact on the planning status of houses available for short term lets. What is the latest on this issue? Has Monaghan County Council considered the local implications of this situation and if so, can the result of these considerations be provided?

Reply: From the 1 March 2026, Rent Pressure Zones are replaced by a national system of rent control. This system covers all private and student specific accommodation tenancies across Ireland. In relation to Short term letting, the Council received a circular in January 2026 which sets out that, The Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment (DETE) are drafting Short-Term Letting and Tourism (STLT) legislation to align with EU Short Term Rental Regulation, and it is expected that the provisions will be in place by 20 May 2026. The introduction of the STLT legislation will provide a legal and administrative framework to regulate short-term lettings, by providing the statutory basis for the establishment of a register for short-term lets. The Council has not yet assessed the local implications of the forthcoming legislation, as it will not take effect until May 2026. Internal discussions will be undertaken in advance of its introduction to prepare for implementation.

18. In relation to housing loans can the actual interest rates being paid by customers be provided. Can an overview be given on how these rates are determined and how different clients have different interest rates on their home loan?

Reply:

Table 1: Fixed Interest rates and number of customers at each rate

Table 2: Variable rates since 2009

Table 1

Privately owned Homes	Private home total leads (genuine enquiries)	78
	Visits completed to private homes by SSE rep.	37
	Homes indicating interest in Home Energy Assessments	14
	Home Energy Assessments completed	14
	Quotes issued for upgrade works	13
	Private home quotes accepted	2
	Upgrades completed to LA owned Homes	49

In 2026 SEAI launched increased grant supports for private homeowners. These increased grant supports have the potential to incentivise uptake of energy efficiency improvements. SSE Airtricity will now re-engage with private homeowners to create awareness of the increased grant supports and will offer private homeowners the opportunity to consider the upgrades through MABRI.

As part of the ongoing monitoring of the MABRI Pilot Project, SSE Airtricity has been tracking direct engagement with their partner Activ8. It has been found that there has been increased activity around the area of Solar PV in Monaghan since June 2025. Much of this increased activity has been on the back of referrals through MABRI with 155 b

The works completed to the Council owned housing stock has seen energy savings in the region of 69% and Carbon reductions of 77% per property. The average starting Building Energy rating was D1/C3 and an average size of 83 square metres. The final Building Energy Rating of the Council owned housing stock is B1.

- b. **with the completion of this phase of works, are there additional houses to be considered for extensive retrofitting?** **Reply:** Monaghan County Council continues to complete upgrade works to its own housing stock under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit programme (EERP) launched in 2021. The roll out of the EERP has been delivered under the MABRI pilot project while also being delivered using other contractors appointed through the Dynamic Purchasing System. The roll out of upgrade works will continue using contractors from the Dynamic Purchasing System while Monaghan County Council explores other mechanisms for delivering additional works in the future. An ambitious programme of works is being developed for 2026 and the years beyond this. Monaghan County Council continues to surpass its allocation for each year of the programme from the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage, the ambitious programme being considered is subject to an increased allocation and funding.

- c. **what number of Council tenants offered these energy efficiency measures declined to have their home included in this scheme?**

Reply: The MABRI pilot project set out a target to upgrade 53 Local Authority owned homes within the Killygoan area of Monaghan Town. To date 49 of the 53 Local Authority owned homes have been upgraded. Monaghan County Council will engage with the remaining properties and aims to have all 53 properties completed as part of the MABRI project. The upgrade works on offer have significant benefits for tenants including lower energy usage, reduced carbon output, reduced exposure to pollutants, reduced risk of Carbon Monoxide poisoning, reduced risk of house / chimney fires and a warmer, more efficient home. Monaghan County Council and SSE Airtricity will engage with the remaining properties and address specific barriers to the upgrade works. Monaghan County Council continually receives requests from homes wanting to be included in the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme and is currently reviewing options to add additional properties to this project. Any additional properties will be subject to agreed costs with the MABRI contractor and subject to increased allocation and funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

21. **Following the allocation of €13,113,557 in March 2021 through the Urban Regeneration Development Fund for the Dublin Street Regeneration Project aimed at transforming the backlands of both north and south Dublin Street,**

- a. **what plans are advancing for the road network that will provide access through the approximate 10 acres of lands previously owned by the HSE at Rooskey?**

Reply: The road currently under construction at Rooskey Lands, providing access to the 10 acres of land formerly owned by the HSE, is a separate project and does not form part of the URDF Dublin Street Regeneration scheme.

- b. following An Coimisiún Pleanála's decision last October to grant planning approval for the Dublin Street Regeneration North project, and Council's submission to the Department of Local Government seeking to move to the next stage of implementation, what are the next steps in moving this plan forward?**

Reply: The project Design Team are currently finalising the submission to the Department of Local Government to seek approval to move into the next stage Detailed Design for Dublin Street North Regeneration project.

- c. following extensive negotiations with landowners during several rounds of consultation over the past 5 years, involving properties required to fulfil the objectives of this plan, what is the status relating to consent to proceed, land acquisition and Compulsory Purchase Orders?**

Reply: In reference to the South Dublin Street Regeneration scheme, to date a total of 7 properties has been acquired through negotiation with relevant property owners. Negotiations with the remaining property owners are still ongoing, any properties not acquired by agreement will be subject to a CPO process. Regarding the Dublin Street North Regeneration Project, the Design Team are also finalising the submission to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage seeking consent to advance land acquisition in parallel with the Detailed Design phase.

- d. aligned to the initial URDF grant from 2021, what is the financial status of the €13,113,557 allocated, and has additional funding been secured since that period to advance the overall scheme? Reply:** Having regard to the €13.1m URDF allocation, a total of €1,074,000 (Dublin St South: €493k & Dublin St North €581k) has been drawdown to date. The Executive is continuing to engage with the URDF funding department in relation to the progression of both phases of the overall regeneration scheme and associated funding requirements, no additional funding has been secured since the initial grant allocation.

Cllr. S. Flynn asked:

- 22. Can an update be provided on the development of new playgrounds and the refurbishment of existing playgrounds across County Monaghan, with a breakdown by each Municipal District, including timelines for delivery and details of any funding applications submitted or approved under current schemes? In particular, can the Executive outline the current status and future plans for playground provision and improvement in Clones, Smithboro, Threemilehouse, and Rockcorry?**

Reply: There are currently no funding streams available for the development or refurbishment of playgrounds. The Municipal Districts have limited budgets to carry out Playground Maintenance and would not be sufficient for refurbishment projects of existing playgrounds. If funding streams become available, all playgrounds will be assessed and considered at application stage.

- 23. Concerns regarding inadequate public lighting have been identified through the Women's Safety Audit, the Local Community Safety Partnership survey, and representations from various community groups, particularly in relation to Fermanagh Street in Clones and the route from Smithboro to Magherarney, County Monaghan.**

In light of these concerns, can the Executive carry out a public lighting survey on the route from Smithboro to Magherarney and on Fermanagh Street in Clones? Furthermore, will the Executive undertake a full assessment of these locations and replace or upgrade any lighting found to be insufficient, including the installation of additional lighting columns where necessary?

Reply: The Executive will arrange for the examination of both locations to ascertain if there are any lighting faults or vegetation issues obstructing illumination. Should there be no issues and Lighting Engineers confirm that lighting illumination in both locations are insufficient a full assessment will be carried out.

- 24. Can the Executive please confirm whether Monaghan County Council has been contacted by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, or any relevant State agency, in relation to the Government's proposed plan to purchase buildings for use as childcare facilities to address childcare shortages, and to further confirm whether any properties in County Monaghan are currently being identified, assessed or considered for acquisition under this initiative.**

Reply: Monaghan County Council have not been directly contacted by the Department, nor by any other relevant state agency in relation to the Governments' proposed initiative to purchase buildings for use as childcare facilities. However, Monaghan County Childcare Committee have

received correspondence in this regard.

- 25. In relation to the Age Friendly Homes Programme, what is the current waiting time from the submission of an application to the assessment of the applicant and the provision of a bespoke support package tailored to the specific needs of the older person?**

Reply: The Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme aims to support older people (aged 65 and over) to live in their own home with dignity and independence, for as long as possible. The programme's ambition is to enable everyone to live longer healthier lives by keeping care close to home and expanding the range of health and social care services in the community. It is about providing a range of alternatives for older people who may otherwise transition into long term residential care prematurely. To do this, we have appointed a Local Healthy Age Friendly Homes Coordinator in Monaghan, Elizabeth (Liz) Doherty Mooney. Liz case manages a range of supports for each person referred, linking them with supports from the variety of public, voluntary, private and community agencies in the area. As a Local Coordinator, Liz will carry out a home-based assessment. During this assessment and in partnership with the older person, Liz will identify a range of supports to enable the older person to continue living independently. Once the supports have been identified Liz will continue to work with the older supports to ensure they are delivered.

This is a free service and will not affect any current home help, medical card, pension, or other services being received.

Current wait times in Monaghan are presently estimated at four to six weeks.

To send a referral please see contacts below:

Email Referrals: referralshafh@meathcoco.ie

Email Admin: healthagefriendlyhomes@meathcoco.ie

Address:

Meath County Council

Kells Civic Office

Headfort Place

Kells, Co. Meath

A82 W2R3

Phone: 046 9248899

Cllr. N. Keelan asked:

- 26. What plans have the council in the time ahead working with An Garda Síochána and other agencies to enhance road safety measures across the county in particular, along the N2 given the significant increase in road deaths and injuries as a result of road traffic accidents?**

Reply: The County Monaghan Road Safety Working Together Group, consisting of members of AGS, Monaghan Fire & Civil protection, National Ambulance Service, RSA and Monaghan County Council met recently to discuss Phase 2 of the local Road Safety Action Plan 2026-2027, will be brought before the Council for noting, once complete. A series of road safety initiatives for 2026 has been drawn up to target the various causes of road collisions in the county. A meeting is due to be scheduled between the Chief Executive, Senior Gardaí, Chief Fire Officer and Road Safety Officer to discuss road safety issues in Co Monaghan including safety on the N2 and what collaborative approach can be taken to help reduce the number of serious injuries and fatalities.

- 27. What is the up to-date position in relation to the preparation of a village plan for Inniskeen and the other tier 4 villages. Will the proposed Inniskeen Community plan run in tandem with the Village plan? What is the difference between a village plan and a community plan?**

Reply: Requests for tenders for consultancy services for the preparation of a Community Vision and Spatial Land Use Plan for the Tier 4 villages of Glaslough, Inniskeen and Smithborough have been issued, with the closing date for the submission of tenders of the 23rd February 2026.

Subject to satisfactory tenders being received, it is anticipated that the successful consultant(s) shall be appointed in March 2026.

The plans when completed shall contain two distinct, but interrelated elements: -

- (1) Community vision and action plan, and
- (2) Spatial land use and planning policy framework

The spatial land use element of the document shall focus on the physical development of the village, and will provide a planning policy framework for its sustainable growth. It is anticipated that this element of the village plan shall be incorporated into the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 – 2031, by way of the variation process.

The Community element will involve engaging with the people living in the area to come to a shared understanding of the social, economic and cultural needs in the area, the opportunities which exist to address these needs, and agree a set of actions which the community can take to make their area

a better place to live, taking all the information into account. The Community element will identify any gaps in structures which are needed in order for the community to succeed in their ambitions and will give them guidance on how to get started with projects which will make a difference in their community.

Together, the two elements shall provide a shared vision for the future development of the village.

28. **What is the up to-date position in relation to the local lane improvement scheme (LIS) When is it hoped to have a list of eligible lanes put together and points allocated. Has funding been announced for the scheme?**

Reply: With regards to the Local Improvement Scheme council staff have visited all eligible applications for assessment. Significant work has been completed on the assessment and prioritisation. The list will be finalised when the funding and criteria for the Local Improvement Scheme has been announced. Monaghan County Council has received an initial funding allocation of €385,880 in 2026.

29. **Following on from the Ministerial / Government directive to reopen the county development plan, when is it hoped to have this work completed?**

Reply: A significant body of work has already been undertaken by the Planning Section in partnership with the Elected Members, in response to the Ministerial guidelines. As part of this, a Chief Executives Report has been prepared, which outlines the recommended response to the guidelines. It is intended that the Report shall be presented to the Elected Members at the March Council meeting, where agreement will be sought to proceed to vary the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. It is difficult to determine a precise date for conclusion of the variation process, but it is hoped that it can be concluded by late summer.

30. **Given the recent storm events and the negative impact that the weather has had on the county road network, will the council consider a county wide pothole blitz with good quality material as was done before as soon as weather allows?**

Reply: Each Municipal District has prepared estimated costs for the necessary repair works, and these have been submitted to the Department of Transport (DOT) with a request for additional financial support. Whilst awaiting a response from the Department, the Council is committing €100,000 per MD to undertake works deemed most urgent, commencing immediately, as well as accelerating Annual Roads Programme.

Clr R. Truell asked:

31. **That Monaghan County Council acknowledges its responsibility as owner of the crèche facility building in Rockcorry and agrees to allocate appropriate funding under the Capital Works Programme to carry out essential external refurbishment works, including but not limited to the replastering and repair of the external walls of the building and to seek departmental funding, if needed, and to make it more energy efficient. The Council further recognises that these works are necessary to:**

- **Protect and preserve the structural integrity of the Council owned asset**
- **Ensure the building remains safe, weatherproof, and fit for purpose**
- **Maintain appropriate standards for childcare provision within the community**
- **Safeguard the long-term sustainability of the facility**

Therefore, I ask that a full condition assessment be undertaken immediately and that the required works be prioritised within the current Capital Works budget or included in the forthcoming Capital Programme review.

Reply: Monaghan County Council will arrange a condition survey of the building fabric to ascertain the current extent of refurbishment works required, including plaster repairs and potential energy-efficiency measures. A decision on costs and potential funding streams will be made following the completion of the condition report. Please note, works were completed in 2023 /2024 by CMETB to facilitate the decant of students, during the reconstruction of Scoil Mhuire at the Creche / Community building. Given that the Scoil Mhuire students have now returned to the new school, Monaghan County Council will meet with the Creche Manager to agree new long-term licence / lease arrangements and a schedule of works / work plan for the building going forward.

20.Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

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

- The family of the late George (Pat Jack) McMeel, Knocknagrave, Tydavnet, Monaghan, former Monaghan County Council employee.

- The family of the late Cormac Boylan, Dundalk Road, Annahale, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, former Monaghan County Council employee.

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

- Shane McLoughlin, Clones on being named the Farney Foundation County Monaghan Person of the Year 2025.

21. Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr N. Keelan, seconded by Cllr N. McCooey, 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	Briefing on New Housing Plan Delivering Homes Building Communities 2025-2030	Limerick (Southern Region)	19 March 2026	Cllr. R. Truell
AILG	Briefing on New Housing Plan Delivering Homes Building Communities 2025-2030	Raddison Blu, Sligo	21 March 2026	Cllr N. McCooey Cllr P. Gibbons

April County Council Meeting – 13 April 2026

It was agreed that the April County Council meeting, would start at the later time of 2.00pm to accommodate the Monaghan County Council Annual Awards Ceremony.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Signed: _____

**Meetings
Administrator**

Date: _____