

## The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones

Minutes of proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones held on Monday February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026 @ 10am, Clones Municipal Office, Clones, Co. Monaghan.

**Members Present:** Cathaoirleach Cllr Sinead Flynn presided; the following members were also present: Cllrs: Pat Treanor, Richard Truell and Seamus Coyle.

**In Attendance:** Nial O'Connor A/Director of Services, Matthew Lambe A/Municipal District Co-Ordinator, Craig Connolly Executive Engineer and Gillian Costello Staff Officer.

Cathaoirleach Cllr Sinead Flynn welcomed all to the February 2026 Ballybay/Clones Municipal District Meeting.

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

Proposed by Cllr. Treanor seconded by Cllr. Truell & unanimously agreed.

### **2. Correspondence Sent**

Correspondence sent was noted.

### **3. Correspondence Received**

Correspondence received was noted by Members and following discussion, Cllr. Flynn welcomed correspondence from the LCSP and fully supports the proposed survey proposed that a safety assessment is carried out for all zebra crossings and courtesy crossings in the district, and to implement any recommendations arising from the assessment.

*Proposed Cllr. Flynn, seconded Cllr. Treanor and unanimously agreed.*

Cllr. Flynn noted following the L CSP public consultation which took place in Clones the community have requested a lighting assessment of Fermanagh St.

Cllr. Flynn welcomed correspondence from Minister Heydon and his acknowledgement of pressure on the Farming Community in the midst of Bovine TB and requested that Ballybay/Clones Municipal District Elected Members extended an invitation to the Minister to attend an upcoming meeting of the Ballybay/Clones Municipal District to discuss this matter.

*Proposed Cllr. Flynn, seconded Cllr. Truell & unanimously agreed.*

Cllr. Flynn call for the resignation of Larry Murrin. Larry Murrin's company, Dawn Farm Foods, imported Brazilian beef in 2025/2026. This contradicts Bord Bia's mission to promote Irish beef and its quality assurance standards. Larry Murrin cannot credibly chair Bord Bia while running a company importing non-Irish beef. BCMD call for his removal from the role of Chair of Bord Bia.

*Proposed Cllr. Flynn, seconded Cllr. Treanor & unanimously agreed.*

Cllr. Treanor concurred with Cllr. Flynn on calling for Larry Murrin's resignation from the role of Chair of Board Bia and also extended his congratulations on her appointment to chair of the LCSP.

### **4. Siobhán Griffin, Regional Transport Manager, Bus Éireann**

Members welcomed Siobhán Griffin, Regional Transport Manager, Bus Éireann to the February Municipal District Meeting of Ballybay/Clones. Ms. Griffin delivered a presentation outlining the role of Bus Éireann in administering the School Transport Scheme on behalf of the Department of Education. She provided an overview of how the scheme operates and the criteria for eligibility.

Ms. Griffin reported a continued and significant increase in demand for school transport places, driven by rising student numbers, expanded route requirements, additional demand from students from Ukraine and those residing in IPAS/EROCC centres, and increased numbers of students with special educational needs requiring dedicated transport.

For County Monaghan, Ms. Griffin advised that the scheme currently caters for approximately 4,200 mainstream students and 300 students with additional needs. Transport services in the county are delivered through contractors operating 47 large buses, 22 medium buses, and 70 minibuses/taxis. Challenges highlighted include expanded eligibility requirements and ongoing market shortages of both vehicles and drivers. Future plans under consideration include further integration with public transport to ensure value for money. Bus Éireann's target for 2030 is to accommodate an additional 120,000 students nationally.

Ms. Griffin also noted that pilot schemes introduced during 2024/2025 are being reviewed and aligned with broader public transport developments.

The Elected Members thanked Ms. Griffin for her informative presentation. Cllr. Flynn opened the discussion by expressing the need for a School Transport System that works effectively for both children and their families, particularly regarding appropriate pick-up and drop-off locations. She highlighted the poor state of public transport in Monaghan and stated that relying on it to support the School Transport Scheme would not be successful. She emphasised the importance of having a plan in place to review additional routes and to introduce buses where demand requires.

She requested that Bus Éireann consider reviewing its policy on drivers over 70. She also raised concerns that the nearest school rule is being applied too rigidly, creating difficulties for families. Issues around concessionary tickets were also noted, with uncertainty over seat allocation continuing to cause significant problems for students.

Cllr. Flynn further stated that communications from Elected Members to Bus Éireann frequently go unanswered, resulting in delays during critical periods. He requested that a dedicated support service or a specific contact person be provided during August and September to ensure timely responses.

Cllr. Truell then addressed concerns regarding the Scotstown bus stop, noting that families have raised safety issues with both the local Gardaí and the bus driver. He requested that the Bus Éireann Inspector meet with the families at the location to assess the Health and Safety concerns. He also referred to the case of the McCaffery family, who now live 3 km from their nearest pick-up point. Prior to COVID-19, the school bus passed directly by their home, but the route was changed to the main N54 road, which he considers a Health and Safety issue requiring review.

Cllr. Truell asked Bus Éireann to reconsider its policy on drivers over 70. He again highlighted significant problems with the concessionary ticket system, describing it as unreliable and stressful for families, with instances where one child in a family of two or three has not received a seat. He requested that the Bus Inspector investigate these cases.

Cllr. Treanor raised concerns regarding the coordination between schools, who have early knowledge of new enrolments, and Bus Éireann. He stated that the current allocation system appears to be

ineffective, with no structured link between school enrolments and the transport provider. As a result, families experience unnecessary stress and prolonged uncertainty regarding transport availability.

Cllr. Treanor noted that in County Monaghan, contractors are often not informed of their routes or contracts until August, creating additional challenges. He highlighted difficulties in contacting Bus Éireann during this period, as responses are frequently delayed due to staff leave. He suggested that each school should have a designated liaison to act as a point of contact between parents and Bus Éireann.

Further concerns raised included the suitability of pick-up locations, with some stops requiring parents to drive a significant distance—at times halfway to the school—before accessing a bus service. While supportive of greater integration with public transport, Cllr. Treanor emphasised that students must be guaranteed a seat, noting that reliability and capacity would be essential for such integration to succeed.

Cllr. Coyle acknowledged previous issues he had raised with Ms. Griffin and expressed his thanks for the work undertaken to resolve them. He noted that national demand for school transport is increasing by approximately 5%, with a 3% increase in County Monaghan, and requested that the policy relating to drivers over the age of 70 be reviewed in light of these pressures.

Cllr. Coyle welcomed the proposal to strengthen links with public transport but highlighted that the limited availability of public transport services in Monaghan would present a significant challenge to effective integration. He concluded by recognising the considerable pressures faced by Bus Éireann in managing the continually increasing demand for the School Transport Scheme.

In response to questions raised by the Elected Members, Ms. Griffin provided the following clarifications: Ms. Griffin advised that the School Transport Portal operates on a rolling basis, covering the 2025/2026 to 2026/2027 school years, with the portal opening in early March. Notices are published on both the Bus Éireann and Department of Education websites, and correspondence also issues directly to families.

Regarding communication and coordination with schools on enrolments, Ms. Griffin explained that Bus Éireann does not have visibility of brand-new applicants until they are entered into the system; however, all existing students are visible through the portal rollover. The Department of Education communicates directly with schools in relation to enrolment matters.

Ms. Griffin confirmed that the age-limit policy for drivers is not being extended. She noted that studies have been carried out in this area, and Bus Éireann has engaged with the Oireachtas on the matter. Following this review, the policy will remain unchanged.

Seat allocation criteria were outlined as follows: eligibility applies to those living 3.2 km or more from their nearest national school and 4.8 km or more from their nearest post-primary school. Applicants living within the minimum distance or seeking transport to a school that is not their nearest, are considered concessionary and will receive a seat only where capacity exists.

For post-primary transport, allocations may include the second-nearest school; however, routes cannot be altered to facilitate this. Post-primary schools are grouped into centres, and siblings are provided with tickets regardless of which school within that centre they attend (e.g. boys' school/girls' school). Ms. Griffin noted that there have been occasional cases where a family overlooked applying for a new student and the bus subsequently reached capacity.

Ms. Griffin acknowledged the concerns raised by Cllr. Truell regarding the safety of a specific bus stop and will follow up on this matter.

She outlined that the concessionary ticket process applies once all eligible applications received on time and paid for have been allocated. The process considers the second-closest post-primary school and all schools thereafter. Ms. Griffin advised that this process is set by the Department of Education. Tickets are printed at the beginning of July, prior to any refusals or switches between buses, to facilitate the accommodation of all applications. Families may contact Bus Éireann with queries; while the volume of calls is high, every effort is made to respond promptly. Dedicated email addresses are available for public representatives ([oireachtas@buseireann.ie](mailto:oireachtas@buseireann.ie)) and for members of the public ([representatives@buseireann.ie](mailto:representatives@buseireann.ie)).

Ms. Griffin explained that prior to 2012, applications were processed based on catchment boundaries. Following government changes in September 2012, the system transitioned to one based on the distance from home to the bus stop. Current assessments may also consider school ethos, language, distance to the preferred school, and religion. Where applications are deemed ineligible, measurements are taken using calibrated meter readers to ensure accuracy, and all efforts are made to ensure that eligible applicants receive tickets.

She advised that contractors received notification of contract awards in June last year, with contracts issued for five-year periods on a rolling basis. Only routes currently out to tender are due notifications in June of this year.

Ms. Griffin noted that public procurement timelines are not aligned with the school application process, meaning Bus Éireann has no visibility of new students when tendering. New routes are introduced only where they are required to serve eligible students and not for concessionary places. Any additional expenditure must be approved by the Department of Education.

Finally, Ms. Griffin advised that proposals to align the School Transport Scheme with broader public transport developments will require significant inter-departmental cooperation, as public transport falls under the Department of Transport while school transport remains under the Department of Education.

#### **5. Update on Community Plans, Carol Lambe, Community Development Officer**

Carol Lambe Community Development Officer presented the Plan for the Preparation of Community Development & Tier 4 Village Plans over the Period 2026-2030. Community Plans will not require funding from the MD, Tier 4 plans will require funding from the MD.

The Municipal Districts, following publication of the latest County Development Plan, have each committed to commissioning one Village Plan of a Tier 4 Village per MD per year for the next four years.

In order for the most efficiencies and delivery of both the Community Plan and Tier 4 Plan by 2030, the proposal is to cross MD's with plans bringing groups together as a whole to achieve delivery.

The proposed order for the preparation of plans is as follows:

<b>Schedule of Work by Year the planning process will commence</b>		
<b>Year plan will START</b>	<b>COMMUNITY PLAN</b> <i>led by Community Dev Team</i>	<b>TIER 4 SPATIAL PLAN</b> <i>Led by Consultants, with input from Planning &amp; Community Dev Teams</i>
2026	Connons Magheraclone Tydavnet	Agreed by MD: Smithborough Agreed by MD: Inniskeen Agreed by MD: Glaslough
2027	Latton, Bawn & Shantonagh Mullyash ←————→ Knockatallon ←————→	Agreed by MD: Rockcorry Suggested: Oram Agreed by MD: Scotstown
2028	Killeevan, Greenans Cross, Aghabog ↔ Cremartin ←————→ Ardaghey & Tullycorbett	Suggested: Newbliss Suggested: Annyalla Agreed by MD: Emyvale
2029	Corduff Toome Carrickroe	Suggested: Scotshouse Suggested: Doohamlet Agreed by MD: Ballinode
2030	Corcaghan ←————→ Killanny Tyholland & Castleshane ←————→	Suggested: Threemilehouse Suggested: Clontibret North

**Note:** an orange line denotes it is proposed to carry out simultaneous planning processes in these communities, in recognition of the close relationship between the communities involved and to allow synergies to emerge

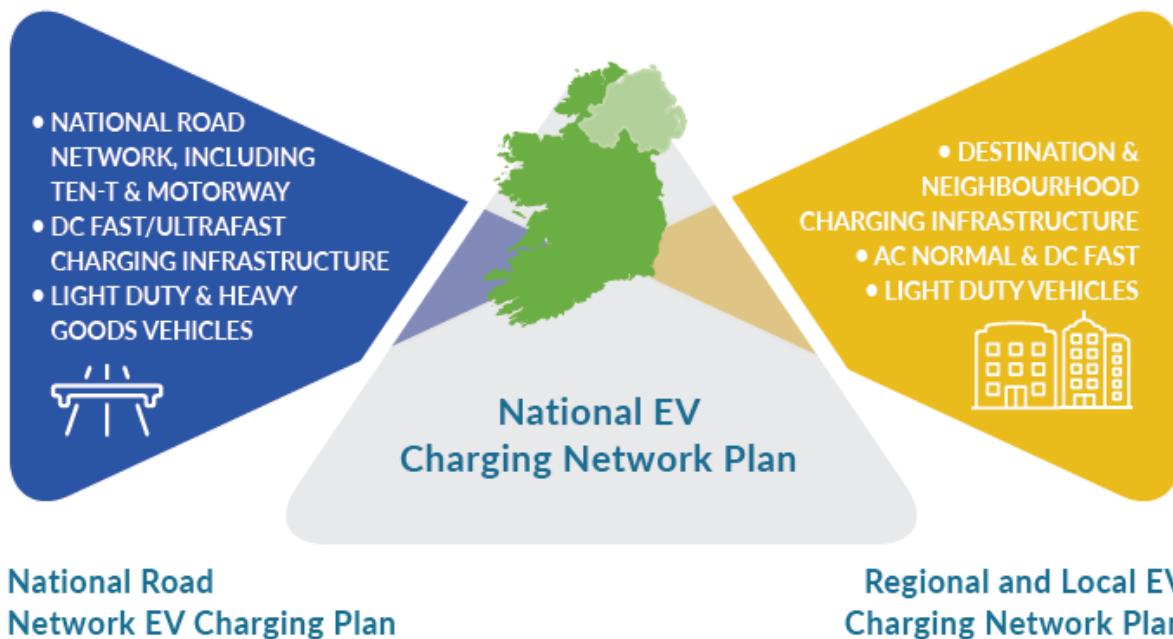
The Members welcomed this presentation and welcomed proposals to bring together communities to increase efficiency in delivering plans.

### **6. Consideration of EV Charging Pilot Project in Clones, Paul Clerkin, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Roads**

Paul Clerkin A/Senior Executive Engineer, Roads presented the proposal for installation of EV charging points in Clones outlining the purpose of this pilot project, benefits and proposed charging point locations.

This project is being undertaken in line with National and International Policy, to provide Destination and Neighbourhood publicly accessible EV Charging Infrastructure in compliance with The European Union’s Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), which came into force in 2024 it Sets clear targets for EV Charging Infrastructure. Co. Monaghan’s target power output is 7428kW by 2030.

The National EV Charging Network Plan falls under 2 categories, National Road Network EV Charging Plan and Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan



There will be a dedicated office in the Department of Transport to lead Ireland’s transition to low-emission mobility and support consumers, the public sector, and businesses in switching to EV’s and co-ordinate the rollout of charging infrastructure.

There are 3 locations under neighbourhood need proposed for EV Charging Points in Clones, Church Hill, Newtownbutler Road, Roslea Road.

There are 3 locations under destination need proposed for EV Charging Points in Clones, Creighton Hotel, Supervalu, Clones Library.

The multiuser site will be in Fitzpatrick’s Square Carpark.

The Elected Members welcomed this pilot scheme and the presentation. Following discussions and questions from Members, staff advised ZEVI examined sites in their professional capacity and the Roslea Road Carpark was deemed unsuitable to accommodate the multiuser site, Fitzpatrick Square carpark the proposed site was accessed in depth and the data showed this carpark was rarely full to capacity and can accommodate EV charging spaces. While there will be a loss of 2 parking spaces in the town the gain to businesses is beneficial with the introduction of 2 high speed charging points.

The Members unanimously agreed that promotion of electric vehicles is important and there is a need to improve the infrastructure to facilitate this. Cllr. Treanor requested that Fitzpatrick Square carpark is examined to establish if there can be additional parking spaces created to account for loss of parking for EV charging.

*The EV Charging Pilot Project was proposed by Cllr. Treanor, seconded by Cllr. Truell and unanimously agreed.*

**7. Report by Municipal District Co-Ordinator.**

Matthew Lambe Municipal District Co-Ordinator presented his report to the Elected Members.

**Town & Village Scheme 2023**

Public Realm - Market House Ballybay

Funding of €250k has been received for Public Realm enhancement works and the undergrounding of overhead power cables area and streetscape of the Market House. Construction works will commence later this month.

#### Clones Youth Centre

Funding of €250k has been received for the refurbishment of Clones Youth Centre this project went to tender and no tenders were received. The project has been re-advertised.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Schemes 2022**

##### Dromore Blueway –

Planning Permission for this project has been granted. Detailed designs are being prepared, and works will commence in Q2 of 2026. The delay in the commencement of works is due to environmental conditions placed on the project with works only permitted between May and September.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Scheme 2023 Project Development Measure (PDM)**

##### Drum Lough Circular Walkway

Funding of €50,000 has been received recently from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Project Development Measure (PDM) of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2023 for a proposed Circular walkway at Drum Lough. A Preliminary Design Report outlining three route options will be presented to the community towards the end of next month.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Scheme 2023**

##### Measure 2

##### Gortnawhinny Lido

Funding of €119,560.00 has been granted for the Gortnawhinny Lido. Works are ongoing and will be completed in Q1 2026.

#### **ORIS 2024/2025: Measure 1 & Project Development Measure Successful Projects**

Funding of €49,950 has been received for predevelopment work for a 2.3km walking trail at Cashlan Lough. The Call for Tender will be posted on eTenders next month seeking a qualified consultancy firm with specific experience in wetland/riparian habitat to plan and design the trail and carry out associated pre-development works, including a habitat protection report and planning application. The Greenan's Cross Restoration Committee, the community group behind this project have secured signed permissive access agreements from all landowners along the proposed trail route.

#### **PEACEPLUS**

##### **PEACEPLUS Theme 4.2 Healthy & Inclusive Communities**

The MD submitted a funding application with partners from Cavan County Council, Fermanagh Omagh District Council under Peace + for the Ulster Canal Workers Cottages. This application has been successful. There will be an investment by SEUPB of €8.4 million towards the RESTART project under measure 4.2 of the PEACE PLUS programme, Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion. The project, aptly named RESTART, an acronym for Rural Economic & Social Transformation and Resilience Transition Together, will see significant strategic investment in the towns of Newtownbutler, Clones and Belturbet. The project has been designed collaboratively to enable these rural communities to thrive and reach their full economic, social and environmental potential. The proposed works at the at the Canal Stores site to include the redevelopment of the former Canal workers cottage to extend the meals on wheels service, and provision of additional multipurpose meeting and community space that can also be used to provide services for the Marina adjacent to the site.

The launch of this project will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February in the Courthouse in Newtownbutler.

**Peace Plus (Areas for Young People and young people with disability)**

A Teen hang out area at Ballybay Park with access to Wifi facilities, a place to play music, hang out in a dry environment and have access to charging facilities. The structure has been installed, and a drinking water fountain will be installed as part of this project in the coming weeks. Wifi connection will be made in the coming weeks.

**Rural Regeneration & Development fund Scheme Fifth Call 2023**

Clones Regeneration Hubs (Heritage and Enterprises) Plan.

This MD has received €5.137m under the Fifth Call for Category 1 for the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) for Clones Regeneration Hubs (Heritage and Enterprise). This application includes the proposed Business Hub on Fermanagh St and the Lennard Arms (Monastic Centre) MacCurtain Street/Analore Street/The Diamond, Crossmoyle.

**Fermanagh Street Business Hub – Project Update**

The car park at Fermanagh Street Business Hub closed on Friday, 13 February 2026 to facilitate the commencement of construction works.

Site hoarding will be installed from Monday, 16 February 2026, with full construction activities scheduled to begin shortly thereafter.

The current estimated timeline for project completion is Q3 2027.

**Lennard Arms**

A detailed construction design team and a detailed design space exhibition team have been appointed. Meetings are ongoing and the project we be ready to go to tender later this year.

**Ballybay Market House –**

The detailed designs are completed, and all relevant designs and documents were forwarded to the department for approval prior to proceeding to tender stage. The Department came back with several queries and responses have been prepared and returned to the department last month.

**Community Recognition Fund 2024 Window 3**

Funding has been received for the following projects: -

Local Authority	City/Town/Village Area	Project Group Name	Project Title	Total Grant Received
Monaghan	Ballybay town park	Monaghan County Council	Provision of basketball court and equipment	€69,161
Monaghan	Ballybay town park	Monaghan County Council	Replacement of pedestrian bridge in the town park	€54,700

Both projects are at design stage.

## **Clar 2023 Developing Community Facilities and Amenities**

### Peace link Sensory Garden

Works are substantially completed with planting and snagging to be completed in the spring.

### **Community Centre Investment Fund –**

#### **Rockcorry Community Centre**

The Detailed Design Stage is complete. The Decision Gate 2 (Approval to Proceed to Tender) paperwork has been submitted to the Department, and we are awaiting approval to publish the tender documents.

### **Greenways**

#### Ulster Canal - Clones to Smithboro Greenway: -

Flood modelling has confirmed that 4.1km of the preferred route is at risk of flooding. Alternative construction techniques to provide a flood resilient Greenway, with accompanying cost estimates, have been developed by Monaghan County Council in conjunction with our consultants and presented to TII for review. TII have responded that the current National Design Standards for Greenways are currently being updated, with flood risk management included within the review process. When the Design Standards have been reviewed and updated, they will be used to assess the proposed solutions for the Clones to Smithboro greenway project.

#### Ulster Canal – Smithboro to Monaghan Greenway: -

Its Monaghan County Council's intention to publish the Part VIII Planning Application in Q2 2026, subject to TII approvals.

### **2024 Community Recognition Fund**

An application totalling €200,000 was successful for the Upgrade & Refurbishment of Ballybay Multi-use Community Building. This project went to tender twice using established frameworks however no contractor provided a costing for the construction of the project. This project was retendered, and a letter of intent has been issued to a construction contractor.

### **Site Assessment for Gone but Not Forgotten Memorial Garden**

The Paul Hogarth Company will present findings from the public survey this month to the elected members.

### **Making spaces for Teenagers Clones Teen Haven: Where Stories Unfold**

An application was made earlier this year to the Department of Children Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth for the development of a safe, inclusive and welcoming space for teenagers of all backgrounds into the local community. This application has been successful and funding of €125k has been received for Phase 1 of the project. A contractor has been appointed, and works are ongoing. An application for Part VIII planning permission for Phase 2 of the project is currently being prepared.

### **Clones Gaol HTI application**

Funding for €140k was received via the Historic Town Initiative for enabling work for the Clones Gaol to stabilise the existing building, walls and intermediate floor and install a temporary roof to protect it from loss and in preparation for a comprehensive conservation led approach to returning the building to use for the community. Phase 1 works have been completed and an application for further funding to proceed to phase 2 will be made later this year.

### **Active Travel Scheme linking Ballybay Main St and the Town Park and Schools**

The National Transport Authority have confirmed funding has been made available to explore the feasibility for the development of an active travel scheme linking Ballybay Main St and the Town Park and Schools. The funding will allow for vegetation removal and surveying of the proposed route; this work has commenced. On completion of surveys the scheme will be developed, and an option selection report will be prepared.

Project Code:	Project Name	Comments
MN/21/0020	Low-Cost Junction Tightening - Newbliss (where R189 meets R183).	The NTA have confirmed that the proposed bus route from Clones to Ballybay isn't proceeding. However, they have requested that Monaghan County Council review the relocation of the existing bus stop in front of the takeaway to the Clones Rd. ATU design consultant currently reviewing this proposal. Junction tightening and the proposed bus stop will form part of this project
MN/22/0001	Clones Peace Link AT Scheme	S Wilkins commenced works on garden area at Coyles entrance Nov 2025. Works will be substantially later this month.
MN/22/0004	Lough Egish Village AT Scheme	Works are substantially completed. Official opening to be arranged.
MN/25/0001	Bus Stop Enhancement Programme.	MCC have published tender for installation of 42nr bus stop flag poles and sockets. 13nr location within the Clones MD Contractor to commence works Q1 2026.
MN/25/0004	SRTS- Killeevan Ns	The NTA have provided detail design and tender documents which are currently under review by ATU. This proposed Scheme requires Speed limit review on the Clones Newbliss road. The NTA and An Taisce to engage with school regarding final design.
N/A	Bike Repair Stands	Bike repair stands to be installed in Clones and Ballybay Q1 2026.

#### **Teehill Depot Clones**

This proposed project has been tendered for the appointment of a construction contractor. Tender assessment has been completed, and a letter of intent will be issued to preferred bidder later this month.

#### **Car Parking Ballybay**

A detailed design consultant has been appointed to prepare designs for a Part VIII Planning application at the rear of 3 Main St Ballybay for the provision of car parking. Site clearance in preparation for site surveys will commence later this month. The car park design will be completed in conjunction with design for the Housing Project on No3.Main St.

### **Bank Of Ireland Clones**

This is a joint project; between Monaghan County Council, providing the building and delivering on the Renovation works, and Enterprising Monaghan who will deliver on training from the new DigiHub. The Council have gone out to tender for design consultants and intend to have this in place in the coming weeks. A detailed design will be developed and application made for Part VIII planning application to develop the ground floor of the property. This project is part of the EBR DigiHub project funded by SEUPB through Peace plus funding.

The project will have two key elements:

**1) Creation of Mini-Digi Hub:** Fit out of Building in Clones

**2) Programme Delivery;** Provision of Services which will include,

- Data literacy workshops and analytics masterclasses.
- Digital transformation consulting for SMEs.
- Networking events to foster local and cross-border business connections.
- Access to data processing and cloud computing resources

The budget of the project in Clones is €770,354.30, this will include equipment, infrastructure and works and staff costs.

### **Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) - Category 2 Projects**

#### St. Tiarnach's Quarter Regeneration Project

Monaghan County Council applied under RRDF Category 2 funding for Clones Community & Public Realm, St Tiarnach Qtr. Regeneration Project and received confirmation of funding of €664,668.

The Council are currently preparing a tender for a Design Team to lead out on the project and once approved by DRCDG will proceed to tender

The Scope of the project will include.

- Preparation of a comprehensive Regeneration Strategy and action plan for the regeneration area
- Detailed design of a new multi-purpose Community Hub to the rear of the existing Gerry Arthur Stand at St. Tiarnach's Park
- Design of public realm improvements linking St. Tiarnach's Park, the town centre and the PEACE Link.

### **Ballybay Fire Station**

The official opening of the new Ballybay Fire Station will take place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April. An official invite will be issued in due course, once times have been finalised.

### **Housing Projects in the Ballybay Clones MD**

Ard na Greine Roslea Road Clones – application has been made for the FSC and DAC with Fire and Building Control for the apartment style accommodation units at the front of the site. It is proposed that a tender will be issued later this month for the appointment of a construction contractor. It is estimated that construction will commence in Q2 of this year and estimated completion date of Q4 2027.

3 derelict sites in Clones – 7-9 McCurtain Street, 10 Cara Street and 12 Cara Street. The Department have requested that Monaghan County Council engage a conservation architect and engineer to determine a plan to reuse existing properties as opposed to demolition and build new. At present there is no expected firm timeline on these projects.

Newbliss Renewal – It is proposed to proceed to Part VIII planning in the coming weeks for 3No. units on Main Street

Ballybay Old Health Centre – Monaghan County Council are awaiting Stage 2 approval from the Department prior to going for Part VIII Planning. It is envisaged that a Part VIII application will be submitted next month.

Maple Grove Smithboro 13 units under Turnkey hoping to get to site Q2. Completion date late Q4 of 2026.

### **Actions Arising from Co-Ordinators Report**

The Members welcomed the report and commended staff for their ongoing work, noting in particular the positive developments in both Ballybay and Clones. Following discussion and questions from the Members, staff advised that the owners of the Paragon Bar site have been requested to erect hoarding, and this matter will be followed up.

Staff further reported that the Clones Youth Club project, initially tendered through an existing framework, received no responses and has therefore proceeded to open tender. Teehill Depot will serve as the outdoor depot for storage and welfare facilities. The current Clones outdoor depot is a rented facility, and the Teehill Depot will require borrowing approval to enable construction. Olga will brief the Municipal District on this at a later date.

It was also confirmed that Local Link “Connecting Ireland” bus routes will be followed up in relation to service provision for Newbliss to Ballybay and Smithboro.

### **8. Report by Municipal District Executive Engineer**

Craig Connolly Executive Engineer presented his report to the Elected Members.  
Roads Programme

The selected roads on the 2026 programme have been measured and are currently being processed for inclusion in the tender package. The required testing and trial holes are currently being undertaken with a review to follow and preparatory works are currently underway by the Outdoor Staff. It is proposed to have the tender package advertised by mid-March.

### **2025 Restoration Maintenance Programme**

A number of roads have been identified using the Pavement Management System and PSCI ratings. A list of roads has been compiled and is due for assessment in coordination with road section in the coming weeks.

### **Low-Cost Safety Initiatives**

An application has been made to the Department for locations which have previously been identified for the 2026 LCSi Programme. Monaghan County Council will be notified of decisions made on Q1 of 2026.

#### **Drainage Notices**

The following is an update on the drainage notices issued since the beginning of January.

- 28 Nr. Notices issued
- 1 Nr. Notice closed out
- 6 Nr. 2<sup>nd</sup> Notices issued
- 3 Nr. Landowners have engaged and indicated that they will carry out works
- 18 Nr. Notices are to be followed up by end of February

### **Road Closures**

There is a Road Closure Notice currently being advertised for resurfacing works on the N54, from the Diamond, Clones to the entrance of Circle K on the Monaghan Road. The duration of these works is estimated to take no more than 2 weeks. Works will commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March and be completed by the 13<sup>th</sup> of March. The works will be carried out at night between the hours of 8pm and 6am.

### **Patching**

Since Storm Chandra and the continuous rainfall that has been occurring, the volume of roads that require patching repairs has increased. The Municipal District has 2 patching crews continuously patching roads within the District. The District will be directing a crew to carry out drainage works and opening outlets on regional roads from Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February.

### **Climate Adaptation**

An application has been made to the Department for Climate Adaptation works for 2026. Monaghan County Council will be notified of decisions made on Q1 of 2026.

### **Storm Chandra**

Storm Chandra brought about an unexpected volume of rainfall over its duration in mid-January. The Municipal District had 15 roads closed due to flooding. The Outdoor Staff carried out assessments on these roads over the weekend following the storm ensuring no further impact was occurring. Financial Supports were made available for households in Monaghan whose primary residences were directly affected by Storm Chandra. An Emergency Humanitarian Flooding Scheme was made available for Small Businesses, Community, Voluntary and Sporting Bodies impacted by flooding also. Storm Chandra resulted in further deterioration in some parts of our road network. A request for funding has been processed for the issues resulting from the storm, which include the following:

- Road surface repairs
- Road slippage repairs
- Road raising
- Vegetation clearance and maintenance of drainage channels
- Hydrology Survey for Lough Egish and Laragh area

### **Shared Island Initiative**

The Municipal District Office met with Fermanagh Omagh District Council to discuss the Shared Island Initiative with a view of applying for funding to carry out repair and maintenance works on roads in the border region. The current grant call is for Creative Cross-border Community groups and does not allow for the proposed infrastructural project. However, there is a potential Environmental grant call which funding may be applied for in the future.

### **Actions Arising from Engineers Report**

The Members welcomed the report and commended staff for their ongoing work. Following discussion and queries from the Members, staff advised that, in relation to damage caused by Storm Chandra—particularly in the Laragh and Doohamlet areas—and clarification regarding responsibility for river clearance, they would revert with further information.

With respect to road damage and necessary repairs, staff noted that a proposal for a new patching contract is currently under consideration in conjunction with the Roads Section, although no agreement has yet been reached. As the Shared Island initiative was not deemed suitable for border road funding, alternative funding options will now be explored.

## 9. Matters arising from previous minutes

### 10. Questions

**Cllr. Treanor will ask:**

Question 1:

What progress, if any, has happened in relation to the extra car parking spaces at O'Neill Park, Clones, to alleviate the congestion and improve access for emergency services, when required?

**Answer:**

***Uisce Eireann are proposing to carry out works on the storm and sewer networks within O'Neill Park. When completing this works, they will require a site compound for the duration of the contract. It is proposed to discuss with Uisce Eireann, the location of the site compound and on completion of works may provide the Municipal District an area for additional parking for the estate.***

Question 2:

When will the Council be in a position to remove the trees at Legnakelly junction (N54 - LP02130) and address the restricted sightlines for drivers exiting onto the very busy N54?

**Answer:**

***Engineering staff issued information to Monaghan County Council solicitors in January of this year, and the Municipal District is currently waiting on a response. Should legal agreements be completed works will be tendered. It is envisaged to have works completed in Q2 of 2026 subject to necessary land agreements.***

Question 3:

What is the plan and timeline for the repair of the L62011, Lislongfield, Drum?

**Answer:**

***This road does not currently form part of the adopted 3-year roads programme. However, it has been included to the list of roads for consideration for low-cost intervention.***

**Cllr. Flynn will ask:**

Question 1:

Can the Executive please outline the statutory responsibilities of landowners regarding the cutting and trimming of roadside hedges and verges, and the powers available to the Municipal District to ensure this work is carried out where required? In addition, can the Executive confirm if there are any exemptions to the 28th of February deadline for carrying out these works.

**Answer:**

***Hedge cutting notices are issued under Section 70 of the roads act 1993. The following subsections deal with what a local authority can do if the owner doesn't comply with the notice:-***

***(8) Where an owner or occupier fails to comply with a notice under this section, the road authority may take the action specified in the notice or such other action as it thinks fit.***

***(9) Where a road authority considers that a structure (or the use of such structure), tree, shrub, hedge or other vegetation presents an immediate and serious hazard to persons using a public road it may, notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (1) to (8), take immediate action to reduce or remove the hazard.***

***(10) Where a road authority takes action under subsection (8) or (9) it may recover any reasonable costs incurred by it from the owner or occupier as a simple contract debt in any court of competent jurisdiction.***

***Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976 prohibits the cutting, grubbing, burning or other destruction of vegetation growing on “any land not then cultivated” between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August annually.***

***This is to protect bird life during the nesting season, to help prevent forest fires, and to protect vegetation and wildlife habitats during the months of growth and reproduction.***

***The legislation allows for some limited exemptions. For business, landowners and the general public the most notable of these exemptions are:***

- ***The destruction, in the ordinary course of agriculture or forestry, of any vegetation growing on or in any hedge or ditch.***
- ***The clearance of vegetation in the course of road or other construction works or in the development or preparation of sites on which any building or other structure is intended to be provided;***
- ***The felling, cutting, lopping, trimming or removal of a tree, shrub, hedge or other vegetation pursuant to section 70 of the Roads Act 1993.***

Question 2:

Can the Executive provide an update on the CCTV scheme for Ballybay and Clones, including the current status of all required authorisations, whether approval has been received or is expected, and the anticipated timeline for the commencement of installation works in both towns?

***Answer:***

***The Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSPs) will assume the former responsibilities of the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) in coordinating the required community consultation and obtaining local approval for any Community CCTV applications.***

***This approval must be secured prior to the submission of applications to the Garda National Communications Bureau for final consideration.***

***Monaghan County Council has been advised that all new Community CCTV schemes are currently paused pending the completion of updated Codes of Practice by the Garda National Community Engagement Bureau.***

***These Codes of Practice will govern the operation of schemes under the new CCTV legislative framework, enacted as Section 47(3) of the Garda Síochána (Recording Devices) Act 2023, which will replace the existing legislation.***

***Elected Members will be kept informed as further updates become available, including the finalisation and publication of the new Codes of Practice***

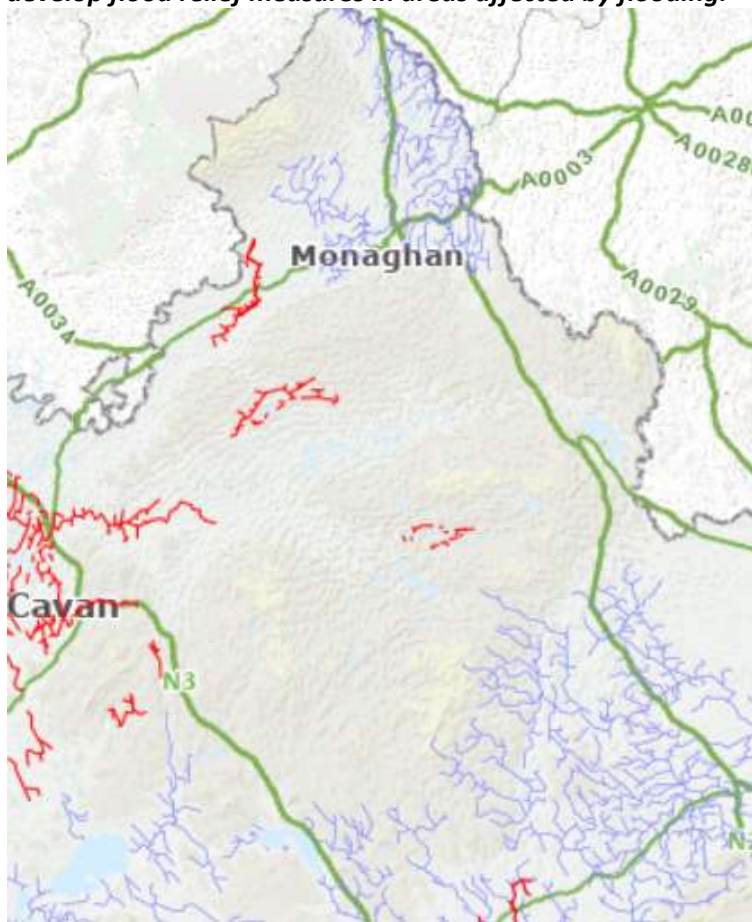
Question 3:

Can the Executive outline the statutory responsibilities of landowners who have rivers or culverts running through their lands in relation to their maintenance, including the regular clearance of debris, fallen trees, vegetation, and other obstructions to ensure the free flow of water and to prevent flooding? And what supports and assistance, if any, are available to landowners?

***Answer:***

***The responsibility of river maintenance is dependent on the location. There are certain areas of the county that are OPW maintainable channels (outlined in blue), these being channels that form part of the Monaghan (Blackwater) Arterial Drainage Scheme completed in 1993 in the north of Co Monaghan and the Glyde and Dee Arterial Drainage Scheme completed in 1957 in the south of Co Monaghan. Both schemes were completed under the 1945 Arterial Drainage Act.***

***There is also Drainage District Schemes in Co Monaghan (outlined in red below), and the maintenance of these schemes is the responsibility of the Local Authority however this a very small catchment. Minor Works funding is available to LAs at a rate of 90% contribution from the OPW to develop flood relief measures in areas affected by flooding.***



Source [https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/drainage\\_map/](https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/drainage_map/)

***All other responsibility outside the areas marked red and blue for the upkeep of culverts, and the regular clearance of debris, removal of fallen trees, vegetation, and other obstructions to ensure the free flow of water and to prevent flooding lies with the landowner when the watercourse runs through their lands.***

#### **11. Notice of Motion**

That Ballybay-Clones Municipal District demand of the Minister for Education and youth, Hildegard Naughton TD and the Government to immediately address the long running dispute with School Secretaries and School Caretakers. a vital part of Irelands Schools and Educational system, over their access to the Public Service Pension Scheme, an entitlement well deserved for their contribution to School life.

*Proposed Cllr. Coyle, seconded Cllr. Treanor & unanimously agreed.*

#### **12. CE Orders**

Noted

#### **13. Votes of Congratulations/Sympathy.**

**Congratulations**

### **Bank of Ireland Ballybay**

Members welcome the continued investment in Bank of Ireland Ballybay and the enhanced services it brings to the local community. The Elected Members extend their best wishes to Margo Sherlock, Welcome & Operations Advisor, and the entire team as they continue to support customers with professionalism and dedication.

*Proposed Cllr. Coyle & unanimously agreed*

Congratulations to Shane McLoughlin, Paralympian and amputee from Clones, on achieving his sixth Guinness World Record by successfully pulling a 120-tonne passenger ferry. He pulled the vessel Saoirse na Farraige—the largest passenger-only ferry registered in Irish waters—over a distance of five metres at Rossaveel Harbour, Connemara, on 14 February 2026.

Congratulations to Clones GAA on St Tiernach's Park being named a finalist in the prestigious GAA Pitch of the Year Awards Scheme

*Proposed Cllr. Treanor & unanimously agreed*

### **Sympathies**

The Elected Members of Ballybay/Clones Municipal District wish to extend their sincere sympathy to Mrs. Celine Boylan & family on the recent passing of her husband Cormac Boylan.

The Elected Members of Ballybay/Clones Municipal District wish to extend their sincere sympathy to Mrs. Kathleen O'Hanlon & family on the recent passing of her husband Jim O'Hanlon.

### **14. AOB.**

The Planning Department submitted for consideration by Members the naming proposal of **Plás Darach, Oak Place**, for a potential Part 8 Housing Development, Newbliss, Co. Monaghan for 3 number dwelling units (beside Radharc an Dún and behind Clones Road houses).

*Proposed Cllr. Treanor, seconded Cllr. Coyle and unanimously agreed.*

Meeting concluded.

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Meetings Administrator  
Date, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026