

# **COMHAIRLE BAILE MHUINEACHAÍN**

## **MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at 4.40pm in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, No. 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

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**Cathaoirleach:** Cllr. Seamus Treanor

**Present:** Cllrs. Mary Carroll, Seán Conlon, Robbie Gallagher, Thomas Hagan, David Maxwell, Paul McGeown and Donal Sherry.

**In Attendance:** David Fallon, Acting County Manager, Dermot Deeney, Town Engineer, Mary Hughes, Acting Town Clerk and Sinead McCann, Staff Officer.

### **Presentation of Prizes to St. Patrick's Day Parade Winners.**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seamus Treanor welcomed and congratulated the winners of each category in the St. Patrick's Day Parade Competition. The Cathaoirleach presented a trophy for the best marching band in the Parade to the following representatives from Monaghan Community Brass Band - John James McKenna, Chairman, Maureen O'Donaghue, Secretary and Seán Smyth, Band Master.

A plaque for the best commercial float was presented by the Cathaoirleach to Ms. Karol Patterson of Bluebells Alternative Health and Beauty Clinic in Ballybay.

The best community float which was won by Carrickroe Festival Committee will be presented at a later date as there was no representative in attendance.

The prizewinners left the Council Chamber.

### **Meeting with Ms. Bridget Clarke, General Manager, HSE and Mr. Cathal Hand, Service Development Manager, Cavan Monaghan HSE Area.**

The Members welcomed Bridget Clarke and Cathal Hand from the Health Service Executive who gave detailed reports on the services provided by the HSE in relation to St Mary's Hospital, Castleblayney and Monaghan General Hospital.

### **The Hospital Groupings Structure**

Ms. Clarke informed the meeting that the HSE are expecting an announcement on the introduction of a new grouping structure of Irish hospitals. This would see the Cavan/Monaghan Hospital Group linked to a tertiary hospital which could be one of the major Dublin Hospitals and would provide direct clinical pathways for local patients into a major Dublin Hospital.

### **Budget for 2013**

Bridget Clarke stated that there has been a massive improvement in the hospital service provided in Cavan and Monaghan and that they had some of the lowest waiting times in the Country for a number of procedures. She stated that the HSE are very transparent in respect of waiting times and that statistics are readily available.

Ms. Clarke also told the meeting that since the Medical Assessment Unit was opened in Cavan Hospital on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2012 at a cost of €200,000, there have been no trolleys placed on the corridors. Ms. Clarke informed the meeting that as a result of the HSE Hospital Assessment that the budget for 2013 had been increased to €81.2m, however she also stated that the expenditure incurred in 2012 was €84m.

Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha entered the Meeting Room and apologised for being late.

**The future of St Mary's Hospital, Castleblayney – Could beds in Monaghan Hospital be made available to elderly patients?**

In relation to the future of St. Mary's Hospital in Castleblayney, Cathal Hand informed the Members that very strict standards have been introduced by HIQA and that all Public Residential Centres have been given until 2015 to meet these very challenging environmental standards. From 2015 the maximum number of residents per room will be two and that at least 30% of the overall capacity needs to be provided through single bedrooms. This will be challenging for St. Mary's and will require a major capital development, for which funding has been approved. A planning application is currently being prepared and it is envisaged that works will commence by the end of this year. Cathal Hand stated that when these works commence, residents will continue to reside in St. Mary's, however, the intake of residents will be reduced by putting a temporary pause on admissions to allow the contractors have vacant occupancy. It was also noted that HIQA are adamant that residential care and respite services must be provided in completely separate and designated areas and that the HSE are confident that when the capital works are complete that respite care will be provided in St. Mary's. With regard to the Members proposal that vacant beds in Monaghan General Hospital be used for elderly patients, Cathal Hand stated that this would not be good use of the beds in Monaghan Hospital as the beds had a much greater use in the provision of rehabilitation care. He also stated that it would not be feasible to have Monaghan Hospital registered as a nursing home.

Cllr. Seán Conlon stated that he wished to disassociate himself and his party from turning Monaghan Hospital into a Residential Centre.

Cllr. Seamus Treanor expressed dissatisfaction that patients from Monaghan requiring respite care have now to travel to Lisdarn in Cavan while 80% of the beds in Monaghan Hospital are not being utilised. Cathal Hand stated that he had recently conducted a study to establish how much vacant space there is at Monaghan General Hospital to allow for the development of a co-located Primary Care Centre on the site and found that there is minimal vacant capacity within Monaghan General Hospital and concluded that if a Primary Care Centre was to be located on the site of Monaghan General Hospital it would have to be a new build.

Cllr. Thomas Hagan stated that a patient at Cavan General Hospital had been accommodated in a bed placed in a linen cupboard. This was described as a very serious allegation by the HSE General Manager, Bridget Clarke who assured Cllr. Hagan that no patients could be accommodated in a linen cupboard due to their capacity and offered Cllr. Hagan a tour of the Hospital.

Cllr. Donal Sherry stated that a member of the public had informed him that waiting times in the Accident and Emergency Department in Cavan General Hospital were much longer in comparison to Enniskillen Hospital. Ms. Clarke said she could have this matter investigated.

An incident in relation to ambulance response times was also brought the Ms. Clarkes attention by Cllr. Thomas Hagan.

The Acting County Manager, David Fallon thanked and commended Mr. Hand and Ms. Clarke on a very open and frank discussion and this concluded the business of the meeting. Bridget Clarke and Cathal Hand left the Meeting Room.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seamus Treanor opened the Monthly Meeting by drawing attention to the historical importance of the date, the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2013, as it marked the Town Council's 400<sup>th</sup> year in existence.

**1. Confirmation of February Monthly Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013.**

On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Thomas Hagan it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of the February Monthly Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

**2. Confirmation of Special Meeting held in committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013.**

On the proposal of Cllr. Thomas Hagan seconded by Cllr. Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to adopt the Minutes of a Special Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held in committee on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

**3. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Cllr. David Maxwell proposed that a letter be sent to Brian Hayes T.D., Minister of State in relation to the acquisition of the former Revenue Commissioners building, this was agreed by all the Members.

Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha sought clarification as to who would be attending the Annual Irish Settlers Day celebrations in Prince Edward Island from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> May 2013. It was confirmed that Cllr. Mary Carroll would be representing Monaghan Town Council.

Cllr. Mary Carroll stated that she had been speaking to a local skateboard enthusiast who had confirmed that they were often unable to use the skateboard park due to obstacles being placed in their way. Cllr. Mary Carroll suggested that a meeting be arranged with the skateboarders in order to find a solution to the skateboarding taking part in the town centre. Cllr. Thomas Hagan stated that the lack of public lighting at the skateboard park was also a factor. Cllr. Thomas Hagan requested an update in relation to the erection of signs prohibiting skateboarding in the Town centre. The Town Engineer, Dermot Deeney informed the meeting that the matter was with our Solicitors.

Cllr. Donal Sherry enquired if the Council could avail of a mobile camera to combat the practice of illegal dumping. The Town Engineer, Dermot Deeney stated that the Environmental Section of Monaghan County Council had a mobile camera and that the Town Council would arrange to avail of it.

Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha enquired if costings for the Famine Memorial had been sought. The Town Engineer informed the meeting that discussions are ongoing with members of the clergy and that costings would be sought thereafter.

Cllr. Mary Carroll asked if there were any developments in relation to increasing visibility at the junction of the Mall Road/Glen Road and if it would be possible to erect a mirror. Cllr. Carroll also made enquiries in relation to the broken railing between the Spar Shop and the Ballybay/Cootehill Junction.

The Town Engineer, Dermot Deeney informed the meeting that the erection of a mirror would not be a favourable solution as any movement of the mirror could cause an accident. It was noted that the damage to the fence would be investigated.

#### **4. Manager's Orders**

The Members noted Managers Orders numbered 25/13 – 45/13.

#### **5. Correspondence**

The Members noted the following correspondence:

- Letter dated the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012 from Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer, Monaghan County Council regarding the 400<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary of the Town Council.
- Acknowledgement letter dated the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013 from the Office of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation regarding the regulation of the quantity, quality and labelling of packaging materials.
- Acknowledgement letter dated the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government regarding the regulation of the quantity, quality and labelling of packaging materials.
- Letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013 from Leo Varadkar T.D., Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport stating that the funding for the National Cycle Network Programme has been fully allocated for this year and that consideration to the Town Council's request for extra funding could not be given at this time.
- Letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013 from Martin Whelan, National Asset Management Agency in relation to the completion of the Knockroe Glen Housing Estate.
- Letter from Bernadette M. Smith, Local Returning Officer stating that 50% of the staff employed at the referendum held in November 2012 was made up of Students/Retired People and the Unemployed. The Members expressed dissatisfaction with the answer provided by Ms Smith as it had not given the percentage in each category. On the proposal of Cllr. Donal Sherry seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to write again to the Local Returning Officer requesting this information.
- Acknowledgement letter dated the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013 from Superintendent Noel Cunningham, Monaghan Garda Station in relation to begging in Monaghan Town.
- Letter dated the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013 from Monaghan County Council in relation to a Section 140 Notice.
- Letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013 from Monaghan Motor Club requesting the use of Glaslough Street Car Park for the annual stages rally. The Members agreed that the Motor Club could use Glaslough Street Car Park again this year and wished them every success with the annual rally.
- Correspondence dated 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013 in relation to the processing of Student Grants by Student Universal Support Ireland. The Members acknowledged that there had been a number of problems associated with the centralisation of the student grant application process.
- Letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2013 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the Social Housing Investment Programme 2013.

#### **6. Planning Applications**

The Members noted Planning Applications numbered MT13/5 – MT13/6.

**7. Business Submitted by An Cathaoirleach**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr Seamus Treanor circulated correspondence from Mr. Darren McQuillan of Monaghan Cruisers. It was agreed that this correspondence would be considered at the next Planning Sub-Committee Meeting.

**8. Consideration of Reports of Committees**

Cllr. Mary Carroll congratulated Boyle's Menswear on winning the best Irish Language window display.

The Members thanked all those who had taken part in the St. Patrick's Day Parade and all those who made the event possible. It was suggested that a letter of invitation to take part in the St. Patrick's Day Parade could be issued, by the organising committee, to local community groups, clubs and schools prior to next year's event.

On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed that a letter of thanks be forwarded to the representatives of the Miramichi Valley High School Rugby Team from New Brunswick in Canada as they had made a great effort to visit Monaghan Town and take part in the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

**9. Roads/Housing**

A number of matters were noted for the attention of the Town Engineer:

- Re-paint pedestrian crossing at Heatons/Dinkins.
- Repair manhole cover at Heatons.
- Repair lights at the traffic calming island on the Clones Road.
- Repair potholes on the Milltown Road.
- Repair manhole cover in Dublin Street

Cllr. Thomas Hagan stated that considerations should be given to the erection of more signage in the town outlining the penalties that can be imposed on the owners of dogs who foul on the public streets.

On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Mary Carroll it was agreed that the provision of extra "Mother and Baby" parking bays be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next Planning Sub-Committee meeting.

**10. Telecommunication Mast at Killygoan**

The Members look forward to the removal of the telecommunication mast at Killygoan.

**11. Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme**

The A/County Manager informed the Members that the procurement process commenced on the 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2013 and that Tenders are due back to Monaghan Town Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2013. It was noted that when the tenders are opened the assessment process will commence and subject to the approval of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government it is hoped that construction will commence in June/July 2013.

**12. Report on Mixed Use Development at Rooskey**

David Fallon, Acting County Manager stated that the revised date for completion of the Mixed Use Development at Rooskey would now be early July rather than June as previously stated.

**13. Report on Vacant apartments at Drumbear**

Dermot Deeney, Town Engineer stated that the Consultants have inspected the vacant apartments and the Council is still awaiting their report.

**14. Consideration of approval to dispose of Freehold Interest**

On the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell seconded by Cllr. Robbie Gallagher it was agreed to approve of the disposal of the Freehold Interest in No. 14 Woodview, Killygoan, Monaghan and No. 2 Highfield Close, Monaghan in accordance with Notices dated 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2013.

**15. Consideration of A/County Manager's Report dated 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013.**

On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha it was agreed to approve the Acting County Manager's Report dated 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013 in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001) for Phase 3 of the Mullaghmat Remedial Works Scheme which comprises of the following:-

- Improvement works to exterior and interior of designated houses within the Mullaghmat Housing Estate
- Alterations to boundary details of specified houses
- Access Road improvements and realignment
- Upgrade to services where necessary at Mullaghmat, Monaghan.

**16. Notices of Motion:-**

- (a) "That this Council calls on the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan to instruct all Local Authorities not to include the nominal amount of additional income social welfare recipients receive from JobBridge and similar internship schemes, as "reckonable income" for the purpose of determining weekly rent for local authority tenants who participate on these schemes".

Cllrs. Uí Mhurchadha, Conlon, Sherry, McGeown

On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. Donal Sherry it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion and to forward it to Minister Phil Hogan and Minister Joan Burton.

- (b) "That we write to the Minister for Justice, Alan Shatter calling for a maximum 10 year sentence and a minimum of 5 years for any person involved in a fatal motor accident who leaves the scene".

Cllr. Treanor

On the proposal of Cllr. Seamus Treanor seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion and to forward it the Minister for Justice, Alan Shatter. It was also agreed to circulate it to all other Local Authorities.

- © “That this Council, following the news that NAMA is prepared to fund the completion of the Knockroe Glen Estate on the Clones Road would take steps to contact the developer and ensure that these works are moved on as expeditiously as possible”.

Cllr. Gallagher

On the proposal of Cllr. Robbie Gallagher seconded by Cllr. Seán Conlon it was agreed to adopt the above Notice of Motion.

- (d) “That this Council would, in conjunction with Monaghan County Council contact Coillte with regard to the taking in charge of parking areas and walking trails in Rossmore Park for the benefit of the people of Monaghan”.

Cllr. Gallagher

It was agreed that a meeting be arranged with representatives of Coillte to discuss the matter of the road safety at the main entrance gates to Rossmore Park as the volume of traffic parking on the roadside has greatly increased since the introduction of a new scheme of charges. David Fallon, A/County Manager stated that Monaghan County Council would contact Coillte on the matter.

The Members agreed that this Motion required more exploration as the taking in charge of the parking areas and walking trails would incur a major financial commitment from the Council.

## 16. Ceisteanna/Questions

**Cllrs. Uí Mhurchadha, Conlon, Sherry and McGeown asked:-**

- (a) In reference to a previous proposal by Sinn Féin members, have the Council Executive commenced negotiations with financial institutions or developers with a view to purchasing land for future use by our Local Authority?  
*The Local Authority has commenced negotiations with a financial institution. An offer to buy residual lands has been made and a response is awaited.*
- (b) Have Monaghan Town Council received the annual Social Housing Investment Programme allocation from Central Government funding for the purchase of additional council houses and repairs to our existing housing stock?  
*Monaghan County Council now receive the annual Social Housing Investment Programme allocation from Central Government, a copy of which has been circulated under Item No. 6 on the Agenda ( Correspondence).*
- (c) In relation to the Household Charge of €100 introduced by the Government in 2012, certain categories of Unfinished Housing Developments are eligible for an exemption, including locally on the Dublin Road, addresses at Latlurcan Close, Latlurcan Court, Latlurcan Glen and Latlurcan Way. However on the [www.householdcharge.ie](http://www.householdcharge.ie) website the exempt listing is given only as Latlurcan Close/Latlurcan Court/Latlurcan Close duplicating “Close” and omitting “Glen” and “Way”. This has created uncertainty to residents who own dwellings at Latlurcan Glen and Latlurcan Way as they are not being permitted to avail of the exemption. For the purpose of clarification, will the Planning Section provide further explanation and outline what steps are being take to hold the appropriate government department accountable for this confusion. Also, will the Executive outline further what estates in Monaghan are exempt from payment of the Property Tax?  
*The 2011 DoECLG Unfinished Housing Development Survey required Monaghan Local Authorities to prepare a register and to categorise all unfinished development in the county as follows:-*

- CAT 1:** *the development is still being actively completed by the developer;*  
**CAT2:** *a receiver has been appointed;*  
**CAT3:** *a receiver has not been appointed and the developer is still in place but effectively inactive.*  
**CAT4:** *the development has been effectively abandoned and is posing serious problems for residents.*

*This survey was subsequently used to inform the Household Charge waiver entitlement, with CAT 3 and 4 UHDs qualifying. Planning Section confirmed Monaghan's UHD register to the DoECLG in April 2011 with "Latlorcan Close, Court and Glen categorised as CAT 3 developments. The prescribed list ultimately attached to the Household Charge legislation did not however tally with the April 2011 submission. The Planning Authority have advised the DoECLG's of this error on a number of occasions but they have maintained that the list is fixed and those not included on it for a waiver must pay. In respect of the Property Tax, it has been confirmed that 4 no. developments in County Monaghan comply with the DoECLGS qualifying criteria and as such will be granted a waiver. These are 'Corr na Ghlass' Ballybay, 'Killycard Manor' Castleblayney, 'Candlefort' Inniskeen and 'Rock River View' Rockcorry. The Local Authority had no discretion in the application of these strict qualifying criteria.*

**Cllr. Seamus Treanor asked:-**

- (d) How much of the Household Charge money collected has been returned to the Town and County Councils as promised by Phil Hogan, T.D. as additional revenue?  
*There was no Household Charge money returned directly to Local Authorities. The Household Charge income was used to supplement the Local Government Fund and was distributed to Local Authorities through the Local Government Fund.*

**Cllr. Robbie Gallagher asked:-**

- (e) Would the Council arrange to have the gullies cleaned out on the Clones Road from the Scotstown Road turn off to opposite the Leisure Centre?  
*Cleaning of gullies is an ongoing operation carried out throughout the town and the gullies in this area can be advanced on account of this request.*

**17. Resolutions from Other Local Authorities**

- (a) "That this Council calls on the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Pat Rabbitte and An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny to seek agreement during this period of our E.U. Presidency to expedite the abolition of roaming charges in Ireland and Europe. That this motion be circulated to all Local Authorities in Ireland".

Clones Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.

- (b) "Ballybay Town Council call on the Government not to sell the Coillte harvesting rights – the right to fell and sell timber for up to 80 years to private operators, in view of economist Peter Bacon's assessment that the economic rationale for the proposed sale "no longer stands up and cannot be justified".

Ballybay Town Council

It was agreed to support the above Resolution.



## **18. Conferences :-**

- (a). Ace Training – “Tax Entitlements Seminar 2013” – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford – 29<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 - (approx. cost €370).
- (b). Cantillon 2013 – “The Economy & Entrepreneurship” – Institute of Technology, Tralee – 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013 - (approx. cost €750).
- (c). Ace Training – “Starting and Growing a Chamber of Commerce in your Community” – Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford – 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> April 2013 - (approx. cost €370)
- (d). Carlow Tourism National Conference – “The Gathering” – The Lord Bagenal Hotel, Leighlinbridge – 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2013 - (approx. cost €660)

No attendance is to take place at the above Conferences.

## **19. Any Other Business**

Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha informed the Members that while making enquiries in relation to the restoration of the harp on the front of the Courthouse that she had been told that bronze harps were available. However, the architect responsible for the refurbishment of the Courthouse would not sanction a bronze harp as it would not be in keeping with the steel shutters. The architect has suggested commissioning another harp that is in keeping with the appearance of the steel shutters. Cllr. Pádraigín Uí Mhurchadha said she would keep the Members informed of any progress in the matter.

David Fallon, Acting County Manager advised the Members that a number of complaints had been received recently in relation to the erection of unauthorised signs.

## **20. Sympathy/Congratulations**

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- The O'Donaghue Family, Killygoan on the death of Sheila O'Donaghue.
- Edel Casey and Paul Butler, Middeltown, Co Cork on the tragic death of their son, James.

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:

- Garda Inspector Patrick McMorro on the occasion of his retirement.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of April 2013.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Cathaoirleach**