Ceantar Bardasach Carraig Mhachaire Rois – Baile Na Lorgan

Comhairle Contae Mhuineachain

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Monaghan County Council

The Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblayney

Monaghan County Council

Minutes of proceedings of the Municipal District Monthly Meeting held in Carrickmacross Civic Offices, Riverside Road, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan on Monday the 24th of February 2025 at 10:15am

Present: Cathaoirleach PJ O'Hanlon,
Cllrs. Colm Carthy, Noel Keelan, Paul Gibbons, Aidan Campbell, Peter Conlon (via Teams)

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

Cllr. O'Hanlon opened the meeting by expressing thanks to all public officials for their work regarding The Nuremore Hotel. Cllrs. Keelan and Carthy echoed these sentiments.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Carthy, the minutes of the January 2024 monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Monday the 27th of January 2025, were adopted.

2.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Campbell:
Sought an update on street lighting in Castleblayney, particularly the lighting heading towards the Market House.

Cllr. Gibbons:
Echoed Cllr. Campbells comments.
Advised that he has received a lot of reps regarding lighting at Drumillard and Lakeview.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:
Requested a letter from the executive stating that they are satisfied with the standard of public lighting on Main Street, Carrickmacross.

Cllr. Carthy:
Remarked it had been confirmed at the last meeting that Molloy Engineers will have a report and requested that they are invited to inspect the lighting at Patrician High School carpark and compare to those nearby.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:
Asked that a similar comparison is made with the lighting on the Dundalk Road.

Cllr. Carthy:
Asked if a committee for the proposed swimming pool Carrickmacross has been established.
Reply – A group of Monaghan County Council engineers have visited 5 proposed sites. Detailed assessments will need to be carried out. Timeframe of 2 -3 months away from identifying a preferred site.

3.0 Presentation – Housing Delivery Programme 2025
- Nial O'Connor , S.E.O, Lorcan MacCinna, S.E.E., Emmet Sherry E.E., Lorcan Sheenan, A.E., Conor McBride, Clerk of Works, Mairead McNally, A.S.O., Louise Rice, A.S.O.

Cllr O'Hanlon:
Requested a total figure for re-let houses in Carrickmacross and Castleblayney.
Reply – there have been 85 in total for the County.

Cllr. Carthy:
Requested an update on the unfinished Clois na Droimmaine, advising awareness that MCC are not directly involved.
Reply – MCC are fully committed to resolving this matter. There is no current update available.

Cllr. Cambell:
Raised the issue of dereliction.
Reply – The housing section are committed to working with the Town Regeneration Team to deal with this issue, noting it takes significant time to buy derelict properties.

Cllr. Keelan:
Asked what works MCC can carry out or does it all need to be put out to tender.
Reply – A percentage of works are carried out by the 2 craft workers assigned to the MD – for example faulty taps, minor repairs.

Cllr. Gibbons:
Raised the issue of very high rental costs.
Reply – Affordable housing is being investigated for Carrickmacross and Castleblayney.
There has been considerable investment, approximately €40 million, in Carrickmacross and Castleblayney.

Presentation – Update on Regeneration Plan for the Backlands off the North-Western side of Main Street, Castleblayney

- Grainne Shaffrey, Shaffrey Architects, Kevin McNally, Town Regeneration Officer, Drew Hurley, S.E. Planner

Cllr. Campbell:
Questioned the "next steps" in the process, queried whether ownership of car parks had been investigated and if any commitments have been given by the private sector.

Cllr. Gibbons:
Concurred with previous comments.

Cllr. Keelan:
Concurred with previous comments made. Remarked that a strong policy on shop fronts is needed.

Responses:
Conversations need to be had regarding car parks which are in private ownership.
The next step will be to engage with landowners with a view to moving forward.
It will be a site-specific approach.
Stressed the importance of linking McGrath Road to the Main Street.
Specific funding streams for derelict properties could have meaningful impact.

Cathal Flynn thanks the presenters and remarked that the plan is a blueprint for future backland developments.

4.0 Correspondence

i. Correspondence from Laetitia Hadji, Mairie de Marseillan

Agreed to re-visit at the next MD meeting.

ii. Correspondence from Carrickmacross Festival Committee

On the proposal of Cllr. Carthy and seconded by Cllr. Campbell it was unanimously agreed to approve the use of the public areas mentioned for the dates requested, subject to the fulfilment of usual conditions.

iii. Acknowledgment from James Browne TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Cllr. O'Hanlon asked that members are informed at the next meeting if no response had been received. Cllr. Keelan seconded this.

Cllr. Keelan queried what is the position when a social housing tenant wishes to keep a stove in their home.
Lorcan MacCinna, S.E.E., advised that under energy regeneration funding, Monaghan County Council intend to install upgrades to social housing with a view to making them warmer.

He remarked that storm power outages will affect most heating systems. If a house is being upgraded, a stove cannot be in place.

5.0 Municipal Coordinator's Report

Cllr. Keelan:

Asked that the potential purchasing of lands at the back of BOI is kept on the agenda.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Stated that there should be secure public toilets located at Muckno – they should be relocated due to recent vandalism.

Requested more details on the Safety Improvement Works in Oram.

Advised that lighting and safety works are needed at at Brennans Cross.

Cllr. Carthy:

Asked for confirmation on the date for the Gallows Hill workshop.

Voiced concern over current lack of funding for the N2 Ardee to Castleblayney road.

5.0 Q&A

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

1. What is the update on the road safety works which are planned for the junction on the Shercock Road and the Mile Hill road?

   Response:

   Detailed design is complete. It is envisaged that a tender for the engagement of a suitable works contractor shall issue to the market within the coming weeks.

2. What is the update on the commencement of works on the Market House in Castleblayney?

   Response:

   The Design Consultants are continuing to progress works in relation to the finalising of project designs and drafting of tender documentation. The Executive has completed the preparation of a detailed Project Brief and Procurement Strategy as required under the Pre-Tender Project Approval Stage; it is expected that a submission will be made to the DRCD in April 2025 seeking approval to progress to Stage 2 of the tender process. Subject to Department endorsement of the next two project stage approvals (Pre-tender Approval & Approval to Proceed) and satisfactory completion of the Stage 2 procurement process, it is expected that a contractor will be appointed to commence project construction in Q3 2025.

3. What is the update on the regeneration plans for the backlands off Main Street between Muckno Street and the McGrath Road in Castleblayney and what plans have Monaghan County Council to put these proposals into practice to help alleviate some of the dereliction in this area?

   Response:

   The appointed consultants, *Shaffrey Architects*, are scheduled to provide an update presentation to the elected members at the February 2025 Municipal District meeting.

4. With the ongoing damage being caused to the temporary toilets at Hope Castle and the fact that the park and area are now so busy,
   (a) Can the MD move these toilets back down to the playpark area behind the Library where they were originally?

   Response:
   The Executive is currently exploring the feasibility of re-siting the existing public toilet facilities in Lough Muckno Park.

   (b) Can the MD include the toilets under the CCTV system that is in place down at Muckno to alleviate this damage?

   Response:
   The field of view of the existing CCTV system in Lough Muckno Park is a key determinant in assessing the feasibility of re-siting the existing public toilet facilities.

   (c) Can the MD look at putting permanent structure in place?

   Response:
   The provision of more comprehensive sanitary facilities for patrons of Lough Muckno Park shall be fully considered in the development of the proposed *Lough Muckno Masterplan and Development Framework*.

5. With the recent storm which has caused so much damage,
   (a) What plans has Monaghan County Council in place now to address some of issues around trees which are still overhanging roads etc.?

   Response:
   The Executive is continuing in its efforts to remove roadside trees that may pose a risk to the public as a result of the effects of Storm Éowyn.

   (b) When is it hoped to have the road in Tullycaghney, Mullyash reopened and repaired?

   Response:
   It is expected that repairs to the road and embankment shall be completed within the coming weeks.

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

6. Has the development of a dog park in Castleblayney been considered? If not, can a feasibility study be initiated? I note the success of the Carrickmacross dog park.

   Response:
   The Executive shall explore the feasibility of providing a dog park in Castleblayney.

7. The current public toilets in Lough Muckno are a temporary solution and have been vandalised on several occasions. Can plans be made for the development of new toilet facilities in the Lough Muckno area located near the very busy play park?

   Response:
   The Executive is currently exploring the feasibility of re-siting the existing public toilet facilities in Lough Muckno Park. The provision of more comprehensive sanitary facilities for patrons of Lough Muckno Park shall be fully considered in the development of the proposed *Lough Muckno Masterplan and Development Framework*.

8. There is no bin provided at the new bus stop outside the former Priests House on York Street (where buses continuing north stop). Can a bin be provided at this location to help prevent litter?
   Response:
   The Executive shall provide a waste bin at the new bus stop on York Street, Castleblayney.

9. Sections of footpaths in Laurel Hill, Bree and Drumillard require repair. Have these areas been included in the MD Annual Programme of footpath repairs for 2025?
   Response:
   The sections of footway in need of repair in Laurel Hill, Bree and Drumillard shall be included for consideration under this Municipal District's 2025 Footway Programme.

10. Can the junction of the N53 and L4400 (Toome direction) be assessed from a road safety perspective and findings relayed to TII. There is no designated filter lane for vehicles turning right from the N53 onto to the L4400 when approaching from the Dundalk direction. Drivers are forced to position themselves in the ghost central island to complete the turn. This obstructs the visibility of drivers in the designated filter lane who are waiting to turn towards Broomfield and is very dangerous.
    Response:
    Monaghan County Council has submitted a Feasibility & Options Report for this scheme to TII, requesting approval to proceed with the preferred option and subsequent funding. This preferred option involves a junction reconfiguration, whereby a staggered arrangement with separate right turning lanes into the two minor roads is proposed. This option requires third party land acquisition. The Roads Section continue to pursue this matter with TII. MCC are awaiting a response to this application.

    It is recognised that two collisions have occurred at this junction over the last 2 months. MCC has obtained details of these collisions from AGS and a report containing details of the collisions has been submitted to TII Road Safety Section. MCC are currently examining a number of short-term safety interventions for this junction and an option will be presented to TII in the coming weeks. Separately, MCC has submitted a report to request provision of public lighting at the existing Brennan's Cross junction.

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

11. When does the Executive expect repair works will be carried out on the R179 (Carrick to Kingscourt road) to the subsidence issue, where temporary traffic lights and crash barrier are currently located?
    Response:
    It is anticipated that remedial works to address the subsidence issue on the R179 Kingscourt Road shall commence in late Q1 2025. The Executive is currently engaging with all key stakeholders to progress a feasible design solution.

12. What plans (both short-term and medium-term) does this MD have to repair the surface of our urban roads at the following locations in Carrickmacross:

    - Ross road - bend in the road at entrance to C&M Coldstores (and other patches along this road)?

Response:
In the short term, the Municipal District Executive shall arrange for necessary patch repairs to the pavement surface along the Ross Road, including the section adjacent to the entrance of C&M cold stores.
Longer term, the Active Travel (AT) Unit are continuing to progress the proposed AT scheme for the northern approaches to Carrickmacross Town. This scheme includes for the upgrade of Ross Road.

- Ardee road - on the Ardee side of the Pedestrian crossing at Highfield?

Response:
Funding has been secured under the *2025 Former National Road Rehabilitation Works* programme for the resurfacing of the Old Ardee Road (R927) from the pedestrian crossing at Highfield to the Drumconrath Road junction.

- Dundalk road - specifically from roundabout out past the Nuremore/Killanny road junction?

Response:
Resurfacing works to the R178 Dundalk road, from the roundabout to the L-4700 Nuremore Road junction, shall be completed in 2025.

13. Does this MD, or Monaghan County Council generally, have any plans to introduce signage for the use of E-Scooters in urban areas to make our footpaths safer and inform E-Scooter users of the laws in place?

Response:
There are currently no plans for the introduction of signage for the use of e-scooters. Monaghan County Council, in conjunction with An Garda Síochána, shall arrange for a promotion around the new e-scooter legislation in the local media.

14. Has the MD added the provision of lighting at the following locations to our list for consideration:
    - Ballalley junction (L4900) on the R179 (Carrick-Kingscourt road)
    - Old Castleblayney road out of Carrickmacross (old N2 leading to LS08150)

Response:
Both the Ballalley Junction (R179/L-4900) and the Old Castleblayney Road (R-927) are included for consideration under this Municipal District's 2025 Public Lighting Programme.

15. When is it expected resurfacing works will take place on Mullinary Road, Carrickmacross?

Response:
It is anticipated that resurfacing works to the Mullinary Road (L-4930/31) with take place in late Q2/early Q3 2025.

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

16. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the public realm plan for Inniskeen village, what funding is available, what works is it hoped to carry out with the available funds?

Response:
Following submissions from community groups in the Village, the Executive undertook a review of the draft detailed design for public realm enhancements to the Village Heart and St. Mary's Space areas in Inniskeen Village. The MD Executive, in conjunction with the Active Travel Unit, intend to undertake further consultations with key stakeholders within the coming weeks. The total funding available for the current scheme, including match funding, is €283,000. Planned

works include for the upgrading of the footways from the Village Heart to St Mary's Space and the redefining of the road junction in the village centre.

17. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the proposed parking strategy for Inniskeen village including the provision of additional car parking and improvements to the access into Deery Terrace as requested by the local residents?

Response:

The Executive is currently reviewing the final draft parking analysis/strategy for Inniskeen Village. Separately, the Executive shall continue to explore all potential sources of funding to undertake site-specific upgrades at Deery's Terrace.

18. What plans have the council to upgrade and improve the playpark facility in Inniskeen Village?

Response:

The upgrade of the existing play park facilities in Inniskeen Village forms an integral part of the Inniskeen Village Public Realm Spatial Plan. In November 2023, Monaghan County Council submitted a funding application under the 2023 Town and Village Renewal Scheme for public realm, heritage and amenity enhancements to the Railway Station and Playground spaces in Inniskeen Village. The proposal included for the upgrade of the existing playground facilities, in support of the development of an active welcome space on the western approach to Inniskeen Village. Unfortunately, the application for funding was unsuccessful. The Executive shall continue to explore all potential sources of funding to progress the proposal.

19. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the proposed masterplan for the Creevy Lough?

Response:

It is anticipated that a presentation on the first draft of the *Creevy Lough Recreational Masterplan* shall be provided to the elected members at the March 2025 Municipal District meeting. Thereafter, it is intended to undertake a further round of public consultation with a view to having the finalised Plan completed in Q2 2025.

20. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the proposed Park and Ride facility for the Carrickmacross and wider south Monaghan area?

Response:

Preliminary Design has been approved by TII and an allocation of €1.1m has been provided to progress this scheme through detailed design and construction. It is envisaged that the detailed design of the Park and Share/Ride facility shall be completed in late Q1 2025.

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

21. What is the up-to-date position in relation to the Carrickmacross Workhouse project?

Response:

Monaghan County Council has appointed a multi-disciplinary design team, led by *Cooney Architects,* to advance this project. The Design Team has completed a detailed review of current documents and consulted with various stakeholders. A number of detailed site surveys have been procured and are due to be completed shortly. This will allow the Design Team to prepare costed concept plans and drawings for the site. Following stakeholder review and approval of these proposals, it is envisaged that a Part 8 planning application for the project will be submitted in Q2 2025.

22. A lot of council-owned houses suffered damage to roofs and fencing etc. as a result of Storm Éowyn. What plans has the executive in place to carry out repairs to these properties?

Response:

Approximately 120 repairs have been logged in the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney MD in relation to the damage caused by storm Éowyn. Most of the repairs logged relate to roof (52 no.) & fence (25 no.) damage, with the remaining repairs categorised as plumbing, electric, spouting and gutters. Monaghan County Council's Term Maintenance Contractor is actively carrying out these repairs along with our own Craftworkers. The repairs have been listed by area/estate/type for convenience, prioritised accordingly and updated regularly since the storm. As of the 18th of February, 28 no. roof repairs, 20 no. fences and 25 plumbing/electrical repairs have been fully completed.

23. What is the latest update on the provision of a pedestrian link from Convent Avenue to Carrickmacross Main Street?

Response:

Monaghan County Council has appointed *The Paul Hogarth Company* to prepare a concept landscape masterplan for the Convent Lands area to the south of Carrickmacross Town Centre. The terms of reference of the proposed Masterplan are centred on the provision of improved foot and cycle linkages to the town centre, the accommodation of the potential expansion of the St. Louis Secondary School and the consolidation of recent investments in sports facilities.

Subsequent to several meetings with key stakeholders, a number of options to improve the pedestrian/cycle linkages to the town centre have been developed for consideration. The Council is currently engaging with key stakeholders in order to identify the optimum solution for the provision of improved linkages. These discussions ae ongoing and it is hoped that a preferred solution may be identified by Q2 2025.

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

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

Response:

Due to the lead time on some bespoke landscape materials, works are currently scheduled to commence on the 14th of April 2025.

25. Where are we with the feasibility study for Creevy Lough?

Response:

It is anticipated that a presentation on the first draft of the *Creevy Lough Recreational Masterplan* shall be provided to the elected members at the March 2025 Municipal District meeting. Thereafter, it is intended to undertake a further round of public consultation with a view to having the finalised Plan completed in Q2 2025.

26. Can a policy documents be prepared for dealing with tress / undergrowth along public roads / walkways?

Response:

Monaghan County Council has a *Hedge Cutting Policy* in place to address road safety issues associated with roadside trees and hedgerows. The Executive endeavour to advise the public of landowner responsibilities in this regard on an annual basis.

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

Response:

It is anticipated that a screening of the documentary "How to Defuse a Bomb" will take place in the Carrickmacross Workhouse in early Q2 2025. Exact details TBC in due course.

6.0 Motions

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

"That this Municipal District contacts the Local Link Service requesting that they make a presentation to the MD Members at the earliest opportunity, to give an overview of the service available to date, and what plans they have to expand and improve the service into the future."

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

"In relation to the Newbaze factory, which was officially opened in November 2019, that this MD issue a letter to the factory owners, the Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Mr. Peter Burke TD, and Minister of State with responsibility for Trade Promotion, Artificial Intelligence & Digital Transformation, Ms. Niamh Smyth TD, seeking an update as to when the factory will become fully operational."

Cllr. O'Hanlon advised that if no response is received within one month, the elected members will call upon Niamh Smyth TD, Minister of State for Trade Promotion, Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation, to discuss the issue further.

7.0 CE Orders

Orders Cmx-Cby 04/2025; Cmx-Cby 05/2025; Cmx-Cby 06/2025; Cmx-Cby 07/2025; Cmx-Cby 08/2025 and Cmx-Cby 09/2025 were noted.

8.0 VOS/VOC

Votes of sympathy were extended to Denise Meegan & family on the death of Paul Meegan (RIP); Sinead & Michael Byrne on the death of Paul Meegan (RIP); Pat Sweeney & family on the death of Marie Sweeney (RIP); Pat McCaughey on the death of Catriona McCaughey (RIP); The Callan family on the death of Rosie Callan (RIP); The Callan family on the death of Paul Callan (RIP); Ann McMahon on the death of Barney McMahon (RIP); Elizabeth Coogan on the death of Christopher Coogan (RIP) and Kathleen King on the death of Joey King (RIP).

A *Vote of congratulations* was extended to Patrician High School on booking their place in the All-Ireland Final of the Paddy Drummond Cup.

9.0 A.O.B

Cllr. Keelan:

Requested that MCC work with the local church to help clean up the Old Famine Graveyard following the recent storm and suggested holding a cross-community remembrance/memorial ceremony in the future.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Requested an update on the Old Famine Graveyard at the next meeting, acknowledging that the MD team are currently working on a report.

Requested that the Ross Road is inspected as a matter of urgency due to its deterioration.

Cllr. Campbell:

Stated that road openings in Castleblayney, specifically noting one near the new Irish School, need to be restored to Monaghan County Council's standards.

Cllr. Carthy:

Suggested that when a road has to be opened, a significant portion needs to be restored.

The meeting concluded at 12:55.

_____ _____

Cathaoirleach Date

_____ _____

Meeting Administrator Date