Ceantar Bardasach Carraig Mhachaire Rois – Baile Na Lorgan

Comhairle Contae Mhuineachain

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 Tuesday the 6th of May 2025 at 12:20pm

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

Apologies: Gemma Keenan, Senior Staff Officer

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

Michelle Lennon, Community Support Development Officer, introduced herself to the elected members and gave an overview of her role, and advised she can be contacted on a mobile phone number which she will provide.

All elected members warmly welcomed Ms. Lennon to the team.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

Cllr. Keelan wished to amend the minutes to correctly assign his remarks concerning the access roads in Donaghmoyne under item 7, "Municipal Coordinators Report".

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Campbell, the amended minutes of the March 2025 monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Monday the 24th of March 2025, were adopted.

2.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Campbell:

Asked if there are plans for a more permanent structure for the public toilets at Lough Muckno.

Reply – The executive will revert on this matter.

Cllr. Keelan:

Advised he in in the territory of proposing a motion of no confidence in the Garda Commissioner Office due to the delays with the Community CCTV Scheme applications.

Requested that the possibility of purchasing land at the rear of BOI is investigated.

Reply – A dereliction notice has been placed at this location.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Advised that he hoped to have a meeting with the new Minister for Justice, Jim O'Callaghan, regarding recent events in Carrickmacross and intends to raise two issues:

1. CCTV
2. Garda Presence.

Also informed the elected members that Superintendent Patrick O'Connell advised the CCTV delay is due to Data Protection.

3.0 Correspondence

i. Correspondence from Helen McEntee T.D., Minister for Education and Youth re: funding for schools following Storm Eowyn damage.

The elected members expressed their dissatisfaction at the response received.

Cllr. Carthy suggested writing another letter to Minister Helen McEntee. Cllr. O'Hanlon suggested also sending this letter to the Taoiseach and Tánaiste. Cllr. O'Hanlon queried if MCC have been reimbursed for Storm Eowyn funding.

Cathal Flynn, Director of Service, advised that, as he understands it, there is no reimbursement, however there is a commitment to providing funding.

On the proposal of Cllr. Carthy and seconded by Cllr. Keelan, it was unanimously agreed to write a letter to Taoiseach Micheal Martin, Tánaiste Simon Harris, and Minister Helen McEntee, expressing the elected members total dissatisfaction with the response received regarding no funding for schools damaged following Storm Eowyn.

ii. Response from Monaghan County Council Social Inclusion Officer re: "Make Way Day" 2025

Cllr. Carthy remarked that he believed that MCC led "Make Way Day" and expressed surprise that MID will be rolling it out.

Cathal Flynn, Director of Service, advised that he will seek clarification on this matter.

iii. Response from Niamh Smyth T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Cllr. O'Hanlon requested that another letter is issued to Minister Smyth to enquire how much of Enterprise Ireland and taxpayers' money has been spent on this factory and if need be, to bring Enterprise Ireland to the Chamber to find out what is going on.
Cllr. Carthy concurred with issuing a letter to Minister Smyth and to Minister Burke.
Cllr. Conlon requested that a request to help find a suitable buyer is added to the letter.
Cllr. Keelan concurred with previous comments and advised a need to keep a close brief on the matter.
Cllr. Campbell expressed his disappointment at the news and wished to put on record that he does not believe the factory was opened previously for electioneering purposes.
Cllr. Gibbons advised to revert to the Minister to see what can be done.
Cllr. O'Hanlon suggested that an invitation to attend a meeting with the elected members be extended to Minister Smyth and all other local Oireachtas members.

4.0 Municipal Coordinators Report

Cllr. Keelan:
Asked the Executive to exhaust every avenue regarding the proposed Inniskeen Bike Rental Scheme.

Cathal Flynn, Director of Service, clarified that the bikes will be used by Monaghan Sports Partnership.

Cllr. Carthy:
Advised that he would like to see elected members brought in earlier in discussions regarding proposed sites for a swimming pool in Carrickmacross.

Suggested a need to engage with local companies regarding the Bandstand project, to encourage them to tender.

Cllr. Conlon:
Sought clarification as to whether the executive will continue to seek funding for the Inniskeen Bike Rental Scheme if the bikes are going to be used.
Reply – No the MD will not.
Sought an update on potential security measures at Cloughvalley Play park.
Requested that there be minimal impact to people regarding the current road works on the Dundalk Road.

Cllr. Campbell:
Wished to flag that he feels alarmed at all the work which has been carried out on Ballynacarry Bridge planning and design and noted there is already an ecological survey to be repeated.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Sought clarification if the predicted timelines for works to the Market House remain the same.

Reply – it is hoped that Q3 remains a realistic commencement date for the Market House.

Asked if a reason was given for refusing Brennans Cross/Toome.

Reply – TII do not allow for public lighting at junctions in rural areas.

Requested an update on speed surveys in estates.

Reply – These are complete. Results can be emailed or shared with the elected members at the next MD meeting.

Questioned if there have been any recent reports of vandalism at the public toilets in Muckno.

Reply – There has been no recent reports.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Stated he believes there is a stranglehold in relation to local democracy.

On the proposal of Cllr. O'Hanlon and seconded by Cllr. Gibbons, it was unanimously agreed to call in all local TD's and Senators to ask if they are happy with the current model of government.

5.0 Q&A

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

1. When is it expected repair works and replacement of damaged sections of the fencing along the edge of Convent Lands estate (specifically around Corran Fionn Barra & Plas Fionn Barra) will be carried out?

   Response:

   Remedial works to the fencing around Corran Fionn Barra and Plas Fionn Barra are completed.

2. Has any further progress been made on the provision of a Water Feature for Carrickmacross?

   Response:

   The provision of a public water feature is included in the scope of services for the detailed design of public realm enhancements for the Main Street and Bridewell Lane areas. Tender documents for the engagement of an Urban Designer/Public Realm Architect-led Multidisciplinary Design Team have issued to the market. The closing date for tender submissions is Tuesday the 3rd of June 2025.

3. What is the latest update on the Workhouse project for Carrickmacross?

   Response:

   Monaghan County Council has appointed a multi-disciplinary design team, led by *Cooney Architects,* to advance this project. The Design Team has prepared 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.

4. Has there been any further update on the temporary traffic lights on the Carrick-Kingscourt Road; when is it expected works will take place on this road to bring it back into full use?

   Response:

   It is anticipated that the remedial works will commence in late May/early June 2025. Weather permitting, it is envisaged that the remedial works will take approximately four weeks to

complete, at which time the temporary traffic management measures currently in place shall be removed.

5. What measures are being taken and/or considered for the calming of traffic along the Ballybay Road, Carrickmacross, between Inver College junction and Corr and Tobair roundabout, and what provisions are being planned to introduce safe crossings on this road?

   Response:

   The executive intends to commence a traffic management assessment on the section of the Ballybay Road between its junction with the Castleblayney Road and the Corr and Tobair roundabout within the coming weeks, with a view to identifying and developing appropriate and feasible traffic calming solutions, including provision for vulnerable road users. Thereafter, the executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to implement the traffic calming interventions identified.

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

6. Can the turn from the Dundalk Road in Castleblayney into the Old Coach Road be examined to see if it can be made safer? I am aware of accidents concerning both cars pulling out from The Old Coach Road and turning into it.

   Response:

   The Municipal District executive has referred the concerns surrounding road safety at the junction of the N53 Dundalk Road and the Old Coach Road to the National Road Team for detailed investigation.

7. The playground in Drumillard, Castleblayney is extremely busy, has been consistently and has not had a major upgrade in many years. Can this playground be examined, and an upgrade considered?

   Response:

   Monaghan County Council is currently developing a *Play & Recreation Strategy* for 2025–2030. Once adopted, the strategy will facilitate the submission of proposals for the upgrading of existing facilities and the development of new play and recreation areas. Submissions for the upgrade of existing facilities will be evaluated and ranked based on the findings of independent Annual Inspection Reports.

8. Can an examination of parking in the vicinity of Market Square leading into Muckno Street (i.e. at Ginos Diner leading down to Muckno Street) in Castleblayney be examined being mindful of sight lines of cars and lorries driving on the road, parked cars and their impact on same, placement and suitability of double yellow lines in this area and incidences of parking on pavement hindering progress of people with disabilities and parents with prams?

   Response:

   The executive will examine the impact of current parking facilities on the broader traffic management arrangements in the vicinity of Market Square leading into Muckno Street and endeavour to address any issues that may be identified.

9. The arch has been removed from the gates at Lough Muckno. Can the reason for the removal be provided along with estimated timelines on its reinstatement?

   Response:

   The arch at the entrance gates to Lough Muckno Park was removed in the interest of public safety and to help ensure the integrity of the entrance pier heads. Longer-term, it is intended to restore the entrance to Lough Muckno Park to its original state. It is anticipated that these works shall be completed in Q4 2025.

10. The roads in the vicinity of Annafarcon school are in extremely poor condition. Potholes have been recently filled but the road requires resurfacing along with the reinstatement of traffic calming road markings. In addition, the nearby road at Finncairn/Lackafin is also in very poor condition and require resurfacing. Can these roads be reviewed and considered for resurfacing?

    Response:

    Municipal District engineering staff will conduct an assessment of roads in both the Aughnafarcon and Finncairn/Lackafin areas. If warranted, these roads will be submitted for consideration by the elected members in the adoption of future annual roads programmes.

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

11. What is the up to-date position in relation to the public realm plan and parking strategy for Inniskeen Village, what funding is available, is this funding ringfenced, when is it hoped to see works commence on the ground?

    Response:

    In tandem with on-going consultations with community stakeholders, the executive is reviewing the draft detailed design for public realm enhancements to the Village Heart and St. Mary's Space areas in Inniskeen Village. Further consultations with key stakeholders will take place on completion of any design amendments. The total funding available for the scheme, including match funding, is €283,000. Although funding is currently allocated for project, it is not ringfenced indefinitely. The implementation of these plans is heavily reliant on the community's endorsement of the proposed public realm enhancements.

12. What is the up to-date position in relation to the flooding mitigation plan for Donaghmoyne, and also what is the plan to Improve and resurface the access roads into the Village which are in a deplorable state?

    Response:

    The Design Team is currently collating and analysing survey data in order to develop a comprehensive 3D model of the assessment area. The Design Team is scheduled to provide elected members with an update presentation at the May Municipal District meeting. Following completion of the flood mitigation design, the executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to advance the implementation of the identified remedial drainage works. The executive intends to undertake significant resurfacing works to the access roads entering Donaghmoyne Village in conjunction with the implementation of flood mitigation measures.

13. What is the up to-date position in relation to the provision of a CCTV camera system for Carrickmacross, and Castleblayney town. Has the Garda Commissioners office responded to any of this Councils requests to have these proposed schemes approved or not?

    Response:

    The executive continues to await approval or otherwise from the Commissioner's Office to implement both CCTV schemes. An Garda Síochána are scheduled to provide the elected members with an update on the status of the application for the proposed community CCTV schemes at this month's Municipal District meeting.

14. Following on from the terrible damage as a result of storm Éowyn, what is the up to-date position in relation to having cleanup works carried out including removing the trees at the old famine graveyard (Bully's Acre) as it is so important that we show respect to those that are buried there?

Response:

The executive is involved in on-going discussions with the landowner concerned. The priority for all parties is the respectful and timely restoration of the graveyard. In recognising this common aim, the extensive nature of the storm damage, and the somewhat unique set of circumstances, the executive has agreed, in this once off instance, to proceed with the management of remedial works. The executive is currently in the process of procuring the services of an osteoarchaeologist to examine the site and determine the most appropriate course of action.

15. In relation to the roads resurfacing programme 2025, how many roads will be resurfaced in the area this year, when will the resurfacing works commence, Is there any extra funding to add extra roads to the resurfacing programme this year given the deplorable state of some of our local roads?

Response:

The 2025 Roads Programme provides for the resurfacing/strengthening of the following roads:

Roads	Townland	Funding Stream
R-178-7	Drummond Otra	RI
R181-1	Creaghanroe	RI
L-4040	Bocks Middle	RI
L-8601	Tattyboy	RI
L-4400	Drumgoose	RI
L-89031	Greaghlone	RI
R927	Old Ardee Road	Former National Roads

The regional roads element of the 2025 roads resurfacing programme commenced in this Municipal District on the 28th of April last. It is anticipated that the resurfacing of local roads will commence in July 2025. Upon completion of the above programme, and subject to any funding surplus, the executive will assess the feasibility of including additional roads having regard to the adopted 2026 roads resurfacing programme.

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

16. What is the latest position with generating a feasibility study on the Workhouse?

Response:

Monaghan County Council has appointed a multi-disciplinary design team, led by *Cooney Architects*, to advance this project. The Design Team has prepared 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.

17. CCTV has long been called for in Carrickmacross and Castleblaney, has there been any update from the Garda Commissioner on this important issue?

Response:

The executive continues to await approval or otherwise from the Commissioner's Office to implement both CCTV schemes. An Garda Síochána are scheduled to provide the elected members with an update on the status of the application for the proposed community CCTV schemes at this month's Municipal District meeting.

18. Has Monaghan County Council any update on a pilot study for Stone roads?

Response:

Engineering Staff in the Road Design section are investigating the potential of trialling several low-cost interventions on stone roads throughout the County in 2025. It is anticipated the tender process will begin in the coming weeks with works beginning in early July.

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

19. What is the update of works to be carried out for road safety improvements at Brennans Cross on the N53 and the request for lighting at this junction?

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. MCC have also submitted an application to implement short term measures in the form of additional signage and road markings on the approaches to the junction.

To underpin our funding application, MCC have obtained details of a number of recent collisions at this junction from AGS and a report containing details of the collisions has been submitted to TII Road Safety Section for their information.

Separately, TII has advised that our application for provision of public lighting at this junction has been refused.

20. In acknowledging the ongoing enhancement works taken place at the Black Island to upgrade the paths, create new viewing areas and new seating etc.
    (a) What is the update on these works?
    (b) When is hoped that work will be completed?
    (c) Will these works also include the new sensory space due to be opened at Lough Muckno?

Response:

(a) What is the update on these works?
(b) When is hoped that work will be completed?

Upgrade works on Black Island are progressing well with an anticipated completion date of the end of June. These works include path upgrades, signage and interpretation, drainage works, development of viewing points, picnic areas etc. Coillte is currently arranging for a harvester on site to clear away as much of the fallen trees and debris as is possible. While the original grant did not cover works to the bridge, in light of its increased usage for heavy vehicles in the aftermath of storm Éowyn, MCC is engaging with the Department to see if works to the bridge can be incorporated into the project.

(c) Will these works also include the new sensory space due to be opened at Lough Muckno?

The development of a sensory space adjacent to the existing play park in Lough Muckno Park is funded separately under *Measure 1* of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme. It is anticipated that these works will commence in late June 2025.

21. When is it hoped that the road upgrade on the Drumgoose/Longfield road adjacent to Toome GAA football field will commence?

Response:

Drainage works were completed in March 2025. It is anticipated that resurfacing works will commence on the Drumgoose/Longfield road in July 2025.

22. Can the MD look at traffic calming measures on the road out of Castleblayney past Saint Marys Church and also where there are number of schools?

Response:

The executive shall arrange for a speed survey to be undertaken on the R-938, in the vicinity of St. Mary's Church and Schools, to determine the extent of any speeding issues. Subject to the outcome of this assessment, the executive shall seek to identify appropriate road safety measures for this location and explore all potential sources of funding to implement same.

23. With the recent report on Castleblayney "Town Centre regeneration" encouraging projects improving permeability between Main St and The McGrath Road thus opening up the main street area to the backhands etc. What and when will the next stage of this project take place?

Response:

The report "Castleblayney - Regeneration Framework Plan for Town Centre lands" includes a series of themes and objectives that were developed through the consultation process. These included the following:

- Projects improving permeability between Main Street & McGrath Road
- Backlands developments - opportunities for housing
- Main Street & McGrath Road Carparking - improvements & interventions
    - Reorder parking / Recover space for pedestrians
    - Enhance environment through planting, public realm interventions and amenity-oriented facilities
- Increasing residential properties (reuse of existing vacant and new infill buildings)
- 'Ridge v.2' potential to reuse and extend cluster of existing underused/vacant buildings
    - Cluster of existing underused buildings
- Bring vacant buildings back into use and improve energy efficiency
- Shopfront and Facade improvements

These themes and objectives have then been developed through a series of scenarios illustrating what can be achieved.

These scenarios will be progressed over a long-term period, and likely at different timescales dependent on the complexity of the project. Each scenario has been allocated for action to relevant sections of the council (Capital/MD Team/Regeneration Section/Housing) and updates will be provided to members on an ongoing basis.

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

24. In the interest of road safety, can the Municipal District executive undertake speed surveys on all the main approach roads to Carrickmacross Town? I would ask that these surveys be completed before the end of May and that a report be presented to the elected members at the June Municipal District meeting.
    Response:
    The Municipal District executive will arrange for speed surveys to be undertaken on the main approach roads to Carrickmacross Town and endeavour to have the findings presented to the elected members at the June Municipal District meeting.

25. In relation to the letter that the elected members recently received from Carrickmacross Emmets GFC, can a meeting be arranged between the executive of the Municipal District and a delegation from Carrickmacross Emmets GFC in relation to road safety at Emmet Park?
    Response:
    The Municipal District executive will arrange a meeting with a delegation from Carrickmacross Emmets GFC as soon as is reasonably practicable.

6.0 Notice of Motions

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

"The Municipal District of Carrickmacross-Castleblayney calls on the Council executive to do all within its remit to force a conclusion to the unfinished Clos na Droimainne estate in Carrickmacross. Using whatever powers we have as a local authority, including under the Derelict Sites Act, we stress the urgency of bringing this saga to an end either by having the remaining unfinished building completed or demolished and the handover of the 12no. 4-bed units (which are near completion) to provide much-needed housing."

Cathal Flynn, Director of Service, advised, by way of information, that this is a priority site for the Town Regeneration Team.

7.0 Director of Service Orders

Orders Cmx-Cby 14/2025; Cmx-Cby 15/2025; Cmx-Cby 16/2025; Cmx-Cby 17/2025; Cmx-Cby 18/2025; Cmx-Cby 19/2025; Cmx-Cby 20/2025; Cmx-Cby 21/2025 and Cmx-Cby 22/2025 were noted.

11.0 VOS/VOC

Votes of sympathy were extended to Kitty, Niall & Emma Jane Meegan on the death of Thomas John Meegan (RIP); the Matthews family on the death of Eugene Matthews (RIP) and the Finnegan family on the death of Hugh Finnegan (RIP).

Votes of congratulations were extended to Michael Gallen on winning the Fedora Prize; Patrician High School on winning the All-Ireland Basketball Championship and to Sheila

Quinn, Vincent Connolly, and Mena McGinn on their retirements from Patrician High School following up to 40 years plus service.

12.0 A.O.B

Cllr. Gibbons:

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

"That the contribution of Mike Jones (RIP), particularly to the musical life of Castleblayney, be recognised by way of a commemorative plaque or similar. Mike came to Castleblayney in the 1970's and played a huge part in the musical life of Blayney. He was church organist in St. Marys', musical director with a choir, musical director of Our Lady's Secondary School production, musical director of the variety club, completed a mammoth 24-hour piano marathon in the Scout Hall, musical director of several productions in Castleblayney College and musical director for the Blayney Tenors.

Cllr. Keelan:

Asked that funding measures are sought to improve the access roads into Donaghmoyne. Sought an update on a broad timescale for works to be completed on the Old Famine Graveyard.

Reply -The executive is not in a position to confirm a timeframe at this point.

The elected members unanimously agreed to hold the Roads Area Meeting at 10am on Monday the 19th of May 2025 in Carrickmacross Civic Offices.

The meeting concluded at 14:15pm.

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Cathaoirleach Date

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Meeting Administrator