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 Monday the 26th of May 2025 at 15:30pm

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

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

Presentation: Inniskeen Enterprise Group Development Committee Ltd

- **Art Agnew, Micheál McArdle, Seamus Mulligan, Martin Quigley**

Following the presentation, the presenters posed a number of questions to the Executive:

1. **When does the Inniskeen Masterplan process commence?**
   Reply – We are confident that the planning authority will commence creation of the Masterplan by the end of Q3/early Q4.

2. **What process does Monaghan County Council follow to determine the space required?**
   Reply – Generally, professional consultants are engaged to develop such Plans. Space requirements are informed by extensive public consultation.

3. **What criteria does the Council use to identify the most suitable location for development within the Master Plan?**

4. **What is the process for allocating space within the Inniskeen Master Plan framework?**

5. **How is space formally designated for the specific purposes identified by the community in the Master Plan?**

6. **What is the timeline for acquiring the space needed to deliver the Inniskeen Master Plan?**

It was deemed appropriate to answer questions 3, 4 ,5 and 6 via a written response due to the need to liaise with other departments within MCC.

Inniskeen Enterprise Group Development Committee requested to be engaged with early on to avoid future issues, particularly around short-term solutions. The Committee members stated that a new school site is a high priority for them.

Cllr. O'Hanlon stated that the elected members need to work with the Committee to help them. He suggested that the Committee should meet with the CEOs of the CMETB and the East Border Region and strongly advised speaking with all local Oireachtas members. It was also suggested that the Committee take their presentation to the Dáil. Cllr. O'Hanlon advised that members shall aid with organising meetings.

Cllr. Conlon explained the consultant and consultation process of the Masterplan and advised that the Committee have the support of the council.

Cllr. Campbell remarked that the project will be bit by bit, it will not happen overnight. He stated that all the elected members lend their support.

Cllr. Keelan noted a previous motion where it has been requested that the executive investigate the purchasing of land.

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Conlon, it was agreed that the meeting would go in – committee at 16:15pm.
On the proposal of Cllr. Conlon and seconded by Cllr. Keelan, it was agreed that the meeting come out of committee at 16:20pm.

Cllr. O'Hanlon suggested organising a meeting in a number of months and gave a commitment that the elected members will speak to local Oireachtas members. The upcoming Dáil recess was noted.

The Committee members were asked to revert to the elected members following their meetings, with the suggestion being made to meet in the Chamber in late September.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan and seconded by Cllr. Conlon, the minutes of the April 2025 monthly Municipal District Meeting, held on Tuesday the 6th of May 2025, were adopted.

2.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Keelan:

Sought an update on the CCTV applications.

Cllr. O'Hanlon advised that he hopes to have a positive response from Superintendent Pat O'Connell soon.

Stated that the public wish to know when Bully's Acre Graveyard will be returned.

Reply – It is envisaged there will be at least a 3–5-week period before a licence is granted. The osteoarchaeologist will examine the site and determine the most appropriate course of action.

3.0 Correspondence

i. Correspondence received from Uisce Eireann

ii. Correspondence received from Jim O'Callaghan TD, Minister for Justice

Cllr. Carthy and Cllr. Conlon welcomed the news that the Courthouse will be back in action.

4.0 Municipal Coordinators Report

Cllr. Campbell:

Asked if it is possible for the local authority to acquire this building.

Reply – The Executive will revert to Cllr. Campbell regarding this query.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Asked for an update on the Black Island upgrade works.

Reply – it is hoped these will be complete by the end of June.

Asked when it is anticipated there will be boots on the ground for works on the Market House.

Reply – a comprehensive answer to this query is detailed in the MD Coordinator Report.

Cllr. Carthy:

Requested that elected members are involved early in the process of selecting a site for the proposed swimming pool in Carrickmacross.

Asked that the Inniskeen presentation is forwarded to the elected members.

Advised that he is eager to hear the public views regarding the Convent Lands Masterplan.

Cllr. Conlon:

Requested an update on the Shirley House Lane car park.

Voiced concerns surrounding security at the Cloughvalley Sensory Garden.

Stated that connection to the town is key regarding the Convent Lands Masterplan.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:
Wished to acknowledge the role of past Director of service Paul Clifford in the purchase of Shirley House Lane car park and the development of a pedestrian the link from Covent Avenue up to town.

Cllr. Keelan:
Asked that the access roads to Donaghmoyne are kept on the agenda.

On the proposal of Cllr. Conlon and seconded by Cllr. Keelan, it was agreed that the meeting would go in – committee at 17:25pm.
On the proposal of Cllr. Campbell and seconded by Cllr. Keelan, it was agreed that the meeting come out of committee at 17:30pm.

5.0 Audit of Street Lighting on Main Street, Farney Street and O'Neill Street in Carrickmacross Town

The elected members all agreed that the report from the Community Section does not appear to reflect the views of the public who were in attendance. It was clarified that members of the public stated that lighting issues were most important to them.

Cllr. O'Hanlon requested that Cathal Flynn, Director of Service, speak to the Roads Department and asked that a letter is written by them confirming that the lights are good enough and safe.

Cathal Flynn, Director of Services, reiterated a previous commitment given that the MD will do all they can about this matter. It will be requested that a representative of Roads Section attend a future meeting.

6.0 Results of Speed Surveys in housing developments in Castleblayney

Cllr. Campbell stated that the figures are concerning, particularly Thorndale, and queried if the report was sent to An Garda Síochána (AGS). He also called out driver behaviour.
Reply –Traffic calming measures will be explored. The report can be forwarded to AGS.

Cllr. Gibbons requested an overview of what the criteria is to receive traffic calming measures and what those measures involve.
Reply – Predominantly speed and accident history. A stepped approach is generally adopted - narrowing the road, lining, build- outs and speed ramps as a last resort.

Cllr. Carthy wished to note that no complaints have been received from existing housing estates regarding speed ramps.

7.0 Q&A

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

1. **There is no turning lane for vehicles into Castle Park estate from the Shercock Road in Castleblayney which is very busy. Can this entrance and the road infrastructure in the area be assessed from a road safety perspective to see if it can be made safer?**
   Response:
   The planning conditions for the Castle Park estate provide that the Developer is to install a right turn lane as part of the ongoing housing development.

2. **Has the Executive any plans to submit funding proposals for a new playground in the Carrickmacross Castleblayney MD in the year ahead?**
   Response:
   Earlier this year, the Municipal District executive submitted a proposal for the provision of a new playground facility in Castleblayney, centrally located between Plás An Bhrí, Rosevale, Knocktornagh and Coill Darach housing developments, for consideration under the Capital Grant Scheme for Play and Recreation 2025. Unfortunately, this submission was unsuccessful. The executive shall continue to explore potential funding opportunities to progress this proposal.

3. **Can traffic in the vicinity of The Willows estate, Castleblayney be reviewed from a road safety perspective to see if it can be made safer? I would ask that sight lines, speed of traffic on the Shercock Road (especially travelling from Lough Egish direction), traffic volumes, presence of adjacent entrances to Castle Park estate and entry to N2 and signage for same, road markings etc all be considered.**
   Response:
   The executive shall arrange for a safety assessment of the section of the R181, Shercock Road that fronts the N2 interchange and The Willows and Castle Park housing developments. Thereafter, the executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to implement any road safety remedial measures identified.

4. **There has been anti-social behaviour at The Ridge 2 site on McGrath Road, Castleblayney. Can measures that have been taken or are being considered at this site to address this issue be detailed?**
   Response:
   Funding has been secured under the *Anti-Dumping Initiative* to enhance the security of the site immediately adjacent to the north-east side of "The Ridge" Enterprise Hub, by way of the installation of additional perimeter fencing. It is anticipated that these works will commence within the coming weeks.

5. **Can the number of inspections of private rented accommodation undertaken in 2025 to date in a) Castleblayney and b) Carrickmacross be provided?**
   Response:
   In the year to date, Housing Services has completed 37 No. inspections of private rented accommodation in Castleblayney and 26 No. inspections in Carrickmacross.

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

6. **What is the latest update on the survey of streetlights in Carrickmacross and when will recommendations be presented to councillors?**
   Response:
   The executive has received the outcome report from the Lighting Consultant engaged to conduct an assessment of the public lighting along Main Street, Farney Street and O'Neill Street in Carrickmacross town. It is intended to share the findings of the report with elected members at the May 2025 Municipal District meeting.

7. **What repair works are proposed for footpaths in our urban centres in 2025 and will works include for widening paths in locations where they don't meet standards?**
   Response:
   Footpath repair works in our urban centres will focus on localised repairs at identified priority locations. These works will primarily address potential trip hazards and deteriorated surfaces.

8. **Can the council engage with the Tidy Town Groups in this Municipal District to decide on the most suitable locations for public seating/benches and ensure they are in place as quickly as possible?**
   Response:
   The executive will engage with the Tidy Town Groups in this Municipal District with a view to optimising the provision of public seating.

9. **Can the engineering section please confirm when it expects to complete all planned road resurfacing in this MD for 2025 with a breakdown of areas due for works this year?**
   Response:
   It is anticipated that all planned road resurfacing works in this Municipal District will be completed by the end of Q3 2025. The 2025 Roads Programme provides for the resurfacing/strengthening of the following roads:

Road No.	Townland	Funding Stream	Anticipated Completion Date
R-178-7	Drummond Otra	RI	Complete
R181-1	Creaghanroe	RI	Complete
L-4040	Bocks Middle	RI	July 2025
L-8601	Tattyboy	RI	"
L-4400	Drumgoose	RI	"
L-89031	Greaghlone	RI	"
R927	Old Ardee Road	Former National Roads	September 2025

10. **When is it expected 'public consultations' will be carried out on the Convent Avenue Masterplan?**
    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 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 continuing to engage with key stakeholders in order to identify the optimum solution for the provision of improved linkages. It is hoped that the draft Masterplan will be available for public

review in Q3 2025.

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

11. **With regard to the water quality for Lough Muckno,**
    a) What is the latest update on the quality?
    b) Where can these results be located?
    c) How and when will Monaghan County Council advise the users of Lough Muckno of the latest result?
    d) What is the latest on the works etc with regards to "Lough Muckno Road To Recovery plan" which is being led and carried out by Monaghan County Council?

Response:

a) What is the latest update on the quality?

The most recent Water Framework Directive (WFD) Status for Lough Muckno 2016-2021 is Moderate Status. Lough Muckno improved from Bad Status (2013-2018) to Moderate Status (2016-2021). The next water framework directive status update will be contained in the EPA Water Quality in Ireland Report which is due to be published in 2025.

Lough Muckno is not a designated bathing water, but Monaghan County Council does monitor for bathing water parameters at three locations on the lake on a monthly basis from June to September each year. The three locations include:

1. Lough Muckno (Bathing Area)
2. Lough Muckno Black Island Point
3. Lough Muckno Water Sports Area

This monitoring is planned for 2025, and results will be published on www.beaches.ie and there will be a link to this website from the Monaghan County Council website. Whilst there were no exceedances detected in 2024, there have been a number of exceedances of the bathing water parameters in recent years at the bathing area. In 2025, the results of monitoring for all three locations from the 2022- 2024 monitoring period were sent to the EPA. The EPA have returned the following likely classifications:

Monaghan County Council	**Water Quality (2021-2024)**
Lough Muckno (Bathing area)	Below Minimum Standard
Lough Muckno Water Sports Area	Highest Quality

The Lough Muckno Black Island monitoring point could not be classified as the minimum number of samples were not achieved as this station in the 2022-2024 period. This station was only added to the MCC monitoring programme in 2023. Individual sample results since we first started monitoring have been within the standard for highest quality.

The classifications in the table above were published last week in the "other monitored waters" document accompanying the EPA 2024 Bathing Water Quality Report. A notice is due to be erected onsite at the Lough Muckno (Bathing Area) for the 2025 bathing season advising people

not to swim due to potentially high levels of bacteria. The presence of a large number of ducks is suspected to be influencing the water quality at this location.

There was an algal bloom recorded on Lough Muckno in 2024 and given the levels of phosphorus in the lake we are likely to continue to see algal blooms on the Lough particularly during calm warm conditions.

b) Where can these results be located?

Results from WFD monitoring are available in map format at EPA Water Maps - Catchments.ie - Catchments.ie and raw data can be downloaded on the data pages Data - Catchments.ie - Catchments.ie

Results from the non-designated bathing waters monitoring can be accessed online at www.beaches.ie
in the "Other monitored waters" category. Results from 2022-2024 are available on the Monaghan County Council website Bathing Waters - Environment

The bathing water season for 2025 is due to commence in June. All results from this year's monitoring will be available on www.beaches.ie and a link will also be provided on Bathing Waters - Environment

c) How and when will Monaghan County Council advise the users of Lough Muckno of the latest result?

As a result of the likely EPA classification, an advisory not to Swim notice will be erected at the Lough Muckno Bathing water monitoring point in advance of the 2025 bathing season.

In the event of the detection of a Poor-Quality Result at the Black Island Point and/or the Water Sports Area during the 2025 monitoring period. Monaghan County Council will:

- Erect a notice at the site advising not to swim.
- Put the results on www.beaches.ie
- Arrange for a further sample to be taken.

It takes -3-4 days for the results of sampling to be completed and returned by the lab.

In the event that the presence of algal blooms is recorded by the sampler, Monaghan County Council will erect a notice at the site.

d) What is the latest on the works etc with regards to "Lough Muckno Road To Recovery plan" which is being led and carried out by Monaghan County Council?

The *Lough Muckno Road to Recovery Project* report has just been finalised. The project investigated not only the current loadings of nutrients to the lake, but also assessed the nutrients which exist in the lake sediment. The main factor which makes the project unique is this assessment of the lake sediment and how they are influencing current water quality. Currently Water Framework Directive Status does not include lake sediment analysis in water quality status determination or to set the environmental objectives for recovery and as a result the contribution of nutrients from the lake sediment remains the unknown factor for a lot of lakes.

Hydrec Environmental Consulting were appointed to carry out the study. The local interest and enthusiasm of the consultant was notable throughout the project. Scientists from the Ryan Institute from the University of Galway, Trinity College Dublin, and Professor Chen from Yunnan University in China also assisted with the project.

The main findings of the project were:

- Total Phosphorus (TP) concentrations in Lough Muckno have been in excess of EQS (Good Status) for each of the 3 basins in the lake since 2007.
- The 18-month lake monitoring programme found that Internal phosphorus loading was occurring within the lough from the lake sediment, which will hinder lake recovery after the external loading is sufficiently reduced.
- Pre famine phosphorus concentrations of the Lough were found to be in the Good Status Range.

- The external load part of the project found that the orthophosphate concentrations required for good status rivers was exceeded in 2023 in the Gentle Owens Stream, County Water, Toome Stream & Drumacon Stream.

- The study calculated the phosphorus load reductions required in the inputting tributaries.

- The study indicates that even after the external loads of phosphorus have been reduced sufficiently, given the contribution from the lake sediment, it will take a minimum period of 12 years for improvements in water quality.

In terms of next steps for the project the following actions are ongoing:

- Lough Muckno has been included as a Priority Area for Action in Ireland's 3rd cycle River basin Management Plan (2022-2027) which was published in September 2024. Work is underway at a national and regional level to develop catchment management workplans for all sectors involved in water framework directive implementation. The findings of the Lough Muckno project will feed into these plans.

- Since this project has commenced the workplan of the water team has been strongly influenced by the project. The water quality data from the project was used to focus our workplans in the catchment areas where improvements are required.

- Catchment characterisation and inspections are ongoing in the County Water and the Gentle Owens River Catchment areas. The project has highlighted these areas as the catchment areas contributing the most significant loads to Lough Muckno.

- Due to the cross-border nature of the contributing tributaries to Lough Muckno, Monaghan County Council met with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in 2024 to discuss the findings of the project, it is hoped to have further collaboration in 2025.

12. **With the increase in traffic on the Lough Egish road out of Castleblayney, due to the construction of the new Irish School also the new Health Centre. Can the MD look at traffic calming measures on this stretch of road?**
    Response:
    The Executive shall arrange for a traffic and speed survey along the section of the R181, Shercock Road, fronting the new Irish School and the new Health Centre, to determine the extent and nature of any speeding at this location. Subject to the findings from this assessment, the executive shall explore all potential sources of funding to implement appropriate traffic calming measures.

13. **With so much recent engagement re the CCTV in both our towns in the MD. What is the latest update on this?**
    Response:

The executive continues to await approval or otherwise from the Commissioner's Office to implement both CCTV schemes.

14. **In welcoming the launch of the Masterplan for Muckno which was recently signed with Cunnane Stratton Reynolds. What are the planned public stakeholder processes to engage with the community groups etc?**
    Response:
    The process to inform the making of the Masterplan will consist of three phases:
    1. Information Gathering (March – June 2025)
    2. Emerging Concepts (September 2025)
    3. Draft Master Plan (Q1 2026)

    Stakeholder / public consultation will form part of all three phases. The draft Masterplan will undergo Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment in Q2 of 2026 with the final Masterplan to be completed by August 2026.

    As part of the current Phase 1 works, the following public engagement has taken place / is planned:
    - Secondary schools' workshop on the 16th of May 2025
    - Consultation with Muckno Development Committee on the 22nd of May 2025
    - Consultation with Castleblayney Town Team on the 22nd of May 2025
    - Stakeholder / community groups workshop on the 28th of May 2025 (a.m.)
    - Public consultation drop-in event on the 28th of May 2025 (3 p.m. – 8 p.m.)
    - Online community survey

15. **What is the update with the MD's plans to have put in place permanent toilets at Lough Muckno?**
    Response:
    The Executive is continuing to examine the feasibility of re-siting the existing public toilet facilities near to where the facilities were historically located, adjacent to the play park. A survey of the decommissioned wastewater network has been completed in this regard and the executive is currently engaging with EPS Group to develop a design and costing for a new pumped rising main.

    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.

<u>Questions raised by Cllr. Peter Conlon for the May 2025 meeting of Carrickmacross - Castleblayney Municipal District:</u>

16. **What is the latest position with generating a feasibility study on the Bridewell?**
    Response:
    Monaghan County Council has appointed *Cooney Architects*, to advance this project. The programme for the delivery of this enabling project shall be confirmed with the coming weeks.

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.

18. **The Masterplan for Creevy Lake, how is this progressing?**
    Response:
    The appointed consultants have initiated the preparation of a prioritised cost plan for the scheme. It is anticipated that a final round of public consultation shall commence within the coming weeks, with a view to having the Plan completed in late Q2/early Q3 2025.

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

19. **Is there any 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 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 continuing to engage with key stakeholders in order to identify the optimum solution for the provision of improved linkages. It is hoped that the draft Masterplan will be available for public review in Q3 2025.

20. **Now that the design is completed, when are works to start on the safety measures in Magheracloone?**
    Response:
    It is anticipated that these works will commence in mid-late June 2025.

21. **What is the update on the submission of the part 8 planning application for the Carrickmacross Workhouse project?**
    Response:
    Monaghan County Council 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.

    The Design Team has reviewed a number of options to advance the project and have prepared costed concept plans and drawings for the site. Following stakeholder review of these proposals, which is programmed to commence in late May 2025, it is envisaged that a Part 8 planning application for the project will be submitted in Q2 2025.

8.0 Director of Service Orders

Orders Cmx-Cby 23/2025; Cmx-Cby 24/2025 and Cmx-Cby 25/2025 were noted.

9.0 VOS/VOC

Votes of sympathy were extended to the Kirk Family on the death of Michael (Mickey) Kirk (RIP); Tommy McKanna & family on the death of Frank McKenna (RIP); the Carthy family on

the death of Bernadette (Bernie) Murray (RIP) and PJ Finnegan on the death of Marion Goff (RIP).

A Votes of congratulations was extended to Oisín McEntee on the achievement of playing in Wembley on the 26th of May 2025 for Walsall F.C. in the English League Division 2 final.

10.0 A.O.B

Cllr. Carthy:

Queried possibility of painting the kerb on the bad bend at the graveyard on the Dundalk Road.

Requested additional wheelchair accessible equipment is investigated for Cloughvalley Play Park.

Cllr. Campbell:

Proposed a Civic Reception for Michael Gallan to be held in the Iontas Centre before the June AGM.

Cllr. O'Hanlon suggested that Cllr. Gibbons, as Cathaoirleach of MCC, could lead this.

Cathal Flynn, Director of Services, advised that such a Civic event would be organised through Corporate Services.

Complimented *The Northern Standard* on their reporting an accurate fact checking and voiced concern about recent disinformation being spread, stating that the elected members need to push back at times.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Concurred with Cllr. Campbell's proposal of a Civic Reception.

Asked that the proposed playground facility in Castleblayney (between Plás An Bhrí, Rosevale, Knocktornagh and Coill Darach housing developments) be revisited following the recent unsuccessful application.

Reply – Yes, this will be revisited.

The elected members agreed to try an accommodate a change of date to the scheduled AGM in June. The MD will revert to the members with a proposed date.

The meeting concluded at 18:05pm.

_____ _____

Cathaoirleach Date

_____

Meeting Administrator