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 Castleblayney Library, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan on Monday the 15th of December 2025 at 11:00am.

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

Apologies: Gary Toye, District Engineer

In Attendance: Cathal Flynn, Director of Services, Damien Thornton, District Coordinator, Gemma Keenan, Senior Staff Officer, Julieann O'Reilly, Assistant Staff Officer

Cathaoirleach Gibbons opened the meeting by extending a warm welcome to all attendees in Castleblayney. Tributes were paid by the elected members to both current and former staff, as well as the proprietors of "The Northern Standard", which is set to cease publication after 186 years of service. Veronica Corr, Peter Hughes, Jimmy Walsh, Rory Geary, and Pat Byrne received special mentions in recognition of their dedication and contributions.
On the proposal of Cllr. Keelan, seconded by Cllr. O'Hanlon, it was unanimously agreed that a letter of appreciation be sent to the Northern Standard team.
Director of Services Cathal Flynn acknowledged the significant role played by The Northern Standard in the life of the Monaghan community and extended best wishes to the outgoing staff for the future.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

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

2.0 Matters Arising

Cllr. Carthy:

Thanked the Executive for works on the Ardee Road, commenting on the importance of building on engagement with local businesses.

Queried if elected members can get sight of future work plans so they are in a position to answer any questions from the public.

Cllr. Keelan:

Commended the Executive for recent works at the Old Famine Graveyard. Requested that ivy is removed from the wall at this location.

Stated that more work needs to be done regarding bus stops, remarking that he understands funding is available to improve these.

Commended MCC for the recent works at Deery Terrace (trimming trees) and advised that Dun Ard requires similar works.

Reply – it is hoped these works will be attended to this week.

Asked that the humps and bumps on the access road into Killanny village are investigated.

Reply – this will be placed on our essential repairs list.

Referred to the access of the N2 into Donaghmoyne village, advising it is very dangerous. Asked that minor works are carried out at the very least.

Reply – Substantial works are needed at this location and funding streams will be explored.

Cllr. O'Hanlon clarified that "substantial works" equates to millions of euros.

Cllr. Conlon:

Thanked the MD team for their engagement with residents and business owners during Ardee Road works and acknowledged District Coordinator Damien Thornton for his works regarding the post box.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Wished to acknowledge that the executive did engage with locals and business owners during recent works.

Wished to state that the executive has overspent regarding roads funding.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Queried if the cleaning of the cobble lock in Castleblayney will be done in-house or by a contractor.

Reply – The intention is to carry out these works in-house.

Queried if potential works at the turn off located at the Old Coach Road is under the jurisdiction of the MD or TII.

Reply – Any potential works falls under the remit of TII/Roads Section.

3.0 Correspondence Incoming

i. Correspondence received from Garda Commissioner Justin Kelly – Carrickmacross CCTV Authorisation

Cllr. Campbell queried if there has been a response regarding the Castleblayney CCTV application.
Reply – A recent issue arose whereby the security of the Lough Muckno cabinet was called into question. This is currently being addressed.

Cllr. O'Hanlon advised that he takes issue with sending numerous letters to the Department of Justice over several years, noting that following direct contact with the new Minister, Jim O'Callaghan and his special advisor, Adrian O'Higgins, the matter was dealt with within 6 months. Wished to state, " Fair play to Minister O'Callaghan".

Cllr. Carthy voiced his delight at progress in Carrickmacross and advised of his shared annoyance regarding the Castleblayney application, stating that both towns need CCTV and that he fully supported the call to get CCTV in place. He wished to highlight that it also seemed to take a change of Garda Commissioner to see progress.

Cllr. O'Hanlon wished to note that contact was made with Minister O'Callaghan during the previous Garda Commissioner's term.

ii. Correspondence received from Brian Braniff, S.E.E., Roads Section – Public Lighting at Brennan's Cross

4.0 Correspondence Outgoing

Noted.

Cllr. Keelan stressed the importance of the elected members making themselves available to meet with Inspector McNally.
Cllr. O'Hanlon queried if this matter was raised at the new Local Community Safety Partnership.
Cllr. Keelan confirmed that he spoke to Superintendent Pat O'Connell.

5.0 Naming of a Proposed Housing Development in Carrickmacross

On the proposal of Cllr. Conlon and seconded by Cllr. Carthy, it was unanimously agreed to confirm the name of **Lána Lios an Uisce, (*Lisanisk Lane),*** for development ref no. 23/206, for Clarlan Ltd, Lisanisk, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan for four number two storey detached dwellings with four number single storey detached domestic garages and all associated works.

6.0 Municipal Coordinators Report

Cllr. Carthy:

Thanked the executive for works on the Bandstand, noting it was agreed to have an alternative project with better value for money, and he looks forward to seeing plans.
Advised that he was disappointed with the road markings following works at the Ross Road bend – they stop at the hatched junction.

Cllr. Keelan:

Remarked that contractors are being paid big money, and the executive may need to keep an eye on this type of issue.

Cllr. Conlon:

Looks forward to the presentation on the Bridewell in January.
Remarked that works for the pitches will be well received.

Cllr. Campbell:

Complimented the Black Island works.
Advised that drainage works are required at the Bridge and at The Point.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Noted the positive news regarding the planning application for Ballynacarry Bridge.
Requested that lobbying efforts with TII continue regarding the lighting and re-alignment of Brennan's Cross, voicing road safety concerns, which will only increase with the new Queen's University link up with Dundalk IT.
Requested that Housing Estate footpaths in Castleblayney are investigated.

Cllr. Keelan:

Welcomed the ring-fenced money for the T&V Renewal Scheme in Inniskeen .
Welcomed the Part 8 planning for Creevy Lough Masterplan.
Noted that during foggy conditions, the wire on the 2+1 N2 Clontibret to Castleblayney Road Scheme is barely visible. Requested that this issue be investigated and referred to TII for attention.
Hopes to see progress on the Tullyvaragh Junction on the N2.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Advised that the red marking has disappeared from the delineators at junctions on the N2, causing poor visibility during dark, foggy weather.

Cllr. Carthy:

Advised that there is no slip road on the 2+1 N2 Clontibret to Castleblayney Road at the turn off for the R183 and requested that TII resolve this issue.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:
Noted that Carrickmacross is forecast to become the largest town in County Monaghan. Expressed concern that Carrickmacross Library is currently operating at full capacity. Suggested exploring the possibility of incorporating the library into the Workhouse site alongside the proposed two-acre Memorial Garden, as this could provide a viable solution and potentially increase footfall at the location.

Director of Services, Cathal Flynn, acknowledged the point raised by Cllr. O'Hanlon and recognised the merits of the current library location. He stated that while there is no objection to investigating the Workhouse option, any proposal would require careful consideration and thorough planning, emphasising that consultation with stakeholders would be essential.

Cllr. Conlon:
Remarked on the need to be cognisant of the Workhouse's past.
Wondered if current feasibility studies etc. would need to be redone?
Stated that the current library is outstanding and advised that if there is opportunity to extend, this should progress at pace.

Cllr. Keelan:
Commented that it is good to have the conversation and debate, remarking that the library service and those in charge need to have their say. "Do nothing" is not an option.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:
Stated that all parties, including the Workhouse, need to be consulted.
Advised that he strongly believes that this option needs consideration.

Director of Services, Cathal Flynn, advised that it can certainly be investigated.

7.0 Q&A

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

1. **Can the executive give an update on road safety works for the Ballybay Road, Carrickmacross, specifically on length of road that runs adjacent to Emmet Park and Gleann Droimnin?**
   Response:
   The proposed Active Travel Scheme, MN/21/0010, incorporating the Castleblaney Road, the Ballybay Road and Ross Road approaches to Carrickmacross Town, includes for road safety measures along these routes. The executive is currently awaiting commentary from the National Transport Authority in respect of the proposed design layout.

2. **Has the council carried out a review on the road surface on Castleblayney Road, Carrickmacross, between Inver College and the roundabout which has dipped in places?**
   Response:

The Municipal District executive has recently submitted a funding application, under the *Former National Roads Rehabilitation Programme*, to facilitate the resurfacing/strengthening of this section of the R927.

3. **When is it expected that repair works will take place on the rear access road in St Macartan's Villas, Carrickmacross, and will the Executive also consider surface works on the main (front) road in this area (incorporating St. Macartans, Emmet Street & Road, Convent View etc)?**
   Response:
   Repair works to the rear access road in St. Macartan's Villas have been completed. The executive will examine the feasibility of resurfacing the main (front) road in this area.

4. **Is there a plan in place to renew road markings throughout our MD towns & villages as some areas have faded completely?**
   Response:
   Existing road markings are subject to on-going review by technical staff. Any required remedial/upgrade works are scheduled on the essential repairs and maintenance list, and addressed as soon as is reasonably practicable.

5. **Has there been any progress in sourcing an alternative mobile stage/bandstand for the Civic Office site in lieu of the original plan to install a permanent one (following our previous discussion on costings)?**
   Response:
   The executive, in conjunction with the Department, is currently exploring a number of potential alternative projects. It is hoped that a suitable alternative will be confirmed and approved in early Q1 2026,

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

6. **I requested in April that 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. Can the result of this examination and any proposed actions be shared?**
   Response:
   This junction has been examined and was determined to be compliant with relevant design standards. The junction sight lines are adequate for vehicles exiting the side road onto the N53. In addition, for vehicles travelling eastbound on the N53 i.e. away from Castleblayney, and taking the right turn into the side road, there is sufficient forward visibility to see oncoming vehicles coming from the Dundalk direction. In the event that a vehicle has to remain stationary before turning right into the side road (to give way to vehicles coming from the Dundalk direction), there is sufficient stopping sight distance for vehicles travelling behind. A drawing supporting this response will issue to the elected members and the Roads Section is happy to discuss further. Just to note, there is no record of any reportable collisions at this junction.

7. **The playground in Drumillard, Castleblayney is extremely busy, has been consistently and has not had a major upgrade in many years. I requested that this playground be examined, and an upgrade considered. Can the result of this examination be shared?**
   Response:
   The emerging *Play & Recreation Strategy* for County Monaghan will facilitate the submission

of proposals for the upgrading of existing playground facilities and the development of new play and recreation areas. Submissions for the upgrade of existing facilities is to be evaluated and ranked based on the findings of independent Annual Inspection Reports.

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. Unfortunately, this submission was unsuccessful. The executive will continue to explore potential funding opportunities to progress this proposal and others, including Drumillard playground, in 2026.

8. **Can the pedestrian crossing at New Street/ Main Street, Castleblayney be examined from a lighting perspective? Lighting levels are low at this location and there have been issues with drivers not identifying pedestrians.**
   Response:
   The executive shall arrange for an assessment of the public lighting in the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing located at the junction of New Street and Main Street, Castleblayney, in early Q1 2026.

9. **I have previously highlighted road L41112. The section of this road at Corravoo is in extremely poor condition and requires resurfacing. Has this road been assessed and if so, what is the assessment and actions proposed (if any)?**
   Response:
   The section of the L41112 at Corravoo has a PSCI rating between 1 and 4, indicating that a structural overlay is required. The L41112 is not included in this Municipal District's currently adopted Roads Programme (2025 – 2028). In the short term, the section of the L41112 at Corravoo shall be included on the essential repairs and maintenance list and attended to as soon as is reasonably practicable. Longer term, the L4112 shall be included for consideration in the adoption of future road programmes (Restoration Improvement, Low-cost Intervention).

10. **Can an update be given on the number of applicants waiting on the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS), progress on assessments for the applicants for the 2024 LIS along with projected timelines for the completion of this scheme?**
    Response:
    There are currently 200 applications (county-wide) undergoing assessment. The projected timeline for the completion of this scheme shall depend on future funding allocations.

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

11. **Will this MD council explore the possibility of sourcing funding for the upgrading and improving of the Inniskeen village playpark and equipment in advance of the roll out of the County Council led, and local community led plan?**
    Response:
    The Municipal District executive previously submitted a funding application under the 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, this funding application was unsuccessful. The executive shall continue to explore all potential sources of funding to progress the proposal.

12. **Following on from the Local Link service presentation last month what progress if any has been made in putting in place more Bus Stops across the Carrickmacross/Castleblayney area including at Corduff Cross, Ballymackney, Ballymackney Cross, and the re-establishment of the Dunard estate access bus stop?**
    Response:
    There is an existing public transport bus stop at Corduff Cross. There is currently no bus service at Ballymackney. There are 2 no. public transport bus stops located in the village of Inniskeen; one located in the village centre, approximately 275m from the entrance to Dunard estate. The other is located at St. Mary's Church, approximately 565m from the entrance to Dunard estate. There are public footways connecting both bus stop locations to Dunard estate.

13. **Has the flooding issue been addressed at the pedestrian crossing and at the main access into the Mary Mother of Mercy Church at Inniskeen?**
    Response:
    The public storm water drainage system is flowing freely. This was confirmed by a specialist drainage contractor last week. Additionally, an engineer from the executive met with the parish priest on site to discuss/examine drainage within the church carpark and the maintenance of same. Whilst on site, the specialist drainage contractor cleared the gulleys and the ACO channel in the church carpark.

14. **Will this MD council explore the possibility of putting in place traffic calming measures at the Coolreagh Cottages area given the high volume and speed of traffic accessing Killanny adjacent to this residential area?**
    Response:
    The Municipal District executive shall arrange for a road safety assessment, including traffic and speed surveys, to ascertain the need for traffic calming measures at the Coolreagh Cottages area. Subject to the outcome of this assessment, the executive shall further determine appropriate traffic calming measures for this location and explore all potential source of funding to implement same.

15. **Are we still on track to see a part 8 planning application lodged in January for the proposed flood alleviation plan for the Donaghmoyne village area?**
    Response:
    It is anticipated that a Part 8 planning application for the flood alleviation scheme will be submitted in late January 2026.

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

16. **What is the up-to-date position in relation to the Shirley House Lane Carpark development?**
    Response:
    Following initial internal stakeholder review of the draft planning documentation, and the outcomes from the updated Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit report, the Municipal District executive is amending the design layout of the proposed carpark development. It is anticipated that a Part 8 planning application for the project will be submitted in January 2026.

17. **When is it expected that the upgrades to the public lighting on Main Street, Carrickmacross will commence?**
    Response:
    In order to minimise disruption to businesses and the general public in the lead up to the festive period, it is intended that the enhancement works to the public lighting on Main Street, Carrickmacross will commence in early January 2026.

18. **What is the up-to-date position with the Convent Lands Masterplan and the provision of a pedestrian link from Convent Avenue to Carrickmacross Main Street?**
    Response:
    Monaghan County Council 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.

    Following consideration of a number of options to improve the pedestrian/cycle linkages to the town centre, a preferred solution has been identified. The executive continues to engage with key stakeholders to agree the mechanism to facilitate this element of the masterplan.

19. **The library facility in the Civic Offices, Carrickmacross has been at capacity for some time now. What plans has Monaghan County Council to address this situation?**
    Response:
    The Library Service wishes to continue to deliver and develop reading, literacy, lifelong learning, and cultural opportunities in the Carrickmacross branch. It would like to meet the demand for more meetings spaces, study spaces, a large multi-purpose room for library and community activities, sensory room facilities and other resources. The executive is currently exploring possibilities for extending the current building or procuring a new space for the library in the town.

20. **With the construction of the new pedestrian crossing in Magheracloone, when will the speed ramp be relocated and the new footpath connecting the community centre to the village shop be completed?**
    Response:
    The Municipal District executive has recently submitted a funding application, under the *2026 Safety Improvement Works on Regional and Local Roads* programme, to facilitate the installation of a new footway linking the school, community centre and the village shop, and the relocation of the existing speed ramp. Subject to a successful funding application, it is envisaged that these works will be completed in Q2 2026.

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

21. **Has there been a date set for a presentation and update on the Master plan for Lough Muckno, Hope Castle, and the Annex in Castleblayney?**
    Response:
    It is expected that an update presentation will be provided to elected members in advance of the January 2026 Municipal District meeting.

22. **With regard to the Market House in Castleblayney. When is it expected that the council will get correspondence back from the Department?**
Response:
Monaghan County Council's submission under *Decision Gate 3 (DG3) - Approval to Proceed*, remains under consideration by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG). The DRCDG have not confirmed a timeline for issuing a response to the Council's DG3 submission.

23. **With the recent announcement regarding the CCTV for Carrickmacross. What is the update on the CCTV in Castleblayney?**
Response:
Following an application presentation on the proposed CCTV scheme to the National CCTV Advisory Committee on the 19th of May 2023, the Committee advised that they would be recommending the approval of the scheme to the Garda Commissioner's Office. The application documentation, specifically the Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), advised that the proposed CCTV scheme for Castleblayney comprised two circuits (Castleblayney town centre and Lough Muckno Park), with recording equipment housed in both the machinery yard building, located next to Castleblayney urban carpark, and in a locked comms cabinet beside Lough Muckno playpark. At the time of application, both storage locations were deemed acceptable by the Garda Crime Prevention Officer (CPO).

On Monday the 24th of November last, the Municipal District executive received an updated security report from An Garda Síochána advising that the storage facility in Lough Muckno Park is now deemed inadequate. Accompanying correspondence further advised that "this application cannot progress until an updated Garda CPO Report is provided outlining that either satisfactory security upgrades to the location outlined have been implemented or a newly designated suitable location has been identified.". The Municipal District executive is working with the Garda CPO to address the issues raised, and it is hoped that the matter will be resolved in January 2026.

24. **What is the update on the bridge rehabilitation work in this MD?**
Response:
The appointed contractor, *Triur Construction*, has recently carried out repair works to Cornacarrow Bridge and Tiragarvan Bridge. The repair works to both bridges are 90% complete. The remaining minor in-stream works are not permitted to be undertaken during the "Closed Season" i.e. October the 1st to April the 30th.

25. **What is the latest update on proposed work at Brennans Cross on the Dundalk Road?**
Response:
Monaghan County Council (MCC) has submitted a 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 has 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 the funding application, MCC has obtained details of a number of recent collisions at this junction from An Garda Síochána 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.

8.0 Motion

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

"That this MD write to The Minister for Justice and The Garda Commissioner asking for an update on the status of the CCTV application for Castleblayney and emphasizing the need for this development."

Cllr. Gibbons noted that there has been communication since the formulation of the motion. Cllr. Campbell noted that GDPR issues arose when moving the original system and acknowledged District Coordinator Damien Thorton's engagement with a security consultant.

On the proposal of Cllr. Conlon and seconded by Cllr. Keelan it was agreed that the meeting go into committee at 1.05pm.

On the proposal of Cllr. Campbell and seconded by Cllr. Conlon it was agreed that the meeting come out of committee at 1.10pm.

9.0 Director of Service Orders

No orders for noting.

10.0 Overview 2025

-Presented by Director of Service, Cathal Flynn

<u>Cllr. O'Hanlon:</u>

Noted that 54% of planning applications for housing are in Carrickmacross – Castleblayney MD.

All elected members expressed thanks for the report and for all the works carried out in the past year.

11.0 VOS/VOC

A Vote of sympathy was extended to Francis McGarrell on the death of Paddy McGarrell (RIP). A *Vote of Congratulations* was extended to Kelly Brady on the achievement of winning the 2025 Women's Personality of the Year at the Soccer Writers Awards, being called up to the Ireland squad, on winning the Golden Boot as the highest scorer in the league with 19 goals and winning the PFA Ireland Women's Player of the Year.

12.0 A.O.B

Cllr. Carthy:

Noted a significant increase of HGV's in Carrickmacross in recent times. Asked that this matter is brought to the attention of An Garda Siochana.

Cllr. Keelan:

Concurred with the above, remarking that a stronger line needs to be taken.
Requested that funding for public lighting at Nuremore is investigated.
Proposed a Vote of Congratulation to Cllr. O'Hanlon on his recent election as Cathaoirleach of the East Border Region Board.

Cllr. Campbell:

Wished Cllr. O'Hanlon well in his new role, remarking it is also the 5oth anniversary of the EBR.

Cllr. O'Hanlon:

Thanked all for the good wishes.
Noted an issue with the warning speed sign on the Ballybay Road, on the far side of Gerflex. It needs adjusting as it warns people, they are speeding at 50km – 60km/hr even though the speed limit is 60km/hr.

Cllr. Conlon:

Concurred with comments about lighting at Nuremore.

Cllr. Gibbons:

Thanked Monaghan County Council staff and elected members for their work during 2025, giving a particular mention to Mr. Jim Gartlan for his efforts.
Wished all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

The meeting concluded at 13:35pm.

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Cathaoirleach Date

_____

Meeting Administrator