

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE DHUN NA nGALL**

Oifig Riathóir na gCruinnithe  
Aras an Chontae  
LEIFEAR  
22 Samhain 2011

Beidh Cruinniú Comhairle Chontae Dhún na nGall ar siúl Dé Luain 28 Samhain, 2011, ag **11.00 r.n. in Áras an Chontae, Leifear**

**DO GACH BHALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE**

**A Chara**

Iarrtar ort a bheith i láthair ag an chruinniú seo den Chomhairle. Ta Clár an chruinnithe le seo.

Beidh Clár Orduithe an Bhainisteora Contae le feiceáil ag an gcruinniú.

**Mise, le meas**

**Liam Mac a'Bhaird**  
**Riathóir Cruinnithe Gníomhach**

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**DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

Office of Meetings  
Administrator  
County House  
Lifford  
22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2011

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

A Meeting of Donegal County Council will be held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2011, at **11.00 am in the County House, Lifford.**

**TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Dear Councillor**

You are summoned to attend this meeting of the Council. The Agenda is attached.

The Register of County Manager's Orders will be available for inspection at the meeting.

**Yours sincerely**

**Liam Ward**  
**A/Meetings Administrator**

## **AGENDA**

### **1. Confirmation of Minutes**

- a) Confirmation of Minutes of Adjourned September Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.
- b) Confirmation of Minutes of Adjourned September Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.
- c) Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.
- d) Confirmation of Minutes of Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2011.

## **MOTIONS**

- (L) Local  
(C) County  
(O) Other

## **LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA**

### **Water and Environment**

#### **2. Clr. McGarvey**

That this Council demand a review of the entire wording in the Bill relating to Septic Tanks. (C)

#### **3. Clr. Blaney**

"That Donegal County Council apply to the relevant bodies (An Taisce) for blue flag status for more of the beaches in our County."  
(C)

### **Corporate**

#### **4. Clr. Quinn**

"That this Council agrees that wages in the Public Sector be capped at €100,000.00 as proposed by Sinn Fein in it's pre-budget submission."  
(O)

### **Roads and Transportation**

#### **5. Clr. Brogan**

"I propose that this Council discuss the implications of the withdrawal of the proposed funding for the A5 and continue to make this our no. 1 priority as a Council and take whatever steps necessary to ensure that we continue to pursue this funding." (C)

6. Clr. M McBride

"Calling on Donegal County Council as a matter of urgency to improve the road safety at the junction of the N56 with the Churchill/Milford Road R249." (L)

DONEGAL ELECTORAL AREA

*Community Enterprise and Cultural*

7. Clr. Byrne

"That Donegal County Council take a lead in working with our Donegal Diaspora with a view towards maximising the potential of this Diaspora as an economic, social and cultural resource for the County, thus ensuring that the Council build on previous work in this field, and continue to work through all stakeholders in the County including the voluntary sector and with networks such as Donegal Associations in various parts of the world." (O)

"STRANORLAR ELECTORAL AREA

*Corporate*

8. Clr. Harvey

"In recognition that an Educated Workforce is vital to boost our economy that this Council supports the call for the qualifying distance criterion of 24km be re-instated for the non adjacent rate of grant." (O)

*Community Enterprise and Culture*

9. Clr. McGowan

"That this Council discuss developing the whole area of energy crops and wind/wave energy where the Council can apply for EU funding in Partnership with other NGOs (non government agencies), Cross Border Partners, and that a presentation be given on the ANSWER Project as an example of how this can be achieved." (O)

*Roads and Transportation*

10. Clr. Crawford

"That this Council debate the potential danger which a serious flood could have on Lifford Town." (L)

GLENTIES ELECTORAL AREA

**Corporate**

11. **Clr. Alcorn**

"That Donegal County Council requests the Minister for Justice to keep all Gardai Barracks in Donegal open, as they are a most valued asset to each Town and Village that they are located in." (O)

12. **Clr. M.T. Gallagher**

"That Donegal County Council undertake to initiate and lead a campaign with other local authorities to highlight the limited powers within Local Government and to publicly illustrate the constraints and unsuitability both EU and National Legislation has had on Local Governance in general but in particular the detrimental effects various legislation has had on Donegal as a County." (O)

**INISHOWEN ELECTORAL AREA**

**Corporate**

13. **Clr. Murray**

"In advance of the publication of the government's budget, this council calls for the restoration of the 200 special needs assistants that were cut in the last budget." (O)

**Community Enterprise and Culture**

14. **Clr. McGuinness**

"That this Council enter into a long-term lease agreement with the Inishowen Rugby Club in respect of the lands they currently occupy at Moss Road, Carndonagh." (L)

**Roads and Transportation**

15. **Clr. M. Doherty**

"That Donegal County Council re-open the shore path between Moville and Greencastle on or before the completion of the capping works being carried out at present on the break-water project." (L)

**16. Disposal of Land – Section 211 Planning and Development Act, 2000**

Notice under Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 to dispose of a small plot of land measuring 0.0158 hectares (158m<sup>2</sup> or 0.039acres) to the side of No.9 Ard McCool, Stranorlar to Mr Pat Murphy.

**17. Taking of decision pursuant to Planning & Development Act, 2000 (Part XI), and Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 (Part 8).**

- a) To approve carrying out of works with regard to the construction of water treatment clarification and filtration units, 250m<sup>3</sup> storage reservoir, pumping station, control building, sludge treatment and all associated site works at Ardsbeg Townland, Gortahork, County Donegal.
- b) To approve carrying out of works with regard to the construction of approximately 4.7 km of Standard Single Carriageway, primarily of online widening and realignment, with off-line construction where required for improvement of the N15 from Meencrumlin to Ballybofey.
- c) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to road safety minor improvement scheme (RSMIS) to improve a section of the N3 (Belleek to Ballyshannon Road) in the townland of Cloghore in the Donegal Electoral Area (Planning Report to be circulated by service prior to the meeting.)
- d) To approve the carrying out of works along the Pilgrims Path at Sliabh Liag (Planning Report to be circulated by service prior to the meeting.)
- e) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of a Transient Traveller Facility at Elagh Beg, Burnfoot
- f) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the Lifford Environmental Improvement Scheme.

**18. Corporate and Housing**

- a) To approve the Schedule of Meetings for 2012.
- b) To fill Casual Vacancy on Coiste Na Gaeilge arising from the resignation of Clr. John Campbell.
- c) To approve the raising of revised loan of €5,075,297 for the development of a Voluntary Housing Project in Carndonagh by APEX Housing Association Ireland Ltd (formerly North & West Housing Ireland Ltd), under the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme.

**19. Roads and Transportation**

- a) Request for a Delegation from Donegal County Council to meet with the NRA to discuss general progress on National Roads.

- b) To adopt the “ROAD TRAFFIC (SPECIAL SPEED LIMITS)(COUNTY OF DONEGAL) BYE-LAWS 2011”.

**20. Water and Environment**

To approve the raising of a capital loan in the amount of €1.9 million for the purpose of providing the matching funding for the capital phase of the Ballybofey Stranorlar Leisure Centre (Finn Valley Swimming Pool) Project.

**21. Endorsement of Confirmed Minutes**

- a) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2011.
- b) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.
- c) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.
- d) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.
- e) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Donegal Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.
- f) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.
- g) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Donegal Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.
- h) Endorsement of the Confirmed Minutes of Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2011.
- i) To note the Confirmed Minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.

**22. Authorisation of representation at a Seminar, Meeting or Event**

Authorisation of representation at a seminar, meeting or event under Section 142 (5) of Local Government Act, 2001, S.I. No 668 of 2006, Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations 2006, S.I. No 37 of 2010, Guidelines given by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the Local Government Act, 2001 (Section 142) Regulations 2010:-

- Irish Central Border Area Network Ltd – Data Capture: Information Rich, Insight Poor? to be held Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2011 in the Hotel Kilmore, Cavan.

- Elected Member’s Training Seminar – Public Sector Expenditure, Where is Ireland spending above the odds? to be held from Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 at the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Dublin Road, Galway City.
- Elected Member’s Training Seminar – Local Government (Charges) Act 2009 to be held from Friday 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 at the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Dublin Road, Galway City.
- The Institute of Professional Training – “The Tragic Impacts of Major Flooding and Freezing Spells” An Ever Increasing Problem to be held from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2012 at the Silver Tassie Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.
- TJK Conferences – Local Government Seminar for Councillors to be held from Friday 27<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2012 at the Patrick Punch Hotel, Limerick.

### **23. Conference Reports**

#### **Clr. David Alcorn**

A.C.C.C. held Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 in Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co Offaly.

#### **Clr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill**

LAMA Spring Seminar 2011 Friday 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2011 in Fairways Hotel, Dundalk.

#### **Clr. Patrick McGowan**

Local Government Promoting Renewable Energy Friday 19<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2011 in Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry.

#### **Clr. John Ryan**

Domestic Water Meters for Ireland – Implications for Irish Consumers and Business Friday 9<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Ravensdale Suite, Carrickdale Hotel, Carrickarnon, Dundalk, Co. Louth.

#### **Clr. Dessie Larkin**

AMAI Annual Conference Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Trim Co. Meath.

#### **Clr. David Alcorn**

AMAI Annual Conference Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Knightsbrook Hotel, Trim Co. Meath.

**Clr. Patrick McGowan**

Domestic Water Meters for Ireland Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Carrickdale Hotel, Dundalk Co. Louth.

**Clr. Dessie Larkin**

Dip Study with IPA in Local Government Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in IPA Headquarters in Dublin.

**Clr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill**

The Role of Tourism in Local Economic Recovery Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Clonea Hotel, Waterford Co. Waterford.

**Clr. Terence Slowey**

LAMA Autumn Seminar from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Clonea Strand Hotel, Dungarvan.

**Clr. Michael McBride**

LAMA Autumn Seminar from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in the Clonea Strand Hotel, Dungarvan.

**Clr. Dessie Larkin**

LAMA Tourism Conference from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Dungarvan, Waterford.

**Clr. Mickey Doherty**

LAMA Autumn Seminar 2011 from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford.

**Clr Mickey Doherty**

Optimising Taxation Allowances and Benefits from Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in Rosscarbery, West Cork.

**Clr. Dessie Larkin**

IPA Diploma Seminar Local Government Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in IPA Headquarters in Dublin.

**Clr. Frank McBrearty**

Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 Friday 14<sup>th</sup> to - Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in Westport, Co. Mayo.

**Clr. Frank McBrearty**

Optimising Taxation Allowances and Benefits Friday 21<sup>st</sup> to Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2011 in Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork.

**Clr. Michael McBride**

Optimising Taxation Allowances and Benefits Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork.

**Clr. Terence Slowey**

The Role of the Councillor in Education The Community Friday 28<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in City North Hotel, Gormanstown.

**Clr. Michael McBride**

Local Government Powers to create/abolish rights of way Friday 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2011 in the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Galway.

**Clr. Frank McBrearty**

Local Government Powers to create/abolish rights of way Friday 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2011 in the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Galway.

**24. Request for Delegation**

Consideration of Request for delegation from Donegal Youth Council to meet with Donegal County Council.

**25. Mayor's Business**

**26. Manager's Report**

**QUESTIONS**

- (L) Local
- (C) County
- (O) Other

**LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA**

**Planning and Economic Development**

**27. Clr. McGarvey**

"Can I ask this Council to initiate a separate policy for our Islands with regard to Development and Funding from National and Local Authority resources?" (L)

**28. Clr. Quinn**

"Has Donegal County Council considered the take-over of Mechanical Plants that are problematic in many estates across the County?" (C)

**Roads and Transportation**

29. Clr. McGarvey

"Can we ask for additional funding for LIS due to the increased costs to carry out such work?" (C)

30. Clr. Brogan

"What progress has been made by this Council following my motion that we working with FAS would set up more community assisted schemes that would help us and some of our roads projects?" (C)

**Water and Environment**

31. Clr. Quinn

"When does Donegal County Council intend commencing the much-needed and long-awaited Water Treatment Scheme at Gartan Lake?" (L)

32. Clr. Brogan

"Could this council give us a full update as to the operations of our Civic Amenity Sites going forward?" (C)

**DONEGAL ELECTORAL AREA**

**Water and Environment**

33. Clr. Byrne

"Can this Council commence the pipe replacement programme for Frosses and Mountcharles as a priority given that quite a delay has occurred since the grant was allocated in January 2011?" (L)

**Roads and Transportation**

34. Clr. Byrne

"Can this council look at providing safety features at the St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs with emphasis on both pedestrian and vehicular traffic?" (L)

**STRANORLAR ELECTORAL AREA**

**Roads and Transportation**

35. Clr. Harvey

"Can I have a breakdown of costs on the Ballindrait to Castlefin Road from 2008, (excluding Current repairs), breakdown to include materials and Man Hours and does the current repairs on the road by a contractor have a warranty?" (L)

36. Clr. Harvey

"Can you outline the procedure when a roaduser damages their car and submits the claim to DCC, what action does DCC do and what is the average waiting time for a response, and how many claims are in the system at the minute?" (C)

37. Clr. Crawford

"What is the position of this Council in having repairs carried out to lights which are not working at Cathedral Hill Raphoe?" (L)

38. Clr. Crawford

"What is the estimated cost of flood prevention/repairs in Raphoe and other locations which prove to be problematic in the Stranorlar Electoral Area in particular those areas identified as a result of flood damage in October 2011?" (L)

**Community, Enterprise and Cultural**

39. Clr. McGowan

"Please can a detailed report on Castlefin Bridge and the Dooneyloop (Dunnalob) to Clady Footpath be provided outlining funding and relevant schedule of works?" (L)

**Planning and Economic Development**

40. Clr. McGowan

"Please can a report be given on the takeover of estates with pumps and treatments plants and the obligations on this Local Authority in the event of a Public Health Nuisance (sewerage spill)?" (C)

**GLENTIES ELECTORAL AREA**

**Water and Environment**

41. Clr. Alcorn

"When is it expected that construction work will commence on the Dungloe and Glenties Sewerage Scheme?" (L)

42. Clr. Slowey

"How many litter fines were issued by Donegal County Council in 2010, and how many prosecutions were initiated in respect of each Electoral Area?" (C)

43. Clr. M.T. Gallagher

"What date does this Council foresee tender documents for the Dungloe and Glenties Sewage Scheme being published and would there be a rough date or estimate in relation to the start date of this project?" (L)

**Community, Enterprise and Cultural**

44. Clr. M.T. Gallagher

"Would this Council consider through the C&E department developing a blue-print plan for developing tourism product in the West of the County?" (O)

**Roads and Transportation**

45. Clr. Alcorn

Why has the public lighting that we erected on the N56 at Meenacuing Gweedore as a pilot scheme, not been replaced by a better standard of light as promised?" (L)

46. Clr. Slowey

"Will Donegal County Council carry out (In House) a comprehensive Energy Audit of its Buildings in Lifford and the Regional Offices with a view to reducing the considerable costs of heating and lighting, and provide also a breakdown of the heating and lighting costs of headquarters and each of the Regional Offices which we could use as a base line for the future?" (C)

**INISHOWEN ELECTORAL AREA**

**Planning and Economic Development**

47. Clr. Murray

"While recognising the labour burden on our planning enforcement officers, can a policy be put in place to assist these members of staff in order to ensure that planning enforcement issues are dealt with in a timely manner?" (C)

**Corporate**

48. Clr. Murray

"Can you outline the protocols in relation to members of this council seeking a meeting between constituents and council staff so that we can provide a top class service for the people of this county?" (C)

MINUTES OF MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL, HELD  
IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD ON 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2011

C/451/11     MEMBERS PRESENT

Clrs. Noel McBride, Mayor, D. Alcorn, L. Blaney, J. Boyle, C. Brogan, B. Byrne, J. Campbell, P. Canning, G. Crawford, M. Doherty, P. Doherty, R. Donaghey, M. Farren, M.T. Gallagher, M. Harley, C. Harvey, D. Larkin, F. McBrearty, M. McBride, S. Mc Eniff, I. McGarvey, P. McGowan, J. Murray, S. Ó Domhnaill, B. O'Neill, M. Quinn, J. Ryan, T. Slowey.

C/452/11     OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Seamus Neely, County Manager, Mr Liam Ward, Director of Housing and Corporate, A/Meetings Administrator, Mr John McLaughlin, Director of Roads and Transportation, Mr Garry Martin, Head of Finance and Director of Emergency Services, Mr Joe Peoples, A/Director of Water and Environment, Mr Michael Heaney, Director of Community Culture & Planning, Mr Aidan O' Doherty, Senior Engineer, Mr. Eunan Quinn A/Senior Planner, Ms Annemarie Crawford, Staff Officer, Corporate Services.

C/453/11     VARIATION IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

On the proposal of Clr. Byrne, seconded by Clr. Mc Garvey, it was resolved to vary the order of business and deal with items 17 and 20 at this juncture.

The Mayor proposed, seconded by Clr. Mc Garvey, that a vote of sympathy be extended to An Taoiseach, Mr. Enda Kenny, T.D. on the death of his mother Eithne Kenny.

Members representing the various political groupings offered their condolences with the County Manager, Mr. Seamus Neely expressing sympathy on behalf of the Management and Staff of Donegal County Council.

The Mayor informed Members that there would be an opportunity for a group from Donegal County Council to meet with Mr. John Callinan, Assistant Secretary, Department of An

Taoiseach later in the week to discuss the practical phasing of the A5 Project.

C/454/11 TAKING OF DECISION WITH REGARD TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF WATER TREATMENT CLARIFICATION AND FILTRATION UNITS 250M3 STORAGE RESERVOIR, PUMPING STATION, CONTROL BUILDING, SLUDGE TREATMENT AND ALL ASSOCIATED SITE WORKS AT ARDSBEG TOWNLAND, GORTAHORK, CO DONEGAL

Members considered the report, circulated with the agenda, in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Clr. Byrne, seconded by Clr. McBrearty, the carrying out of works under Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, with regard to the construction of water treatment clarification and filtration units, 250m<sup>3</sup> storage reservoir, pumping station, control building, sludge treatment and all associated site works at Ardsbeg Townland, Gortahork, County Donegal was approved.

C/455/11 TAKING OF DECISION WITH REGARD TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF APPROXIMATELY 4.7 KM OF STANDARD SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY, PRIMARILY OF ONLINE WIDENING AND REALIGNMENT WITH OFF-LINE CONSTRUCTION WHERE REQUIRED FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE N15 FROM MEENCRUMLIN TO BALLYBOFEY- N15 BLACKBURN BRIDGE

Members considered the report, circulated with the agenda, in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Clr. McGowan, seconded by Clr. Harvey, the carrying out of works under Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, with regard to the construction of approximately 4.7 km of Standard Single Carriageway, primarily of online widening and realignment, with off-line construction where required for improvement of the N15 from Meenacrumlin to Ballybofey- N15 Blackburn Bridge was approved.

The Stranorlar Electoral Area Members outlined their concerns with regard to the inner section of this project.

Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director of Roads and Transportation confirmed that he had no difficulty with a sub-group from the Stranorlar Electoral Area meeting with the NRA in relation to the project. . It was agreed that the Stranorlar members would liaise with Mr. Mc Laughlin to examine the possibility of organising same on the same date.

C/456/11 TAKING OF DECISION TO APPROVE CARRYING OUT OF WORKS WITH REGARD TO ROAD SAFETY MINOR IMPROVEMENT SCHEME (RSMIS) TO IMPROVE A SECTION OF THE N3 (BELLEEK TO BALLYSHANNON ROAD) IN THE TOWNLAND OF CLOGHORE IN THE DONEGAL ELECTORAL AREA

Members considered the report, circulated with the agenda, together with Planning Report circulated prior to the meeting in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Clr. Byrne, seconded by Clr. Boyle, the carrying out of works under Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, with regard to road safety minor improvement scheme (RSMIS) to improve a section of the N3 (Belleek to Ballyshannon Road) in the townland of Cloghore in the Donegal Electoral Area was approved.

C/457/11 TAKING OF DECISION TO APPROVE THE CARRYING OUT OF WORKS ALONG CLIFF TOP PATH AND PILRGIMS PATH AT SLIABH LIAG

Members considered the report, circulated with the agenda and Appendix C- Planning Report circulated prior to the meeting in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Clr. Boyle, seconded by Clr. Byrne, the carrying out of works under Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, with regard to the construction of a pitched path, minor drainage works along the Cliff Top Path, and minor drainage and regarding works along the Pilgrims Path at Sliabh Liag was approved.

- C/458/11 TAKING OF DECISION WITH REGARD TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TRANSIENT TRAVELLER FACILITY AT ELAGH BEG, BURNFOOT  
Members considered the report, circulated with the agenda, in relation to the above.  
On the proposal of Clr. M. Doherty, seconded by Clr. Canning, it was resolved to defer the consideration of this item to a further meeting of the Council subject to options with regard to the selection of an alternative site being considered.
- C/459/11 TAKING OF DECISION WITH REGARD TO THE LIFFORD ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME  
Members considered the report, circulated with the agenda, in relation to the above.  
On the proposal of Clr. Crawford, seconded by Clr. Harley, the carrying out of works under Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, with regard to the Lifford Environmental Improvement Scheme was approved.
- C/460/11 TO APPROVE THE RAISING OF A CAPITAL LOAN IN THE AMOUNT OF €1.9 MILLION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING THE MATCHING FUNDING FOR THE CAPITAL PHASE OF THE BALLYBOFEY STRANORLAR LESIURE CENTRE (FINN VALLEY SWIMMINGPOOL) PROJECT  
Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.  
On the proposal of Clr. Mc Gowan, seconded by Clr. Harvey, it was resolved to approve , subject to the sanction of the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, the raising of a Capital Loan in the amount of €1.9million for the purpose of providing the matching funding for the capital phase of the Ballybofey Stranorlar Leisure Centre (Finn Valley Swimming Pool) Project.
- C/461/11 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF ADJOURNED MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2011

On the proposal of Clr. Larkin, seconded by Clr. M Doherty, the Minutes of the Adjourned Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 were adopted.

C/462/11 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF ADJOURNED SEPTEMBER MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2011

On the proposal of Clr. Crawford, seconded by Clr. McGarvey, the Minutes of the Adjourned Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 were adopted.

C/463/11 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2011

On the proposal of Clr. Canning, seconded by Clr. M McBride, the Minutes of the Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 were adopted.

C/464/11 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2011

On the proposal of Clr. McGarvey, seconded by Clr. M Doherty, the Minutes of the Adjourned Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2011 were adopted.

C/465/11 CALL BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL FOR A REVIEW OF THE ENTIRE WORDING IN THE BILL RELATING TO SEPTIC TANKS

On the proposal of Clr. McGarvey, seconded by Clr. Canning, the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council demand a review of the entire wording in the Bill relating to Septic Tanks.”

Members were informed that:-

“The Water Services (Amendment) Bill 2011 was published recently by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government. A summary of the key features of the Bill are set out below:

All householders with septic tanks and on-site systems will be required to register details of their system with the relevant local authority and a national register will be compiled and held by the E.P.A. Householders will be required to pay a registration fee which shall not exceed €50. A certificate of registration shall be valid for a period of 5 years from the date on which it was issued.

A National Inspection Plan will be developed by the EPA. It is intended that the roll-out of the Plan will be managed by local authorities. The Department has indicated that while inspections would be concentrated on areas with higher risk to the environment and public health, they will also be carried out in lower risk areas but at a lower rate.

In cases where systems are not working properly the E.P.A. Inspectorate will notify the Water Services Authority who will be required to issue an "advisory notice" directing that the matters specified in the advisory notice be remedied. A person aggrieved by an advisory notice may apply to have their system inspected by an authorised person from the Water Services Authority. An application fee which shall not exceed €200 is prescribed.

Where the advisory notice is cancelled the fee is refundable.”

A number of Members expressed the opinion that the introduction of the bill would be disastrous for a rural County such as Donegal. A large part of the problem they acknowledged was the mixed message emanating from the Department itself.

Clarification was sought in relation to a number of items namely:-

- Whether Donegal was included in the high risk category for water quality?
- What linkages existed between Donegal and the EPA and the provisions if any for EPA Licensing.
- Guidance in relation to the makeup of the inspectorate

- If provision had been made for the introduction of a Retrofit Grant.
- The timescales involved and whether compliance would be directly related to the year that the tank was built.
- The access rights to Percolation Areas.

On the proposal of Clr. O' Domhnaill, seconded by Clr. Mc Garvey, it was resolved that a Special Meeting be held to discuss the importance of the Septic Tank legislation when guidelines are published by the D. E.C.L.G. Members asked that that an official from the Department be in attendance to address Members concerns and queries.

Clr. Mc Brearty, advised that it was essential that the people of Donegal were treated in a fair and consistent manner and thus asked that the issues raised in the course of the debate be conveyed to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government.

Mr. Joe Peoples, A/Director Water & Environment informed Members that there was provision in the Bill for the EPA to arrange for the establishment of an inspectorate. It was anticipated that they would carry out the initial inspection and then advise the Local Authority concerned where action was needed.

C/466/11 CALL FOR DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL TO APPLY TO THE RELEVANT BODIES (AN TAISCE) FOR BLUE FLAG STATUS FOR MORE OF THE BEACHES IN OUR COUNTY

On the proposal of Clr. Blaney, seconded by Clr. McGarvey, the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council apply to the relevant bodies (An Taisce) for blue flag status for more of the beaches in our County."

Members were informed that:-

#### “Blue Flag Beaches:

In 2011 Donegal was awarded 12 Blue Flags for its beaches, 11 of these beaches were applied for and managed by Donegal County Council while Bundoran was applied for and managed by Bundoran Town Council. The following beaches were awarded Blue Flag status in 2011, Shroove, Culdaff, Lisfannon, Magherawarden (Portsalon), Marblehill, Killahoey, Carrickfinn, Narin/Portnoo, Fintra, Murvagh, Rossnowlagh and Bundoran. The Blue Flag season is from 1st June – 15th September each year.

Donegal County Council applies to An Taisce for Blue Flag status each year.

Each application for a Blue Flag must meet all of the 32 criteria set out and these are divided into the following categories,

1. Environmental Education & Information,
2. Water Quality,
3. Environmental Management,
4. Safety & Services.

#### Green Coast Beaches:

A further seven of Donegal's beaches were awarded the Green Coast Award, Lady's Bay, Rathmullan, Ballyheirnan, Drumnatinney, Magheroarty, Port Arthur and Dooey. This award was established to acknowledge, promote and protect the environment of rural beaches in Ireland. These are beaches that would not have the infrastructure or facilities necessary for Blue Flag status. Green Coasts are awarded for their water quality and are also prized for their natural unspoilt environment. An Taisce also carry out inspections of Green Coast beaches during the bathing season. Achieving the requisite standards places extra demands on the Council's resources in addition to the Blue Flag beaches

#### Designated Bathing Waters:

Donegal has 19 designated bathing waters this is the highest number in the country. 12 of these designated bathing waters

are Blue Flag beaches and a further 5 are Green Coast beaches. Water quality is monitored at all designated beaches on a fortnightly basis.

The members have continued to recognise the significant tourist potential and have provided significant funding on an annual basis to ensure that standards can be maintained and improved in order to secure these awards. If the Council is to consider additional applications for Blue Flag Awards considerable additional funding would be required under the following headings.

- Water quality (taking samples and analysis),
- Water Safety and the provision of lifesaving personnel / equipment,
- Provision of toilet facilities,
- Provision of recycling facilities,
- Provision of litter bins and beach cleaning.

Donegal County Council is already participating in the “Pack it in, Pack it Out” scheme at four Blue Flag beaches to reduce costs in relation to the provision of recycling facilities and beach cleaning activities at these beaches.

The Council also acknowledges the support provided by local communities in relation to maintaining beaches by way of regular litter clean ups. This is an invaluable support in addition to the Council’s own resources in the area of beach management.”

Clr Blaney asked that every effort be made to progress remedial works on the following beaches:

- Rathmullan
- Downings
- Ballyheirnan

He proceeded to outline the extent of the remedial works required and noted that the application of same would do much to bring these locations up to Blue Flag standard

An increase in the number of Blue Flag locations it was acknowledged would act as a powerful marketing tool for tourism in the County. This coupled with the promotion of our excellent golf and links courses would they advised put Donegal on the international stage.

It was suggested also that an audit of all beaches in the County be carried out, together with an assessment of the Seven Green Coast Award beaches. There were calls also for the effective promotion of the beaches on the islands off the Donegal coast.

Mr. Joe Peoples, A/Director Water and Environment cited the importance of retaining the number of Blue Flag beaches at current levels whilst mindful of the ongoing budgetary constraints.

He agreed to have the matter raised at the next Water & Environment SPC, and thereafter to issue a report to the full Council for consideration.

Clr. Blaney in conclusion asked that consideration be given also to the provision of a lifeguard at Portsalon.

C/467/11 REQUEST THAT THIS COUNCIL AGREES WITH A CAP ON WAGES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AT €100,000 AS PROPOSED BY SINN FEIN IN IT'S PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

On the proposal of Clr. Quinn, seconded by Clr. Harvey, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council agrees that wages in the Public Sector be capped at €100,000.00 as proposed by Sinn Fein in it's pre-budget submission."

Clr Quinn advised that such a cap was necessary given the difficulties being encountered by low income families. He thus called on the Government to lead by example and reduce cabinet salaries immediately. It was acknowledged however that Donegal County Council had no role in the matter and that there were specific legal implications involved in making such reductions.

Clr Quinn said that Sinn Fein had drafted a number of emergency proposals which they believed could address much of the funding deficits, but that the implementation of same necessitated the capping of public sector salaries at €100,000.

C/468/11 THAT THIS COUNCIL DISCUSS THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE PROPOSED FUNDING FOR THE A5

On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. Larkin, the following motion was adopted:-

"I propose that this Council discuss the implications of the withdrawal of the proposed funding for the A5 and continue to make this our no. 1 priority as a Council and take whatever steps necessary to ensure that we continue to pursue this funding."

Members were informed that:-

“It is understood that the portion of funding for this project from the Irish Government has been re-scheduled to fund the project over a longer time scale. In addition, it is understood that both governments as part of the North South Ministerial Council have agreed that the relevant departments will now prepare a new funding and implementation plan to deliver the project.

This project is very important, not only to County Donegal, but to all of the North West, including Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Leitrim, Sligo, Monaghan and Cavan. Indeed it is important to all of the Island of Ireland.

This project is justified on many different levels.

It is a critical part of an All-Island Transport Network and provision of high quality access to the Northwest. It is a part of the Strategy for developing Derry and Letterkenny as a Linked Gateway. It addresses the Inter-reg policies of the European Union. It addresses the Transport Policies of the Union. In

addition, it is part of the Saint Andrews Agreement and therefore part of the Peace Process.

Of itself, it is a stand-alone project with a very positive Cost-Benefit Ratio. It is a "shovel ready" project and could offer good employment to the local construction sector starting in the next year with additional benefits to the complete supply chain that would be affected. It clearly has long term economic and social benefits for the northwest region as a whole and without this vital road access, the Northwest would fall further behind the rest of the country which has had several motorways open in the last five years. Motorists and hauliers are already seeing the difference between the regions as a result of the new motorways. In addition it makes the northwest region more difficult to market and attract international companies for investment.

The road link between Strabane and Lifford is currently with Bord Planala for approval and this link connects to and depends on the new A5 Project being in place.

Over the past two weeks, Donegal County Council has attended a number of meetings with other Councils/Agencies in the region to discuss how this project can still be delivered. In addition, it is likely that Donegal County Council will participate in delegations being sought with the two Departments of Transport (North and South) in early December.”

Members whilst recognising the challenges facing the economy were of the opinion that the project needed to proceed on the basis that it would generate much needed economic growth and development for the County. They acknowledged that over the last ten years considerable effort had been made both by Donegal County Council and the Elected Members to ensure the progression of this project. Concern was expressed in relation to the handling of the matter nationally, with a number of Members indicating that the €50million allocation for 2015 and 2016 was totally inadequate. It was generally agreed that there had been much development nationally in terms of roads

infrastructure over the last number of years but that the Northwest clearly lagged behind in terms of this type of investment.

On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. Larkin, it was resolved that a cross-party delegation from Donegal County Council (including the Mayor and the County Manager) meet with the Taoiseach, Mr. Enda Kenny, T.D to discuss the continued progression of the A5 Project and associated funding mechanisms.

It was suggested also that the Oireachtas Members in the County be invited to attend.

Members also outlined the necessity of meeting with Mr. Danny Kennedy, Northern Ireland Regional Development Minister and the CEOs of the various N.I Agencies.

A number of queries were raised including:-

1. Whether or not funding was still being provided for the bridge at Lifford.
2. What was the position now in relation to the public consultation process given that the project had been scheduled to open in 2015.
3. Clarity with regard to the statutory position on the project given that it had emanated from the peace process and the St Andrews agreement.
4. What progress there was if any on the Lifford to Letterkenny Road.

Clr. Mc Guinness called on the Council to take the matter to Europe given that road access was fundamental to the economic prosperity of the northwest.

The implications for the N14/N15 and associated linkages were also noted.

Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director of Roads and Transportation confirmed that he would make the relevant arrangements to seek a cross-party delegation to meet with An Taoiseach, Mr. Enda Kenny T.D.

He noted that there had been a request also to meet with the Northern Ireland Agencies and advised that he would work with the Members to progress same, liaising where possible with Mr. Mr. John Callinan, Assistant Secretary at the Department of An Taoiseach.

Members asked that the issue be kept as a standing item on the agenda.

C/469/11 ADJOURNMENT FOR LUNCH

It was unanimously agreed at this juncture to take a 30 minute recess for lunch.

C/470/11 MOTIONS UNDER URGENT BUSINESS

On resumption of the meeting the Chair was taken by the Deputy Mayor, Clr Barry O' Neill in the absence of the Mayor who had to attend to a previous engagement.

The Council considered a request signed by Clrs. Harley, O' Neill, Farren, McBrearty, Mc Guinness, Boyle, Slowey, Mc Garvey, Harvey, P. Doherty, and McGowan, to have the following motion discussed as urgent business:-

“That Donegal County Council today consider the future of the need to retain Senior Soccer in this County, by considering funding from the Council to the Finn Harps Football Club of €20,000, so that the club will be in a position to meet its licensing requirements by 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011 to the FAI Licensing Committee.

It was resolved on the proposal of Clr. Harley, seconded by Clr. McGarvey, in accordance with Standing order No 28 to accept the motion and consider same prior to the close of business.

The Council considered a request signed by Clrs. Quinn, Blaney, McGarvey, Byrne, Alcorn, McBrearty, M. McBride, Ryan, M. Doherty, Donaghey, Larkin, Canning, Murray, Gallagher and Harvey to have the following motion discussed as urgent business:-

“That Donegal County Council implores the Government not to increase VAT in the forthcoming Budget as such a change would cause destruction of many businesses in this County”

It was unanimously agreed in accordance with Standing Order No 28 to accept the motion and consider same prior to the close of business.

C/471/11 REQUEST FOR URGENT ATTENTION TO IMPROVE THE ROAD SAFETY AT THE JUNCTION OF THE N56 WITH THE CHURCHILL/MILFORD R249

On the proposal of Clr. M. McBride, seconded by Clr. Brogan, the following motion was adopted:-

"Calling on Donegal County Council as a matter of urgency to improve the road safety at the junction of the N56 with the Churchill/Milford Road R249."

Members were informed that:-

“This junction has been raised by Donegal County Council with the NRA as a possible Safety Scheme for 2012. Funding available in 2012 will be restricted and is allocated on a priority basis nationally. As such at this time there is no guarantee of funding in 2012. Donegal County Council propose to initiate a survey and review of the location which will expedite design and construction works if funding is made available.”

Clr. McBride stated that it imperative that a site visit was carried out in relation to the junction as soon as possible. A number of issues he advised compounded the problem namely:-

1. The speed of the traffic on the N56.
2. The steep brae into the junction.
3. Parking of commercial vehicles on the Milford side of the junction.

He asked for the following short-term measures to be put in place.:-

- Elevation of the “Stop Sign”
- Provision of “Rumble Strips” on the road.
- Call for parking to be restricted for up to 50yards on each side of the junction coupled with adequate warning signage.

Members asked that a report in relation to the lineage and signage be provided at the next Electoral Area Meeting. Any long-term solution they advised needed to include the provision of traffic lights.

Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director of Roads & Transportation agreed to look at possible short-term measures including the provision of a “ Stop Sign”

C/472/11 LEAD ROLE FOR DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL IN WORKING WITH OUR DONEGAL DIASPORA TO MAXIMISE THE POTENTIAL OF THE DIASPORA AS AN ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE FOR THE COUNTY

On the proposal of Clr. Byrne, seconded by Clr. Larkin, the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council take a lead in working with our Donegal Diaspora with a view towards maximising the potential of this Diaspora as an economic, social and cultural resource for the County, thus ensuring that the Council build on previous work in this field, and continue to work through all stakeholders in the County including the voluntary sector and with networks such as Donegal Associations in various parts of the world."

Members were informed that:-

“The Donegal County Strategy, “An Strateis” defines the community of Donegal as being made up not only of those who live in the County, but also those with a connection to, or interest in Donegal, no matter where they live. It is recognised that the Donegal Diaspora is a key resource for the County and that the County and its Diaspora can establish links and seek to

cooperate for mutual benefit. To date Donegal County Council has been working on various projects with a view towards tapping into this resource e.g. Donegal Community in Touch Ezine, participation in Golden Bridges Initiative, etc. Internationally, Diaspora is recognised as a key area of strategic importance for some countries (e.g. Israel, India) with the placing of a very strong emphasis on this sector by them. The Irish Government now intends to place a strong emphasis on this area as evidenced e.g. by the recent Irish Global Economic Forum.

It is proposed to build on work already carried out by Donegal County Council and Donegal County Development Board and to formally establish a Donegal Diaspora Programme which will seek to ensure that the full potential of this area of activity is achieved. It is intended to involve all sectors in the County in this initiative. Agencies, sectoral groups and the community sector. It will be essential to tap into the wealth of contacts, connections and networks that exist to our diaspora through communities in all parts of the County. It is recognised that these community links will be vital to the success of this project. Another key area of partnership will be with Donegal Associations in various parts of the world and these groups will be actively engaged with (a specific element of this project will seek to link young people in Donegal with similarly aged members of our broad diaspora).

The Donegal Diaspora Project will work to connect this County with all of our Diaspora no matter where they are living, using all available networks and media. An important element will be the utilisation of Donegal “Ambassadors”. This will be done through identifying and working with high profile and influential people in business, the arts, politics, etc, who will work with us to promote Donegal at every opportunity through their own networks and further afield.

The Donegal Diaspora initiative can have benefits for this region in terms of Inward Investment, Tourism, Trade in Donegal Goods and Services, Philanthropy, Cultural activity, Access to Skills, Experience and Networks.

The Donegal Diaspora Project as proposed will be led by Donegal County Council working in partnership with Donegal CDB and other stakeholders. A detailed work programme will be set out and efforts will be made to put the necessary resources into place drawing on a number of internal and external resources as available.”

Clr. Byrne outlined at length the value of promoting and enhancing links with the Diaspora as a prelude to economic growth in the County. He called on the Community and Enterprise Section to look at the possibility of initiating an “Internship Programme” to promote the development of Ancestry Tourism.

There was value also he noted in establishing links with prominent Irish Citizens across the globe again to maximise our tourism potential.

Events such as the “The Gathering “ in 2013, Derry’s City of Culture tenure in 2013 and the recent Donegal Live Promotions, it was acknowledged could only help to promote the Diaspora as a viable economic, social and economic resource.

Members acknowledged the contribution nationally of Mr. Kingsley Aikens, and suggested that he be invited to address a seminar in the County aimed at promoting the strengths of the Donegal Diaspora.

The plight of the Undocumented Irish they noted needed to be kept in the public domain.

Mr. Michael Heaney, Director of Community, Culture and Planning agreed to take the members comments on board and noted that the idea of holding a seminar in the County to explore the potential of the “Donegal Diaspora” was already being explored.

C/473/11

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR THE QUALIFYING DISTANCE CRITERION OF 24KM BE RE-INSTATED FOR THE NON ADJACENT RATE OF GRANT

On the proposal of Clr. Harvey, seconded by Clr. Murray, the following motion was adopted:-

"In recognition that an Educated Workforce is vital to boost our economy that this Council supports the call for the qualifying distance criterion of 24km be re-instated for the non adjacent rate of grant."

Members were informed that:-

“The qualifying distance for the Non-Adjacent Rate of Grant changed from 24km to 45km with effect from the 2011 / 2012 academic year as part of the Higher Education Grant Scheme 2011.

In the previous academic year (2010 / 2011) 1267 students qualified for the Non-Adjacent Rate, while to date in the 2011 / 2012 academic year 869 students have received the Non-Adjacent Rate.

The adjacent rate, which now applies if the student lives within 45km of their college, is approx one-third of the non-adjacent rate. The breakdown of awards is as follows:-

	Non Adjacent Rate	Adjacent
Rate		
Special Rate of maintenance	6,100	2,445
Standard Rate – full Maintenance	3,120	1,250
Standard Rate – Part Maintenance (75%)	2,340	940
Standard Rate – Part Maintenance (50%)	1,560	625
Standard Rate – Part Maintenance (25%)	780	315

As the Higher Education Grant Scheme 2011 was enacted into law this year, to reverse the change with regard to the qualifying distance for the Non-Adjacent Rate of Grant would require amending legislation.

This matter was considered by Council earlier this year with a request that a letter should issue to the Minister of Education & Skills particularly in this regard. A reply was received from the

Office of the Minister of Education & Skills on 27th September, 2011 and a copy of same was circulated.

Clr. Harvey noted the reply and in particular the recent response on the matter from the Office of the Minister for Education and Skills. She advised that the decision to reduce the qualifying criteria for the non adjacent rate of grant had been one of the most inconsiderate measure taken by the last Government. It was imperative she noted that every effort was made to encourage young people into third level education.

C/474/11 DISCUSSION ON BY THE COUNCIL ON THE WHOLE AREA OF ENERGY CROPS AND WIND/WAVE ENERGY WHERE THE COUNCIL CAN APPLY FOR EU FUNDING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER NGOS, CROSS BORDER PARTNERS

On the proposal of Clr. McGowan, seconded by Clr. Boyle, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council discuss developing the whole area of energy crops and wind/wave energy where the Council can apply for EU funding in Partnership with other NGOs (non government agencies), Cross border partners, and that a presentation be given on the ANSWER Project as an example of how this can be achieved."

Members were informed that:-

“The development of County Donegal as a lead region for the green economy has been identified as a priority action by Donegal County Development Board. This action is being led by Donegal County Council.

A number of CDB sub structures have been established to oversee the development of the various renewable sub sectors that make up the green economy, including:

- \* CDB Green Economy Forum
- \* CDB Inter Agency Energy Group
- \* CDB Renewables Training Consortium
- \* CDB Land Use Group

These structures work to ensure a coordinated approach and best use of resources.

A number of initiatives have been undertaken, led by Donegal County Council, in relation to this sector in recent years. The CDB Non Food Land Use project explored various energy crops and their potential for Donegal and a guide was produced. The Forest Link 1 and Forest Link 2 projects identified the potential of biomass as a resource for the County and a range of economic/job creation initiatives have arisen from this work based on Donegal's existing forest resource. This work has been continued through the RASLRES project.

The following initiatives are currently being undertaken to achieve the CDB aim of making County Donegal a lead region for the green economy:

- Wood Fuel Energy Development - 15 wood fuel energy systems installed to date, 4 more planned making use of energy services contracts, development of a locally based supply chain based on use of local forest resource.
- Answer project (led by WEES) - potential of willow as a fuel resource.
- Proposed Renewable Energy Business Network - local businesses support for renewables sector.
- Research and Training of Community Wind Farm potential
- Development of offshore wind potential and associated onshore benefits
- Development of Killybegs as a centre of excellence for offshore energy
- Co2Free project - promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Renewable Energy Lighting pilot projects
- Promotion of sustainable energy communities
- Westwave - Research and Development of potential of Wave Energy

- Renewables Training Killybegs - Training Tower/Certified Training Programme (LYIT).

It is intended to continue to pursue all avenues of opportunity with regard to funding to advance this sector from national and EU services. It is intended to continue to participate in and establish partnerships locally, nationally and at EU level (CPMR) and to build on contacts in the US with a view towards ensuring the full exploitation of this resource.”

Clr. McGowan welcomed the comprehensive reply and requested that details of the ANSWER Project be circulated to all Elected Members. He cited the need to progress and promote Renewable Energy, noting that it was clearly evident from the Draft County Development Plan that a serious problem existed in terms of the location of windmills in the County.

He asked specifically that consideration be given to using Council owned lands to produce Energy crops, and in particular lands at the Big Isle which he advised were particularly suitable for this activity.

Members acknowledged the potential of water based energy, in particular tidal flow energy and the excellent conditions that existed for wave based energy off the Donegal coast.

It was generally agreed that the benefits accruing from these types of energy should in the long-term generate economic benefit for the local economies concerned, and that the processes involved needed to be open and transparent.

Another issue generating debate was the capability to store energy. Members noted that this was dependent on Eirgrid updating the 1.10kv line.

Mr. Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture and Planning advised that considerable progress was being made in the Renewable Energy sector in Donegal, with a number of initiatives taking place across the County.

- The initiation of a Wind Turbine Technician Course in Killy begs under the auspices of Letterkenny IT.

- Holding of a seminar in Inishowen in the New Year to discuss the impact of wind energy on the landscape and local communities.
- Continuance of the West Wave project and the designation of Killybegs as the base for all offshore activity along the west coast.

He agreed to keep Members fully updated in relation to the matter.

Clr. McGowan in conclusion advised that the upgrading of the electricity supply line was as crucial a project as the A5 and essential for the long-term development of the County. Noting that the producers of electricity in Northern Ireland were getting two to three times the rate of their Donegal counterparts he called for Airtricity to offer greater recompense. Overall he noted that the production of energy based crops would create long term sustainable employment for the local community.

C/475/11 DEBATE ON THE POTENTIAL DANGER WHICH A SERIOUS FLOOD COULD HAVE ON LIFFORD TOWN  
On the proposal of Clr. Crawford, seconded by Clr. McGowan, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council debate the potential danger which a serious flood could have on Lifford Town."

Members were informed that:-

“The OPW (Office of Public Works) as part of the EU floods directive and the national CFRAM (catchment based flood risk assessment and management study) programme recently completed a preliminary flood risk assessment for the whole of the north west region. They have also engaged JBA Consulting to undertake a flood risk review for the region which will identify probable areas for further assessment.

Lifford is one of the locations being considered as part of this study by OPW. JBA Consulting were active in the town during

the summer months and issued questionnaires to the local residents and they also consulted with Donegal County Council Engineering staff. The flood risk review has yet to be finalised, but both studies are likely to find that Lifford is at significant risk of flooding from the River Finn and that certain buildings could be affected. Should this be the case, then Lifford will be recommended as area for further assessment under the national CFRAM programme.”

Clr. Crawford advised that Lifford was particularly vulnerable to flooding as a result of flood prevention measures taken in Strabane. Prolonged periods of flooding combined with the force of the water where the Mourne and Finn Rivers met could he advised create a potentially dangerous situation.

It was imperative he added that some form of action was taken immediately to identify the risks involved. He asked also that Council staff survey recent subsidence in Bridge Street.

Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director of Roads & Transportation advised that he would look into the possibility of remedial works on the footpath at Bridge Street.

The Mayor returned to the Chair at this juncture.

C/476/11 CALL TO KEEP ALL GARDA BARRACKS IN DONEGAL OPEN

On the proposal of Clr. Alcorn, seconded by Clr. O’ Domhnaill, the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council requests the Minister for Justice to keep all Gardai Barracks in Donegal open, as they are a most valued asset to each Town and Village that they are located in."

Members outlined the necessity of keeping Gardai Barracks across the County open for business, noting that they were part of the fabric of rural life in the region. They called on the Minister for Justice to immediately review the situation. It was essential they added that a full Gardai presence was maintained in Donegal, given our location on the border, increased incidences of crimes such as burglary and the presence of a large and rugged coastline.

The benefits of having community based Gardai they advised could not be underestimated.

Clr Alcorn in conclusion asked that every effort be made to highlight the situation and bring the matter to the attention of the Minister for Justice.

C/477/11 CALL FOR DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL TO LEAD A CAMPAIGN WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO HIGHLIGHT THE LIMITED POWERS WITHIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

On the proposal of Clr. M.T. Gallagher, seconded by Clr. Harvey, the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council undertake to initiate and lead a campaign with other local authorities to highlight the limited powers within Local Government and to publicly illustrate the constraints and unsuitability both EU and National Legislation has had on Local Governance in general but in particular the detrimental effects various legislation had had on Donegal as a County."

Members were informed that:-

The Role and Reform of Local Government Structures and Systems in Ireland have been the subject of numerous studies and reports over the last number of years.

In 2008, during the term of the previous Government, the then Minister, John Gormley, published a 'Green Paper' entitled 'Stronger Local Democracy – Options for Change'. The guiding principles contained therein included:

- Appreciation of the importance of local democratic institutions;
- Decision-making at the lowest appropriate level (subsidiary);
- Democratic responsibility and accountability;
- Proper balance between the number and functions of local government structures and the requirements of

coherence, value for money and efficient delivery of service; and,

- Continued focus on Quality Customer Service.

This 'Green Paper' also noted the following:

'Local Government is tasked with serving a larger, more diverse, more educated and more demanding population. In addition to providing traditional 'hard' services, such as housing, roads and water etc, local authorities must now give more time to the more complex 'softer' tasks of community building. Coordinating development and providing essential services, particularly in areas of significant population growth, will remain a demanding task.

Local government also faces onerous environmental management tasks in dealing with waste, protecting water quality and addressing the challenges of climate change.'

The publication of this 'Green Paper' was intended as the first phase of the consultation process within the Local Government Reform agenda.

As a consequence of the emerging financial situation, the focus since 2008 has been on reform within the Public Sector to achieve targeted savings. For the Local Government Sector, this has resulted in the publication of the Report of the Local Government Efficiency Review Group.

The Efficiency Group's Report contains a series of recommendations, notably:

- Reducing payroll costs in local government, including the reduction in the number of county/ city managers (by 30%), directors of service (by at least 20%), senior and middle managers (by 15%), and staff working in corporate services, planning and roads

- Transferring responsibility for planning, roads and housing, as well as rating functions, from town councils to county councils
- Securing optimal efficiency in the delivery of local government service areas across functional boundaries, including joint administrative arrangements between county/city areas, and between town and county areas
- Achieving savings on local government procurement, designed to ensure further use of collaborative procurement processes, greater purchasing power, and optimal value for money, while building on the savings achieved to date in the local government sector;
- Bringing about greater efficiency in the delivery of specific local government services, including housing, roads, water, planning, waste management, motor tax, and higher education grants, as well local government's community and enterprise function and its links with local development bodies, including consolidation of City/County Enterprise Boards with city/county councils
- Focusing on the potential for greater use of shared services and a regional/national approach to service provision and support functions in specific areas
- Concerning audit, financial control and performance measurement and reporting, with a view to enhancing the democratic scrutiny and oversight of local authority performance at local and national level
- Ending the 'off-the-road' facility in respect of motor tax which allows car owners to self-declare vehicles as not in use
- Ensuring full recovery of amounts due to local authorities, including direct deduction of rents from social welfare payments, and applying a model similar to

the charge on non-principal private residencies to other existing charges

- Securing greater cost recovery and equity in the revenue base for local government services, such as increasing planning fees to reflect costs associated with planning permissions, ending a number of exemptions to commercial rates, and introducing new tolls on national roads to fund road improvements and encourage greater use of public transport.

In April 2011, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Mr. Phil Hogan, T.D., confirmed the establishment of an independently chaired Group to drive and oversee the implementation of the Report of the Local Government Efficiency Review Group.

The overall focus within the Report is to achieve savings and to explore revenue raising opportunities. It is noted that the Minister in setting out the Government's view of current Local Government structures stated:

“The Government sees the role of councillors as pivotal in a newly strengthened and developed system of local government”. He emphasised, however, that “with greater power will come greater responsibility and accountability”.

Within the current financial environment, it is evident that there is a clear focus and drive on achieving a Local Government structure and systems that are efficient, effective and offers maximum potential for achieving value for money.

It is within this context that the constraints and impacts of EU and National Legislation must be viewed and in particular the effects on a largely rural County such as Donegal”.

Clr. Gallagher highlighted the fact development in the County was often hindered by prohibitive legislation, citing a number of specific examples. The erosion of the powers of local government was also deemed to be a contributing factor, and it

was noted that the general public often had heightened expectations as to the role of the Elected Member.

She called for the initiation of a dedicated campaign/focus group to lobby on behalf of the County.

Donegal's position on the periphery it was suggested warranted particular consideration with Members identifying the need for some form of equalisation should the County be left to raise its own revenue. It was also suggested that the issue be progressed collectively through the Local Authority Member's Association.

C/478/11 CALL FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE 200 SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS THAT WERE CUT IN THE LAST BUDGET

On the proposal of Clr. Murray, seconded by Clr. Campbell, the following motion was adopted:-

"In advance of the publication of the Government's Budget, this Council calls for the restoration of the 200 Special Needs Assistants that were cut in the last budget."

Outlining the seriousness of the situation Clr. Murray advised that once again the most vulnerable in society were being adversely affected.

Clr Murray welcomed the cross-party support for the motion and asked that it be circulated to other Local Authorities for support and consideration.

C/479/11 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

On the proposal of Clr. Mc Guinness, seconded by Clr. Donaghey, it was resolved in accordance with Standing Order No. 29 to suspend Standing Order No. 3 and allow the meeting proceed beyond 6pm in order to complete the remaining business on the agenda. This was unanimously agreed.

C/480/11 LONG TERM LEASE AGREEMENT WITH THE INISHOWEN RUGBY CLUB IN RESPECT OF THE LANDS

THEY CURRENTLY OCCUPY AT MOSS ROAD,  
CARNDONAGH

On the proposal of Clr. McGuinness, seconded by Clr. Murray, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council enter into a long-term lease agreement with the Inishowen Rugby Club in respect of the lands they currently occupy at Moss Road, Carndonagh."

Members were informed that:-

“In considering this motion, the Council should take account of the reliance placed on the realisation of funds from any disposal of assets as a means to fund elements of capital debt. The disposal by way of a long lease may be considered to constitute an assignment that puts realisation of economic value beyond the timeframe envisaged when recent restructuring of the funding of the Council of necessity occurred. The Council is also mindful of the valuable role played by Community and Sporting Groups generally and where feasible make every effort to accommodate needs arising. In this circumstance the Council is anxious to engage with the organisation concerned in order to explore opportunities for addressing their need in a manner that meets the requirements of both organisations.”

Clr. Mc Guinness informed the meeting that the Inishowen Rugby Club had been using the lands in question for over 40 years, and had been renting same from Donegal County Council for a considerable period of time.

A long-term lease he noted, was now required to develop playing facilities at the lands in question.

Clr Mc Guinness proposed, seconded by Clr. Murray, that the land be leased by way of a long-term lease to Inishowen Rugby Club with the specific condition that no permanent structure be erected at the said location.

Mr. Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture and Planning agreed to come back to Members with recommendations early in the New Year.

C/481/11 MOTION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS- RETENTION OF A SENIOR SOCCER TEAM IN THE COUNTY.

Members considered the following motion as agreed earlier in the meeting.

“That Donegal County Council today consider the future of the need to retain Senior Soccer in this County, by considering funding from the Council to the Finn Harps Football Club of €20,000, so that the club will be in a position to meet its licensing requirements by 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011 to the FAI Licensing Committee.

Clr. Harley outlined the importance of having a senior football team in the County advising that the Finn Harps Football Club required additional funding of €20k by the 21<sup>st</sup> December to meet its 2012 FAI licensing requirements. The club it was noted had encountered financial difficulties over the last number of years but had in the interim made considerable efforts to rectify the situation.

It was generally acknowledged that the retention of senior football in the County was important both from an economic and a social point of view. The club itself it was noted had been extensively involved in the promotion of youth activities, a feature which many believed warranted some form of recognition.

A number of Members outlined their intention to contribute monies out of their own Development Fund allocations.

Clr. Crawford said he was disappointed that as a Member of the Stranorlar Area he had not been asked to sign the motion and queried the legal status of the motion. He was he advised however fully supportive of the motion in question.

The County Manager stated that he could not commit legally to allocate from 2012 provisions at this time as it was a matter for the 2012 Budget. He noted however that there was a clear intention on behalf of the Members to commit to the motion. There was he indicated a good possibility of reaping a social dividend for the Council.

He agreed to work with the Head of Finance towards some accommodation of same mindful of the 21<sup>st</sup> December deadline.

Thus on the proposal of Clr. Harley, seconded by Clr. O' Neill the following motion was adopted:-

“That Donegal County Council today consider the future of the need to retain Senior Soccer in this County, by considering funding from the Council to the Finn Harps Football Club of €20,000, so that the club will be in a position to meet its licensing requirements by 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011 to the FAI Licensing Committee.

C/482/11 VARIATION IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

It was unanimously agreed to vary the order of business and deal with Item 19(b) at this juncture.

C/483/11 TO ADOPT THE “ROAD TRAFFIC (SPECIAL SPEED LIMITS)(COUNTY OF DONEGAL) BYE-LAWS 2011”

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above. Having outlined a number of specific amendments Members were informed that these could not be accommodated at this juncture but would have to be dealt with through the normal processes which would take up to six months at least.

The County Manager and the Director of Roads & Transportation, Mr. John Mc Laughlin called on Members to adopt the Bye Laws as presented thus using the details presented as an effective baseline from which to move forward. On the proposal of Clr. Alcorn, seconded by Clr. Gallagher, it was resolved to adopt the Road Traffic(Special Speed Limits)(County of Donegal) Bye-Laws 2011.

C/484/11 MOTION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS- PLEA NOT TO INCREASE VAT RATE IN FORTHCOMING BUDGET

Members considered the following motion as agreed earlier in the meeting:-

“That Donegal County Council implores the Government not to increase VAT in the forthcoming Budget as such a change would cause destruction of many businesses in the County”

Members were generally agreed that the implementation of a 2% increase in VAT would be disastrous for the local economy effectively wiping out the small business sector in the County. It was imperative they noted that the message went out that the County was open for business with competitive prices offered across a range of services. They called on the local media to send out a positive message outlining this fact and encouraging shoppers to shop at home in Donegal.

The hike in Vat it was acknowledged would lead to low and middle income families being disproportionately affected. A number of Members indicated that the development of An All Ireland Economy was the way forward.

Clr O’ Neill outlined the necessity of looking at the bigger picture noting that difficult decisions had to be taken to get the Country back on track. He reiterated the message that people needed to shop locally if the economy was to get back on track.

Clr. Quinn encouraged Members to peruse Sinn Fein’s Budgetary proposals as he believed that they offered a viable alternative to many of the measures proposed for Budget 2012.

C/485/11 CALL FOR THE SHORE PATH BETWEEN MOVILLE AND GREENCASTLE TO BE RE-OPENED ON OR BEFORE THE COMPLETION OF THE BREAK-WATER PROJECT

On the proposal of Clr. M. Doherty, seconded by Clr. Mc Guinness, the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council re-open the shore path between Moville and Greencastle on or before the completion of the capping works being carried out at present on the break-water project."

Members were informed that:-

“The Department of Marine has verbally indicated that it will make monies available to get the shore path at Greencastle opened. Work is currently ongoing to try to have the path opened by mid - December 2011.”

Clr. Doherty welcomed the reply complimenting the excellent work carried out to date on the capping of the project. He asked that the enclosed compound on the site used by Donegal County Council be removed as soon as possible as it had become an eyesore.

C/486/11 DISPOSAL OF A SMALL PLOT OF LAND MEASURING 0.0158 HECTARES (158M2 OR 0.039 ACRES) TO THE SIDE OF NO. 9 ARD MCCOOL, STRANORLAR TO MR PAT MURPHY

Members considered the report, circulated with the agenda, in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Clr. Harvey, seconded by Clr. Crawford, it was resolved to dispose of a small plot of land measuring 0.0158 hectares (158m<sup>2</sup> or 0.039 acres) to the side of No.9 Ard McCool, Stranorlar to Mr Pat Murphy, in accordance with Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

C/487/11 TO APPROVE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2012

Members considered Options 1 and 2 circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

Mr. L. Ward, A/Meetings Administrator advised that Option 1 provided for the submission of Questions and Motions in the following months:-

January, March, May, July, September and November.

Option 2 he confirmed allowed for 5 meetings with Motions and Questions and 5 without thus creating a balance between dealing with major strategic issues facing the Council and day to day representational and operational issues.

It would he indicated afford an opportunity in January to follow up on matters arising from the Budget and ensure less business had to be transacted at the July Meeting, allowing for the

clearance of any outstanding issues going into the summer recess.

On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. Donaghey, it was resolved to adopt the Schedule of Meetings for 2012, as set out in Option 1 thus providing for the submission of Questions and Motions in the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

C/488/11 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY ON COISTE NA GAEILGE ARISING FROM THE RESIGNATION OF CLR. JOHN CAMPBELL

On the proposal of Clr. McGuinness, seconded by Clr. Donaghey, it was resolved to defer the filling of the casual vacancy on Coiste Na Gaeilge to a future meeting of the Council.

C/489/11 TO APPROVE RAISING OF REVISED LOAN OF €5,075,297 FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VOLUNTARY HOUSING PROJECT IN CARNDONAGH BY APEX HOUSING ASSOCIATION IRELAND LTD (FORMERLY NORTH AND WEST HOUSING IRELAND LTD) UNDER THE CAPITAL LOAN AND SUBSIDY SCHEME

On the proposal of Clr. McGuinness, seconded by Clr. Donaghey, it was resolved in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (No2) Act 1960 and Section 26 of the Housing Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1992, to authorise the raising of a loan in the sum of €5,075,297 from the Housing Finance Agency for the purpose of funding a Voluntary Housing Project at Convent Road, Carndonagh, Co. Donegal.

C/490/11 REQUEST FOR DELEGATION FROM DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL TO MEET WITH THE NRA TO DISCUSS GENERAL PROGRESS ON NATIONAL ROADS

On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. Mc Guinness, it was resolved that a cross-party delegation (to be selected in consultation with the Party Whips and led by the Mayor) could meet with the National Roads Authority to discuss the general progress on our national roads.

- C/491/11 TO APPROVE THE RAISING OF A CAPITAL LOAN IN THE AMOUNT OF €1.9MILLION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING THE MATCHING FUNDING FOR THE CAPITAL PHASE OF THE BALLYBOFEY STRANORLAR LEISURE CENTRE (FINN VALLEY SWIMMING POOL) PROJECT  
On the proposal of Clr. McGowan, seconded by Clr. Harvey, the raising of a capital loan in the amount of €1.9million for the purpose of providing the matching funding for the capital phase of the Ballybofey Stranorlar Leisure Centre (Finn Valley Swimming Pool) Project was approved.
- C/492/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF STRANORLAR ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2011  
On the proposal of Clr. Crawford, seconded by Clr. Harvey, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2011.
- C/493/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2011  
On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. M. McBride, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.
- C/494/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF STRANORLAR ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2011  
On the proposal of Clr. Crawford, seconded by Clr. Harvey, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.
- C/495/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF LETTERKENNY ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2011  
On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. N. McBride, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of

Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.

C/496/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF DONEGAL ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2011  
On the proposal of Clr. Boyle, seconded by Clr. O'Neill, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of Donegal Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.

C/497/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF STRANORLAR ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2011  
On the proposal of Clr. Harvey, seconded by Clr. Crawford, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of Stranorlar Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.

C/498/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF DONEGAL ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2011  
On the proposal of Clr. O'Neill, seconded by Clr. Boyle, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of Donegal Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

C/499/11 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF STRANORLAR ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2011  
It was noted that these were included in error and in fact referred to the minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2010 which had been endorsed previously.

C/500/11 TO NOTE THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON 17<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2011  
Members noted the confirmed minutes of meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.

C/501/11 CONFERENCES

Having noted the revised arrangements under Section 142 5(d) of the Local Government Act, 2001, introduced by the Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations 2006 and directives issued by the Minister in that regard, on the proposal of Clr. Donaghey, seconded by Clr. M. Doherty, it was resolved to authorise any member, if he/she so wished, to attend the following conferences, subject to the normal procedures:-

1. Individual members not exceeding their annual budget for attendance at conferences.
2. Payment of expenses for attendance to be conditional on the member furnishing documentary evidence of attendance.
3. Submission of a Conference Report
  - Irish Central Border Area Network Ltd – Data Capture: Information Rich, Insight Poor? to be held Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2011 in the Hotel Kilmore, Cavan.
  - Elected Member’s Training Seminar – Public Sector Expenditure, Where is Ireland spending above the odds? to be held from Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 at the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Dublin Road, Galway City.
  - Elected Member’s Training Seminar – Local Government (Charges) Act 2009 to be held from Friday 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 at the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Dublin Road, Galway City.
  - The Institute of Professional Training – “The Tragic Impacts of Major Flooding and Freezing Spells” An Ever Increasing Problem to be held from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2012 at the Silver Tassie Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.
  - TJK Conferences – Local Government Seminar for Councillors to be held from Friday 27<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2012 at the Patrick Punch Hotel, Limerick.

C/502/11

TO NOTE CONFERENCE REPORTS

On the proposal of Clr. Donaghey, seconded by Clr. Canning, the following Conference Reports was noted: -

**Clr. David Alcorn**

A.C.C.C. held Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 in Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co Offaly.

**Clr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill**

LAMA Spring Seminar 2011 Friday 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2011 in Fairways Hotel, Dundalk.

**Clr. Patrick McGowan**

Local Government Promoting Renewable Energy Friday 19<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2011 in Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry.

**Clr. John Ryan**

Domestic Water Meters for Ireland – Implications for Irish Consumers and Business Friday 9<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Ravensdale Suite, Carrickdale Hotel, Carrickarnon, Dundalk, Co. Louth.

**Clr. Dessie Larkin**

AMAI Annual Conference Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Trim Co. Meath.

**Clr. David Alcorn**

AMAI Annual Conference Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Knightsbrook Hotel, Trim Co. Meath.

**Clr. Patrick McGowan**

Domestic Water Meters for Ireland Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Carrickdale Hotel, Dundalk Co. Louth.

**Clr. Dessie Larkin**

Dip Study with IPA in Local Government Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in IPA Headquarters in Dublin.

**Clr. Seamus Ó Domhnaill**

The Role of Tourism in Local Economic Recovery Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Clonea Hotel, Waterford Co. Waterford.

**Clr. Terence Slowey**

LAMA Autumn Seminar from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Clonea Strand Hotel, Dungarvan.

**Clr. Michael McBride**

LAMA Autumn Seminar from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in the Clonea Strand Hotel, Dungarvan.

**Clr. Dessie Larkin**

LAMA Tourism Conference from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Dungarvan, Waterford.

**Clr. Mickey Doherty**

LAMA Autumn Seminar 2011 from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford.

**Clr Mickey Doherty**

Optimising Taxation Allowances and Benefits from Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in Rosscarbery, West Cork.

**Clr. Dessie Larkin**

IPA Diploma Seminar Local Government Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in IPA Headquarters in Dublin.

**Clr. Frank McBrearty**

Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 Friday 14<sup>th</sup> to - Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in Westport, Co. Mayo.

**Clr. Frank McBrearty**

Optimising Taxation Allowances and Benefits Friday 21<sup>st</sup> to Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2011 in Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork.

**Clr. Michael McBride**

Optimising Taxation Allowances and Benefits Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork.

**Clr. Terence Slowey**

The Role of the Councillor in Education The Community Friday 28<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in City North Hotel, Gormanstown.

**Clr. Michael McBride**

Local Government Powers to create/abolish rights of way Friday 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2011 in the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Galway.

**Clr. Frank McBrearty**

Local Government Powers to create/abolish rights of way Friday 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2011 in the Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Galway.

C/503/11

**TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR DEPUTATION FROM  
DONEGAL YOUTH COUNCIL**

Members considered the above request, which had been circulated with the agenda.

On the proposal of Clr. Donaghey, seconded by Clr. Brogan, it was agreed to accept a delegation from Donegal Youth Council to address a future meeting of the Council.

C/504/11 MAYOR'S BUSINESS

*Votes of Sympathy*

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:-

- The family of the late Neily Mc Gee, Marine Services Supervisor
- The family of the late Danny Mc Laughlin (Craig) former Roads Overseer, Inishowen
- Marian Hennigan, Planning, Carndonagh on the death of her father, Patrick Bonner,
- Gerry Gallagher, Mobile Litter Unit on the death of his father, Thomas Gallagher.
- Elaine O' Donnell, Debtors Management on the death of her uncle Jim French

*Planning Workshop.*

On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. M. Doherty, it was resolved to hold a Workshop in relation to the Draft County Development Plan on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2012 at 11.00am in the County House, Lifford.

*Special Meeting of Donegal County Council*

On the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. Crawford, it was resolved to hold a Special Meeting of Donegal County Council on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 at 11.00am in the County House, Lifford to consider the County Donegal Draft Development Plan 2012-2018 and the Manager's report on the Public Consultation Process, and to decide if the Draft plan should be accepted or amended by resolution as required by Section 12 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2010.

*Golden Bridges Awards.*

The Mayor advised that he had led a delegation from Donegal County Council to participate in the Annual Golden Bridges Awards and Showcase in Boston in early November 2011. He

noted that meetings had also taken place with a range of relevant organisations in the States of Massachusetts and Maine.

He proceeded to outline in detail the range of activities and meetings which took place over the duration of the trip.

*Visit By Minister Phil Hogan, T.D.*

Members were informed that Mr. Phil Hogan, T. D., Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government would visit Donegal on the 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. He said that he hoped it would be possible for Mr. Hogan to meet with all the Elected Members on the day.

*Pride of Place Awards.*

Congratulations was extended to Mr. Brain Mc Dermott on winning a “Pride of Place Award”

*People of the Year Awards*

The Mayor acknowledged the involvement of all who had contributed to the recent People of the Year Awards.

*Launch of Road Safety Film*

Compliments were extended to all involved with the launch of the “Young Europe” Movie in Letterkenny recently. It was noted that this was the final phase of the ICARUS Road Safety initiative, with part of the film being shot in Donegal, and due to be launched in over 17 European countries

The Mayor acknowledged the educational aspect of the film and its importance for road safety promotion.

C/505/11 MANAGER’S REPORT

Members considered the report circulated during the meeting.

An update was provided in relation to the following;-

- Severe Weather and Emergency Management for Winter 2011/12
- The CDB Social Inclusion /Community Development Best Practice Programme.

- Publication of “Report of the High level Group to Minister Coveney, T.D on the Jobs Initiative for the Killybegs Region.
- Pride of Place Awards 2011
- Oireachtas na Samhna 2012.
- Ulster Dancing Championships 2012.
- Testing Phase of Whole System of Work Framework.

It was generally agreed that Mr. Brian Mc Dermott, winner of a recent Pride of Place Award be invited to address Members for a short period at the next scheduled Council Meeting.

**Members noted the following questions:-**

C/506/11 INITIATION OF A SEPARATE POLICY FOR OUR ISLANDS WITH REGARD TO FUNDING

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGarvey:-

"Can I ask this Council to initiate a separate policy for our Islands with regard to Development and Funding from National and Local Authority resources?"

Clr. McGarvey was informed that:-

“The offshore islands representative body "Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann" published a range of developmental policies in 2010 that cover all the relevant sectors for population development on the islands. Donegal County Development Board have examined the policies as they refer to the islands of Donegal and a number of services and projects have been initiated in a collaborative manner to safeguard the future of populations on the Donegal islands.

Development policy and practices in a Local Authority context for the islands of Donegal are managed by the Glenties Area Management Team who service the Council's Islands Committee.

A number of potential funding sources are currently being examined in an effort to meet the priority issues identified by the island representatives for 2012.”

C/507/11 CONSIDERATION OF THE TAKE-OVER OF MECHANICAL PLANTS THAT ARE PROBLEMATIC IN MANY ESTATES ACROSS THE COUNTY

The following question was submitted by Clr. Quinn:-

"Has Donegal County Council considered the take-over of Mechanical Plants that are problematic in many estates across the County?"

Clr. Quinn was informed that:-

“The Council is aware of the significant issues that have arisen at a number of housing estates where onsite wastewater treatment plants are not functioning properly because of issues with mechanical plant. This was discussed at the recent Water & Environment Strategic Policy Committee meeting and it was agreed to include this item for consideration at the next meeting of the committee. It will be necessary to establish the extent of the issues on an individual case basis and to examine the scope available given that there will be very significant costs involved both in terms of remedial works.”

C/508/11 NEED FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR LIS DUE TO INCREASE COSTS OF SUCH WORKS

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGarvey:-

"Can we ask for additional funding for LIS due to the increased costs to carry out such work?"

Clr. McGarvey was informed that:-

“Grant allocations under the Local Improvement Scheme have dropped significantly from a high of €3.6m in 2007 to €10,000 for the past two years. Whereas the cost of schemes may have increased slightly there has been a dramatic drop in the number of schemes being done due to the 84% drop in funding.

The Council can request an increase in funding from the Department of Transport although in the current economic climate it might be difficult to get extra funds.”

C/509/11 PROGRESS ON THE SETTING UP OF COMMUNITY ASSISTED SCHEMES TO HELP WITH ROADS PROJECTS

The following question was submitted by Clr. Brogan:-

"What progress has been made by this Council following my motion that we working with FAS would set up more community assisted schemes that would help us and some of our roads projects?"

Clr. Brogan was informed that:-

“There has been considerable progress working with community groups and FAS schemes in various areas in the past number of years

For example in the Stranorlar the following is reported.

We have supplied materials and lined out works and small projects. We checked progress of the works and help the workers as much as possible.

Almost all footpaths and Street Lights between Killygordon Village and Crossroads Villages have been completed under this type of working arrangement. The Footpaths and works to Burnrock Picnic Area are another example.

We have assisted the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Tidy Towns FAS Scheme to place Stone Planters around the two towns. The Scheme have also renewed the Fences in the Main Car Park and carried out some new Stone Walls.

We have also completed most of the Footpaths in Brockagh Village and Drumkeen Villages under this type of working arrangement.

In Inishowen, similar progress is reported where the Council has a very good working relationship with local groups.

Due to National agreements with the Unions there are restrictions in what the FAS workers can be requested to do. In particular these schemes should not be used to do works normally done by Councils existing staff and must be additional to normal Council works.”

C/510/11 WATER TREATMENT SCHEME AT GARTAN LAKE

The following question was submitted by Clr. Quinn:-

"When does Donegal County Council intend commencing the much-needed and long-awaited Water Treatment Scheme at Gartan Lake?"

Clr. Quinn was informed that:-

“The Churchill water supply scheme is included on the Takeover sub-programme of the Rural Water Programme for County Donegal. Contract documents are in preparation and it is expected that the works will be tendered in 2012. Construction could start in the latter part of 2012.”

C/511/11 UPDATE ON THE OPERATION OF THE CIVIC AMENITY SITES

The following question was submitted by Clr. Brogan:-

"Could this council give us a full update as to the operations of our Civic Amenity Sites going forward?"

Clr. Brogan was informed that:-

“All of the Councils six Civic Amenity Sites have been operated on a direct labour basis since they were opened and they have been very successful in terms of promoting recycling, achieving recycling targets, and providing a valuable service for customers. With a view towards managing its resources more efficiently the Council decided in 2011 to explore options for

more cost effective service provision at civic amenity sites and went to the market in May 2011 requesting offers from suitable providers for operation and management of all the sites on a concession basis i.e. on the basis that the contractor pays to the Council an annual sum for the exclusive rights to maximise the potential of the sites while at the same time providing a specified level of service for the public. Compliant offers were received for the Letterkenny/Milford and Stranorlar sites, a non-compliant offer was received for the Carndonagh site, and no offers were received for the Dungloe or Laghey sites. The Council is now moving ahead to appoint the successful contractor for the Letterkenny/Milford and Stranorlar sites and it is expected that the contractor will take over those sites from January 2012. In light of the outcome for the Carndonagh, Dungloe, and Laghey sites the Council will continue to operate those sites on a direct labour basis, will bring the entry charges at those sites generally into line with the contracted sites, and at the same time explore options for negotiating a contract for the Carndonagh, Dungloe, and Laghey sites at the earliest opportunity.”

C/512/11 PIPE REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME FOR FROSSES AND MOUNTCHARLES

The following question was submitted by Clr. Byrne:-

"Can this Council commence the pipe replacement programme for Frosses and Mountcharles as a priority given that quite a delay has occurred since the grant was allocated in January 2011?"

Clr. Byrne was informed that:-

“Three packages of water conservation pipe replacement works of total value €1.782m were approved for construction in January 2011 for the Rosses (€27k), Lough Mourne (€45k), and Frosses (€310k). The works on the Rosses Regional Water Supply are substantially complete. Tenders for the works on the Frosses/Mountcharles Water Supply were returned in October 2011 and the tenders are currently being assessed. It is expected that works will commence on this scheme in January

2012. Tenders for the works on the Lough Mourne Water Supply Scheme will be sought in December 2011 with works expected to commence in the first quarter of 2012.”

C/513/11 SAFETY FEATURES AT THE ST CATHERINE’S VOCATIONAL SCHOOL KILLYBEGS WITH EMPHASIS ON BOTH PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

The following question was submitted by Clr. Byrne:-

“Can this Council look at providing safety features at the St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs with emphasis on both pedestrian and vehicular traffic?”

Clr. Byrne was informed that:-

“Our Road Design Section will carry out a Road Safety Report at this location which can be presented to the EA meeting in first quarter of 2012. This report will consider the previous design (done some years ago at this location) and look at other improvement options such as traffic calming measures. The school has also applied for School Flashing Lights under the 50/50 funded school safety initiative. These lights will be erected in the first quarter of 2012.”

C/514/11 BREAKDOWN OF THE COSTS ON THE BALLINDRAIT TO CASTLEFIN ROAD REPAIRS

The following question was submitted by Clr. Harvey:-

"Can I have a breakdown of costs on the Ballindrait to Castlefin Road from 2008, (excluding Current repairs), breakdown to include materials and man hours and does the current repairs on the road by a contractor have a warranty?"

Clr. Harvey was informed that:-

The Historical Expenditure on Ballindrait - Castlefin Road since 2008 is as follows:

2008

Nothing on Restoration or surface dressing

2009

Nothing on restoration or surface dressing

€15,000.00 on Low Cost Accident Scheme works entailed widening at a corner which had previously collapsed and fallen away. Done by direct labour.

2010

Total restoration budget €65,900.

Contract Works done by Contract. Value €30,092.48

Remainder done by Direct Labour €35,807.52.

2011

Surface dressing budget €34,000.00 done by direct labour.

Restorstaion Budget €58,000, done by Contract.

Current Restoration works done by Contract includes the standard warranties required by the Department of Finance.

C/515/11

OUTLINE OF THE PROCEDURE FOR CLAIMS TO  
DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL WHEN ROADUSERS  
DAMAGE THEIR CARS

The following question was submitted by Clr. Harvey:-

"Can you outline the procedure when a roaduser damages their car and submits the claim to DCC, what action does DCC do and what is the average waiting time for a response, and how many claims are in the system at the minute?"

Clr. Harvey was informed that:-

“When Road users damage their car and they consider it the responsibility of Donegal County Council they may submit a public liability claim form to the Council. These are available from each of the PSCs and on the forms section of our website. Claims are logged and a letter confirming receipt is normally issued within 10 working days. Claims are referred to the relevant staff for comment and assessment. This process can vary dependant on the complexity of the individual cases. The majority of claims received by the Council are non feasance

claims and generally responded to within 16 weeks as staff availability permits. Other cases involving personal injury or outside contractors or ongoing correspondence with claimants can continue for many years.

It is not currently possible to give a number of live claims within the system as claimants rarely confirm their agreement with the Council's assessment in non feasance cases. As an indicator 219 claims have been received in the year to date.”

C/516/11 POSITION WITH REGARD TO REPAIRING LIGHTS AT CATHEDRAL HILL RAPHOE

The following question was submitted by Clr. Crawford:-

"What is the position of this Council in having repairs carried out to lights which are not working at Cathedral Hill Raphoe?"

Clr. Crawford was informed that:-

“Donegal County Council's Public Lighting Maintenance Contractor , Airtricity, have been contacted to carry out a survey at this estate to identify whatever problems exist .This estate has not been taken over by Donegal County Council. The energy component for lighting has not been taken over by Donegal county Council.”

C/517/11 FLOOD PREVENTION/REPAIRS IN RAPHOE AND OTHER AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE STRANORLAR ELECTORAL AREA AFTER THE FLOOD DAMAGE IN OCTOBER 2011

The following question was submitted by Clr. Crawford:-

"What is the estimated cost of flood prevention/repairs in Raphoe and other locations which prove to be problematic in the Stranorlar Electoral Area in particular those areas identified as a result of flood damage in October 2011?"

Clr. Crawford was informed that:-

“There is no specific updated cost of flood prevention/repairs for Raphoe and the general Stranorlar Area at present . The recent flooding was so widespread and serious that it would take a significant amount of time to survey and estimate same and the issue of who is responsible for such regional flood prevention measures would need to be clarified as it relates to lands, housing areas, roads, etc.. In addition, the level of protection to be designed and constructed would need to be decided in order to estimate the costs.

The towns of Lifford, Castlefin and Ballindrait were severely affected whereas Raphoe Town escaped relatively lightly compared to previous floods especially those in September 2006 and June 2007.

In the short term Roads staff will endeavour to have estimates prepared for the worst affected Areas (as it relates to roads) to see how these works can be covered in next years road works programme.

It is anticipated that the extent of these works may be such that a special grant application may be required.”

C/518/11

DETAILS OF FUNDING AND WORKS FOR THE  
CASTLEFIN BRIDGE AND THE DOONYLOOP TO  
CLADY FOOTPATH

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGowan:-

"Please can a detailed report on Castlefin Bridge and the Dooneyloop (Dunnaloob) to Clady Footpath be provided outlining funding and relevant schedule of works?"

Clr. McGowan was informed that:-

“As part of the River Links Project which secured Interreg Funding of €2.1 million, it is proposed to construct 500m of footpath from Donneyloop Chapel to the border on the outskirts of Clady village. It is proposed to construct a 2m wide footpath with street lighting. The estimated cost for constructing this

footpath is €200,000. These works are expected to be carried out in Autumn of 2012.

Agreement has just been reached with the landowner to dedicate 0.32 acres of land on the Castlederg side of the Bridge (Upstream Side).

These lands are being secured by Donegal County Council with the view to removing unstable parapet walls and raising the level of the adjoining field on the upstream side (Castlederg side only), thus stabilising the bridge structure and creating future opportunities for localised widening.

The Bridge structure across the river is a protected structure. We have consulted with the Heritage section of Donegal County Council who have highlighted that even though the parapet wall along Castlederg side are not protected, it would be desired that these walls be reconstructed in a similar fashion after completion of any proposed civil works.

It is anticipated that the existing 3 No. culverts along this section of the road will have to be extended and we will have to liaise with and replace/raise existing statutory services (watermain & telecom).

Subject to the level of funding allocated for 2012 and to statutory and planning procedures it is intended to initiate widening works early in 2012.

C/519/11 REPORT ON THE TAKEOVER OF ESTATES WITH PUMPS AND TREATMENT PLANTS

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGowan:-

"Please can a report be given on the takeover of estates with pumps and treatments plants and the obligations on this Local Authority in the event of a Public Health Nuisance (sewerage spill)?"

Clr. McGowan was informed that:-

“The Council is aware of the significant issues that have arisen at a number of housing estates where on site wastewater treatment plants are not functioning properly because of issues with mechanical plant. This was discussed at the recent Water & Environment Strategic Policy Committee meeting and it was agreed to include this item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee. It will be necessary to establish the scale of the problems that exist and to examine the scope to address this on an individual case basis given that there will be very significant costs involved both in terms of remedial works and ongoing maintenance.”

C/520/11 TIMEFRAME FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DUNGLOE AND GLENTIES SEWERAGE SCHEME

The following question was submitted by Clr. Alcorn:-

"When is it expected that construction work will commence on the Dungloe and Glenties Sewerage Scheme?"

Clr. Alcorn was informed that:-

“The first stage of tendering (Contract Notice & Suitability Assessment) on the Dungloe Glenties Sewerage Scheme has been completed and the shortlisting of contractors will take place shortly by the tender assessment board. The invitation to tender to the shortlisted contractors is expected to issue in January 2012 with tenders to be returned in April 2012. It is anticipated that construction will commence in 2012.”

C/521/11 2010 LITTER FINE STATISTICS

The following question was submitted by Clr. Slowey:-

"How many litter fines were issued by Donegal County Council in 2010 and how many prosecutions were initiated in respect of each Electoral Area?"

Clr. Slowey was informed that:-

“The Council continues to enforce the provisions of the Litter Pollution and Waste Management Acts throughout the County through the employment of Litter Wardens, a Waste Regulation Officer and operation of two Mobile Litter Units. The Litter Wardens deals with breaches ranging from small scale littering to large scale dumping, assisting the work of the Waste Regulation Officer and carrying out surveys under the National Litter Pollution Monitoring system. They also assist with the supervision and operation of the Civic Amenity Sites. The two Mobile Litter Units carry out litter clearance at public areas such as roadsides, picnic areas, beaches and recycling banks. In 2010, 214 litter fines were issued by the Council and one prosecution in the Letterkenny EA was initiated. Arrangements for the enforcement of the various legislative provisions are kept under continuous review so that the most efficient methods are deployed, particularly the use of up-to-date technologies, with blackspots in particular being targeted and resources allocated accordingly.

The Council also continues to adopt a proactive approach to the area of litter management and waste disposal through the employment of a Waste Awareness Officer (for the rollout of an awareness programme including targeted anti-litter publicity and advertising campaigns, school visits and competitions and support for Green School programme, etc) and a Waste Recycling Officer (who ensures that facilities for recycling are provided at various locations throughout the County including the Civic Amenity Sites, etc).”

C/522/11

TIMEFRAME FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE TENDERING OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE DUNGLOE AND GLENTIES SEWERAGE SCHEME

The following question was submitted by Clr. M.T. Gallagher:-

"What date does this Council foresee tender documents for the Dungloe and Glenties Sewage Scheme being published and would there be a rough date or estimate in relation to the start date of this project?"

Clr. M.T. Gallagher was informed that:-

“The first stage of tendering (Contract Notice & Suitability Assessment) on the Dungloe Glenties Sewerage Scheme has been completed and the shortlisting of contractors will take place shortly by the tender assessment board. The invitation to tender to the shortlisted contractors is expected to issue in January 2012 with tenders to be returned in April 2012. It is anticipated that construction will commence in 2012.”

C/523/11 DEVELOPMENT OF A BLUE PRINT FOR TOURISM IN THE WEST OF THE COUNTY

The following question was submitted by Clr. M.T. Gallagher:-

"Would this Council consider through the C&E department developing a blue-print plan for developing tourism product in the West of the County?"

Clr. M.T. Gallagher was informed that:-

“Tourism is recognised as a key resource for County Donegal and its development is a priority goal within our County Strategy – An Strateís. Donegal County Council is working in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders in a CDB context with regard to tourism product development and tourism promotion in the County. The Council is involved in a range of strategic activities which benefit the County as a whole. These include the development of flagship projects (e.g. Inch Levels, Sliabh Liag, Malin Head) and promotional activity and support (e.g. Donegal Tourism Ltd, Donegal Live). It also includes initiatives such as the Sail West Marine Tourism Project and the development of the Malin Waters Brand.

It is recognised that the west of the County has unique tourism resources in relation to culture and land/seascapes which contribute to the overall Donegal tourism offering. Donegal County Council is working with a range of stakeholders to advance projects of relevance to the west of the County e.g. Maritime Heritage Trail, Columban Trail, Walkways,

Cultural/Linguistic Tourism, Islands related tourism, Interpretive Panels at strategic sites.

It would be beneficial to hold a workshop with Elected Members in this part of the County to review activity and to discuss further areas of potential with regard to this sector in the west of the County which fit into and can further augment our overall tourism strategy. The relevant Community & Enterprise staff will organise and facilitate this workshop.”

C/524/11 REPLACEMENT OF THE PILOT SCHEME LIGHTING ON THE N56 AT MEENACUING GWEEDORE WITH A BETTER STANDARD OF LIGHTING

The following question was submitted by Clr. Alcorn:-

"Why has the public lighting that we erected on the N56 at Meenacuing Gweedore as a pilot scheme, not been replaced by a better standard of light as promised?"

Clr. Alcorn was informed that:-

“The solar-powered lights that were erected at Meenacuing were erected as a pilot scheme. It was an attempt to find an alternative way of providing public lighting on rural National roads. On such Roads, it is NRA policy not to erect public lighting in the rural areas, outside speed limits. At the time, the Council undertook to keep the matter under constant review and try to source more powerful lights as the technology improved.

Since then we have looked at a number of different lights and have identified a number of possible alternatives. To date there has only been one possible lighting system that has all the main requirements for solar powered street lighting. We intend to approach the NRA with a view to securing funding for another pilot scheme using this system. We could have sourced an alternative light before now but each system on the market has or had disadvantages of one form or another:- Some are too costly, some have wind turbines and most have lead-acid batteries and consequently over-sized solar or AV panels.

At the same time, application has been made to the NRA to introduce speed-limits at this location. These are now before the Council. In the event that the speed limits are approved, we can once more apply to the NRA for conventional street-lighting in that location.”

C/525/11 ENERGY AUDIT OF COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS AND THE REGIONAL OFFICES WITH A VIEW TO REDUCING THE CONSIDERABLE HEATING AND LIGHTING COSTS  
The following question was submitted by Clr. Slowey:-

"Will Donegal County Council carry out (In House) a comprehensive Energy Audit of its Buildings in Lifford and the Regional Offices with a view to reducing the considerable costs of heating and lighting, and provide also a breakdown of the heating and lighting costs of Headquarters and each of the Regional Offices which we could use as a base line for the future?"

Clr. Slowey was informed that:-

“During 2011 the Facilities Management Section has carried out 'in house' studies on energy usage in the five PSCs and County House in connection with the compilation of Display Energy Certificates (DEC) which will be displayed in the buildings. These DECs show the energy usage at each location in terms of energy generated both electrically and non electrically and expressed in terms of Kilowatt Hours per square metre area per year (KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr) and efficiency is measured through comparing these usages against nationally generated figures produced for typical buildings of that particular size. The DECs have to be renewed annually and will thus provide a year on year comparison as to energy usage and efficiency. While costs of both heating and lighting can be provided, it is considered that measuring the energy usage as described above will provide a better benchmark on which to judge whether or not efficiencies in energy usages are being achieved. The unit costs of electricity and heating fuels are subject to significant market variations at this time and therefore using cost alone can mask actual increases or

decreases in energy usage year on year. The Facilities Management Section is very conscious of the continual need to optimise our energy usage in order to be as cost efficient as possible. It is also worth noting the Council are engaged with the Western Development Commission, which is a partner in a multi - national bio-energy project named RASLRES (Regional Approaches to Stimulating Local Renewable Energy Solutions) in exploring the opportunities that may exist for the Council to avail of a more sustainable and environmentally friendly source of energy for heating our buildings into the future.”

C/526/11 POLICY TO ASSIST THE ENFORCEMENT PLANNING STAFF IN DEALING WITH ENFORCEMENT IN A TIMELY MANNER

The following question was submitted by Clr. Murray:-

"While recognising the labour burden on our planning enforcement officers, can a policy be put in place to assist these members of staff in order to ensure that planning enforcement issues are dealt with in a timely manner?"

Clr. Murray was informed that:-

“Enforcement is and will continue to be a key area of activity within the Planning Service. This is being examined in the context of the ongoing reorganisation work being undertaken at present. Arrangements to ensure best use of available resources for this area of activity will be presented to Members in the context of the overall reorganisation of Planning Services.”

C/527/11 PROTOCOLS FOR THE MEMBERS SEEKING MEETINGS BETWEEN CONSTITUENTS AND THE COUNCIL STAFF

The following question was submitted by Clr. Murray:-

"Can you outline the protocols in relation to Members of this Council seeking a meeting between constituents and council staff so that we can provide a top class service for the people of this county?"

Clr. Murray was informed that:-

“While specific protocols have not been formally agreed in this area, it is fair to say that informal protocols have evolved over time, particularly within the Planning Service, and is informed by the requirement that business is conducted in an open and transparent manner that allows it to be delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible and in a manner compliant with the relevant appropriate legislation.

Within the Planning context, it is understood that meetings in respect of Development Management issues can generally be grouped into three categories, namely pre-planning enquiries, planning applications and enforcement. The Planning Officer will normally have conducted research and a preliminary assessment of the issue before any meeting can take place so as to familiarise themselves with the issue, appropriate background data and where appropriate conduct a site inspection. The appropriate location for a meeting is therefore often within an office environment, where documentation can be laid out and discussed. Where a meeting on site is appropriate it is arranged with all parties, including other council services as necessary.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Certified:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mayor.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

