

MINUTES OF MEETING OF ADJOURNED MEETING OF
DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNTY HOUSE,
LIFFORD ON 17th DECEMBER 2007

C/600/07 MEMBERS PRESENT

Clrs. J. Boyle, Mayor, A. Bonner, B. Byrne, G Crawford, R. Donaghey, Marie T. Gallagher, J. Kelly, N. Mc Bride, T. Mc Daid , S. McEniff, I. McGarvey, P. McGowan, B. Mc Guinness, Pádraig Mac Lochlainn, T. Pringle, T. Slowey.

C/601/07 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Clr. Conaghan, and Clr. Alcorn who were unable to attend the meeting.

C/602/07 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Michael Mc Loone, County Manager, Mr. Liam Kelly, Assistant County Manager, Director of Housing and Building, Mr. Sean Sheridan, Director Corporate Services, Mr. Francie Coyle, Director Planning & Economic Development, Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director Roads and Transportation, Mr. Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture and Enterprise, Mr. Paul Kilcoyne, Senior Engineer, Mr. Gary Martin, Senior Executive Officer, Mr. Eunan Sweeney, Meetings Administrator, Ms. Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer, Corporate Services.

C/603/07 MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC LIGHTS

On the proposal of Clr. Slowey, seconded by Clr. Mc Bride, the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council explore using a private accredited contractor for the erection and ongoing maintenance of public lighting in Donegal.”

Members were informed that:-

“Over the past couple of years, the Council has been doing some work to accurately define its inventory on its 10,000 plus public lights with a view to being ready to advertise for competition in line with CER regulations. We currently have an arrangement with ESB for maintenance and power until the end of 2008. Regarding the construction of new lighting, it is anticipated that the Council will competitively seek

tenders on pilot schemes in 2008. However, the Council will need to have proper preparation in terms of suitable specifications and terms and conditions in place before any tendering.”

Members welcomed the reply and noted that the service provided by the ESB had been quite unsatisfactory for some time. They called on the Roads Directorate to ensure that an adequate protocol was in place by the end of 2008 for the employment of private contractors. They outlined the need for the appointment of one contractor within each Electoral Area to erect and maintain public lighting.

The Director of Service for Roads and Transportation was asked to investigate ongoing problems in relation to the takeover of Housing Estates and the repair of cable faults. It was also requested that a copy of the motion be forwarded to the ESB.

Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director Roads and Transportation advised that all was in order to begin the tendering process but warned members that the process may not all be plain sailing. He noted that a specific policy for the takeover of Housing Estates did exist. In relation to members lighting he noted that a total of 80 had already been erected with the remaining 56 to be completed in the New Year. The Roads SPC had also, he affirmed, agreed a way forward in relation to solar lighting.

Mr. Mc Laughlin informed members that the ESB had agreed to charge the old rates with a certain amount of top-up in relation to previously ordered lights.

C/604/07 SPEED LIMIT, ARDUNS ROAD

The following motion submitted by Clr. O’Dochartaigh was not moved:

“That Donegal County Council will put a speed limit on the Arduns Road between Dore and the Gweedore Junction to improve safety for the users of the road.”

C/605/07 COMMUNITY CHILDCARE SUBVENTION SCHEME

On the proposal of Clr. Gallagher, seconded by Clr, Mac Lochlainn, the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council expresses its disappointment with the Government for its intention to implement a new community childcare subvention scheme without any real consultation with community childcare providers and that we further declare that the present system of providing staffing grants is a more equitable measure rather than the direct subvention scheme under the new scheme which will benefit a small minority of parents and which will likely lead to closure of many community childcare facilities and naíonraí.”

Members were informed that:-

“The attached letter and background detail, prepared by the Donegal County Childcare Committee and forwarded to a range of key decision makers, outlines the effect that the subvention scheme, if imposed, will have on childcare development in Donegal.

This issue has already been raised through the County Development Board and its relevant sub-committees and letters have been issued to relevant Government departments expressing concern at the implications of the scheme for Donegal.

At a public meeting in Letterkenny on 12th November, the childcare providers called on public representatives to request a meeting with the Minister to discuss the impact of this urban model on rural providers in Donegal. This request is currently in train.

The East Donegal Forum is also hosting an information seminar on 30th November at the Radisson Hotel, Letterkenny for providers to assist them in understanding the legal, financial and human implications of the proposed scheme.”

Clr. Gallagher advised that she was fearful that the introduction of the subvention scheme would result in the creation of a three-tier system within rural Ireland.

It was generally acknowledged that the scheme would penalise working families who already were faced with spiralling childcare costs and force the closure of many childcare centres in the county.

Clr. Donaghey advised that contact had been made with the Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children with special responsibility for children, Mr. Brendan Smith,

and it was her understanding that he had agreed to review the scheme.

Mr. Garry Martin, Senior Executive Officer stated that the County Development Board was currently awaiting a response from the Department of Health and Children in relation to the progression of the matter.

The County Manager agreed that correspondence should be sent to Minister Smith requesting clarity on the matter and establishing whether or not the scheme was going to be reviewed.

C/606/07 TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES AT RADHARC NA TRABREIGE

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

“That Donegal County Council install traffic calming measures at Radharc na Trabreige, Malin, at the earlier opportunity in consultation with local residents.”

Clr. MacLochlainn was informed that:-

“This proposal can be incorporated with the other locations proposed over the past few months, as circulated at the Inishowen Electoral Area Committee Meeting on Monday 12th November. These will be addressed as per the recommended procedure contained in the Traffic Management and Speed Control Measures presented at the Electoral Area Meeting.”

Clr. Mac Lochlainn called for the works to be completed to the same standard as those carried out by private contractors and asked that the process be fast tracked to ensure the installation of adequate traffic calming measures.

Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director Roads and Transportation agreed to liase with the Local Area Manager in relation to same. It was agreed that a report would be presented at the next Inishowen Electoral Area Meeting in January 2008.

C/607/07 LIGHTING AT MOVILLE PIER, THE WHARF

The following motion submitted by Clr. Mc Donald was not moved:

“That this Council fix lighting at Moville pier The Wharf which have been out of action for two years.”

In the absence of Clr. McDonald, Clr. Donaghey advised that the work in question had had now been completed.

C/608/07

DOWNGRADE/CLOSE
MALIN HEAD COASTGUARD STATION

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

“That this Council call on the Government and the Minister for Transport and Marine to reverse its decision to downgrade/close Malin Head Coastguard Station.”

Members noted that the decision was indeed contrary to the Government’s own decision to decentralise services and would result in the relocation of jobs to the east coast.

Clr. Mc Guinness asked for cross party support and advised that every effort should be made to convince the Minister that his decision was a retrograde step in terms of tourism infrastructure and job provision. He outlined the need to lobby and seek a meeting with the Minister for Transport and the Marine, Mr Noel Dempsey.

In conclusion, Clr. Mc Guinness thanked members for their support and asked that the County Manager liase with Kerry County Council in respect of providing a joint submission on the closure of both Malin Head and Valentia Coastguard Stations.

The County Manager advised that he would write to Kerry County Council in relation to the adoption of this motion and the preparation of a joint submission.

C/609/07

PLANNING APPLICATIONS-INADEQUATE WATER
SUPPLY

On the proposal of Clr. Donaghey, seconded by Clr. Mac Lochlainn, the following motion was adopted:-

“That Sanitary Services and Planning staff meet with members and agents for developers whose planning applications have been withheld for developments along the east coast of Inishowen due to inadequate water supply. This issue is of paramount importance.”

Clr. Donaghey was informed that:-

“The Council’s Water Services Directorate met with MH Associates who are acting on behalf of a number of potential developers on 03rd October, 2007. The Planning Directorate were represented by Helena O’Toole, Denis Kelly and Clare Cronin. This issue is being progressed by the Water Services Directorate.”

Clr. Donaghey stated that she was extremely unhappy with the reply and was left with no option but to seek a meeting with the County Manager on the matter in the New Year. She noted that the matter had been ongoing for over two years and that there was no option left but to tell the developers concerned to proceed with the boreholes. Members, she contended, were being deliberately ignored and she herself had not been invited to a recent meeting. It was a very serious matter particularly when the developers concerned were prepared to continue and raise the money to satisfactorily complete the works.

Clr. Donaghey noted that a request had been made at the last Inishowen Electoral Area Meeting for a meeting between developers and local representatives within a two-week period.

Mr. Paul Kilcoyne, Senior Engineer advised that there was a serious problem with water provision in east Inishowen and outlined the need for adequate funding mechanisms.

He noted that a number of staff from the Water and Environment Directorate had attended a recent Inishowen Electoral Area Meeting to explain the situation. Responding to Clr. Donaghey’s claim that she had not been invited to attend a recent meeting on the matter, he advised that there had not been any specific attempt to exclude her from the proceedings but that there had been a difficulty in holding a meeting without all members being informed.

He noted that correspondence forwarded by MH Associates had indicated that there was funding available under the Water Services Investment Programme. This was, he advised, incorrect. It might be possible, he advised, to examine funding in the context of the Special Development Charges Scheme. Overall he indicated, that the Water and

Environment Directorate did have a difficulty with borehole supplies being developed by a private source, given that there would be no long-term input into the project.

Mr. Kilcoyne acknowledged that €19 million had been listed on the current Water Services Investment Programme 2017 – 2019 for the Inishowen Water Strategy Scheme. He reminded members that these monies still required formal approval.

Mr. Francie Coyle, Director Planning and Economic Development advised that it was intended to hold a meeting with the members of the Inishowen and Letterkenny Electoral Areas, together with relevant staff from both the Planning and W.E.E Directorates, before the end of January 2008.

Clr. Donaghey stated that the end of January was too late, given that the planning service would be considering the planning applications within the specified time limits.

The County Manager confirmed that as he had only now been made aware of the matter he was therefore not in a position to comment directly. He agreed, however, to the following: -

- To review the number of planning applications currently being processed and at risk of being refused.
- To liaise with W.E.E Directorate and review options for a developer led approach.
- To write to the Inishowen Electoral Area Members as soon as this information was available.

C/610/07 L265 LIFFORD TO DERRY ROAD

The following motion in the name of Clr. Crawford was moved on his behalf by Clr. McGowan, seconded by Clr. McDaid and adopted:-

“That this Council seek funding under the Interreg IV Programme for the L265 Lifford-Derry Road via St. Johnston.”

Clr. Crawford was informed that:-

“Donegal County Council will seek funding under the Interreg IV Programme for the R265 Lifford-Derry Road via

St. Johnston when clarification is received of the eligibility requirements of any applications.”

C/611/07 NEW LINK ROAD BONAGEE TO RAMELTON

The following motion submitted by Clr. Harte was not moved:

“That this Council call on the Government to provide funding for the proposed new link road from Bonagee to Ramelton Road.”

C/612/07 ROLE OF COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

On the proposal of Clr. McDaid, seconded by Clr. Mc Garvey, the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council discuss its role in facilitating the community and voluntary sector in the development of action plans and applications for consideration for funding under Peace 3 Programme.”

Clr. McDaid was informed that:-

“Donegal County Council is currently awaiting clarification from the Department of Finance and the SEUPB on the implementing arrangements for Priority 1: Building Positive Relations at the Local Level of the Peace III Programme. In relation to Priority 2: Creating shared public spaces, Donegal County Council is proactively working in partnership with community stakeholders in preparing detailed proposals for the development of strategic projects in Pettigo/Tullyhomon and Lifford/Strabane that will form the basis of applications to the SEUPB for substantial funding for the development of shared public spaces that will enable the emergence of vibrant, economically active and engaged communities.”

The Council through its Community & Enterprise Division will continue to support the Community & Voluntary Sector and accessing funding from all external sources as part of their ongoing engagement and support for the sector. The Community Development Officer at present engages with hundreds of Local Development Groups across the County and provides monthly information updates, including

funding opportunities that may be available from time to time such as bodies as Special EU Programmes Body via Peace III or Interreg IV, new funding streams available through the National Rural Development Plan including those from the newly cohesed Local Development Companies (expected to come on stream in practical terms in early 2008) and any other relevant funds that may be made available from time to time through national sources such as Government Departments e.g. Clar ect).

The Community & Enterprise Section also, where relevant, supports the creation of linkages between partner funders where funding from more than one source is required for the development of a particular initiative.”

Clr. Mc Daid noted that many community and voluntary projects within the county were now running out of funding.

Mr. Garry Martin, Senior Executive Officer acknowledged that Peace funding would be much lower under these new initiatives. A county wide action plan was, he advised, being prepared and a new taskforce set up to prioritise and focus on programme type activities. The next steps involved meeting with SEUPB and the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government together with the provision of training by POBAL to ensure maximum exposure to Peace funding. He advised that there would also be a countywide consultation process and that it was intended to have the plan completed by the middle of 2008. Members requested that they be kept fully updated on the progress of this matter.

C/613/07 HOUSES AT ASHBROOK DRIVE, BALLYSHANNON
On the proposal of Clr. McEniff, seconded by Clr. Byrne, the following motion was adopted:-

“That the Council connect the houses at Ashbrook Drive, Ballyshannon to the sewerage scheme now in progress in that area.”

Clr. McEniff was informed that:-

“The houses at Ashbrook Drive, Ballyshannon are currently serviced by septic tanks. The estate is a private estate and has not been taken over by the Council. It may be technically feasible to provide a gravity line to facilitate connection of the houses but this may impact on private lands adjacent. The Council will assess if connection of the houses is feasible within the unit cost limits deemed economic by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.”

Clr Mc Eniff proposed, seconded by Clr. Byrne, and it was resolved, that an application be forwarded to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government for additional funding in respect of the above connection.

C/614/07 REVIEW OF CLASS 31 EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENTS

On the proposal of Clr. Pringle, seconded by Clr. Mc Garvey, the following motion was adopted:-

“That Donegal County Council asks the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government to review the “Class 31” exempted development regulations in relation to mobile telephony and the maximum emission levels from antenna equipment.”

Clr. Pringle was informed that:-

“Certain types of development are exempted from the requirement to obtain permission. The principal classes of exempted development are to be found in Section 4 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Class 31, Part 1 of the second schedule to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 relates to the carrying out by a statutory undertaker authorised to provide a telecommunications service of certain developments. If members wish to request the Minister of Environment, Heritage and Local Government to review the provisions it would be appropriate that members give an indication of the rationale for the review and an indication as to what the desired outcome of the review should be.”

Clr. Pringle called on the Department to provide greater assurance in relation to the permitted levels of emissions

from antenna equipment. He asked that correspondence be forwarded to the Department requesting clarification on the permitted emission levels.

C/615/07 DECLINE OF PUB LICENCES

The following motion submitted by Clr. O'Neill was not moved:

“That this Council discuss the impact on the local economy resulting from the decline of pub licences in the county and the factors that have contributed to this decline.”

C/616/07 TRAFFIC DIFFICULTIES-RAMELTON

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

“That this Council address the traffic difficulties in Ramelton as a matter of urgency.”

Clr. McGarvey was informed that:-

“Ramelton has benefited from substantial monies a number of years ago under the “Urban Village Renewal Programme” where extensive works were carried out along the Mall. On an ongoing basis Ramelton also benefits from the Roads Restoration Programme.

Ramelton, as with a number of other towns in the Milford Electoral Area, is experienced greater volume of traffic and in particular a high percentage of HGV. Preliminary work has been undertaken regarding the feasibility of a one way system and it is hoped that this will be further progressed in 2008.

Also recently, a meeting has taken place between officials and residents in the town regarding the alleged damage by large vehicles to private property and legal opinion has been sought on this issue. The Milford elected members will be kept briefed on any developments in this regard.”

It was noted that considerable damage was being done to private property in Ramelton and that the obvious way forward was the development of a one way traffic system. It was generally agreed, in the context of the county as a

whole, that part of the problem lay with driver attitude and behaviour.

Clr. Mc Garvey stated that extra funding was required to alleviate the current situation.

C/617/07 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

It was resolved on the proposal of the Mayor, Clr. Boyle, seconded by Clr. McGowan to adjourn the meeting for lunch.

C/618/07 SAFETY MEASURES AT SCHOOLS

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

“That this Council undertake a complete review of all safety measures on roads leading to and from all schools in Donegal.”

Clr. McBride was informed that:-

“Donegal County Council has progressed an extensive programme of safety measures at schools throughout the county in recent years including the provision of school flashing lights, implementation of improved signage, parking layouts and Low Cost Accident Schemes, provision of school wardens and revision of speed limits. These measures are programmed following consultation between the Road Safety Engineer, Road Safety Officer, Roads Area Staff and the Elected Members. Any particular concerns regarding safety measures on roads leading to and from all schools in Donegal should be raised with Roads Area Staff for consideration in these work programmes.”

Clr. Mc Bride asked that the issue be moved forward as quickly as possible given the serious implications for the safety of school children in the county.

Mr. John Mc Laughlin, Director of Roads and Transportation advised that he would contact Mr. Eamon Brown, Road Safety Officer and Mr. Stephen Lambert, Roads Safety Engineer and ask them to attend the next round of Electoral Area Meetings so as to establish the extent and need for safety measures in each individual area.

He affirmed that he would then bring a report on the matter to the General Purposes Committee.

C/619/07 DESIGNATION OF BALOR THEATRE AS ARTS CENTRE

On the proposal of Clr. A. Bonner, seconded by Clr. Mc Gowan, the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council designate The Balor Theatre as an “Arts Centre” for the Finn Valley and Donegal South East, similar to recent designation of “Abbey Theatre” in Ballyshannon and that proper support mechanism be put in place to support the wonderful work being done by the Balor subject to relevant budgetary constraints.”

Clr. A. Bonner was informed that:-

“The Council through the Cultural Services Division are working on an ongoing basis with the Balor Theatre as part of its Strategic Arts Partnership Programme. Additionally, the Council will continue to support and assist the Balor in any way possible in maximising additional opportunities for support, whether financial or otherwise including external opportunities to assist in its ongoing activities.”

Clr. Bonner in an emotive response stated that she was extremely disappointed with this reply and queried the commitment of Donegal County Council to the Balor Project. She demanded to know why it was proving so difficult to get minimal funding from the Community Culture and Enterprise Directorate, given its 1.94 million budget for arts projects..

The County Manager in response to comments by Clr. Bonner in relation to a recent meeting with the Arts Council, affirmed that there had been no specific attempt to omit mention of the Balor Theatre. Responding to comments by Clr. McGowan, the County Manager refuted that the Regional Arts Centre in Letterkenny had been developed at the cost of any other centre pointing out that it was serving the county as a whole. It was, he asserted, up to members at budget time to consider funding for various arts projects, and that a figure of €40,000 could possibly be considered in the context of budgetary provision for 2008

The County Manager acknowledged that there was a difference in the funding of the Balor and the Abbey but that this was simply down to specifics within the community groups concerned.

Clr. McGuinness suggested, as a way forward and so as not to create any precedents, that the Balor Theatre be given recognition and treated as a unique case because of its history and status within the county.

The County Manager acknowledged Clr. Bonner's dedicated concern for the project and the ongoing commitment of the Butt Hall Committee. He advised that he was willing to meet with Clr. Bonner and the members of the Butt Hall Committee after the 2008 Budget Meeting.

C/620/07

STRANORLAR AREA SWIMMING POOL

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

“That the Manager give a full progress report on Stranorlar Area Swimming Pool, the HSE/Council Offices One Stop Shop, with details of timeframes, funding and project staffing etc.”

Clr. McGowan was informed that:-
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- **Proposed Stranorlar Public Services Centre**
You will be aware from previous reports that the proposed site for the project is on land, which was purchased from the Butt Hall Committee. A clause in this purchase stated that in the event that the construction of the Public Services Centre does not commence within 5 years of the date of the sale, the Butt Hall Committee has the option to buy back the property at the original purchase price. As it is not possible to have work commenced on the site by the end of 2007, the HSE has to negotiate with the Committee a relaxation of the time limit burden on the site.
The Council, including the County Manager has met with the HSE several times over the past number of months with the purpose of progressing the discussions with the Butt Hall Committee. These discussion culminated in a proposal from

the HSE, which was put to the Committee. The Committee has responded with a detailed counter proposal, which is being considered. A response from the HSE is expected shortly.

- Timframe

The timeframe for the procurement of the offices is dependent on the HSE reaching an agreement with the Butt Hall Committee in relation to the procurement of a site. It is expected that the detailed design/planning/tendering stage will take 18 months. Construction stage will take a further 18 months.

- Funding

The total cost of Donegal County Council's accommodation requirement is currently estimated at €7,450,000. This figure includes expenditure of €1.64 million for a library, of which 75% (€1.23million) may be recouped from the DOEHLG's Library Capital Programme.

This leaves a capital balance of circa 6.22 million to be funded.

Consideration can be given by the members to the funding of the Public Services Centre from the disposal of assets.

- Staffing

The staffing of the Stranorlar Public Services Centre has not been finalised but for accommodation purposes the following indicative numbers are being used:-

Corporate Services	5no
Roads/Transport	8no
Housing Services	5no
Planning Service	8no
Community/Culture/Enterprise	1no

Ballybofey Stranorlar Leisure Centre

A progress meeting was held with the Stranorlar Electoral Area Members on 06th November, 2007 to update them on progress generally, as follows:-

- Work on land searches, CPO drawings, schedules, certificates, Manager's Orders and notices is continuing.

- Work on the preparation of contract documents for the leisure centre is about to commence
- All possible sources of funding are being investigated
- Staff resources on all WEE Leisure Centre and public facility projects is being assessed at present.

Clr. Mc Gowan acknowledged that there was a need to appoint a specific Project Manager to the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Leisure Centre project to move the issue forward. €3.8 million had been allocated seven years ago to develop the centre and this was now in danger of being lost, he added.

A number of members advised that there was now a need to support and focus on the Finn Valley given the obvious need for community facilities in the area.

Mr. Paul Kilcoyne advised that the Acting Director of Water, Environment and Emergency Services had been unable to attend the meeting because of a family bereavement , however the following arrangements were being put in place:-

- Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of the project would be published early in the New Year.
- Consultancy Team involved would be asked to proceed with the project.
- All sources of funding would be examined with the assistance of the C&E Directorate who were committing resources to the sourcing of funding.”

The County Manager advised that it was intended to make significant progress on all the matters outlined above in 2008.

C/621/07

ACCIDENT BLACK SPOT SIGN

The following in the name of Clr. Reid was moved on his behalf by Clr. McGuinness, seconded by Clr. McBride and adopted:

“That the Council erect an Accident Black Spot sign at Stranmuch, Castlefinn.”

Clr. Reid was informed that:-

“The NRA does not erect Black Spot signs as a policy, all warning signs should advise drivers of the nature of the problem. However, the regional road safety engineer will inspect the location and examine the accident database to identify if there is an accident problem at the location and, if so, to recommend the most suitable appropriate counter-measure for the site.”

C/622/07 TIDYING UP OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES DURING FESTIVALS

The following question was submitted by Clr. Alcorn:-

“What assistance is available to local festivals in tidying up their towns and villages prior and during their much needed festivals?”

Clr. Alcorn was advised that :-

“The Council does not provide assistance to groups for litter clearance activities prior to and during festivals. This is in line with Section 17 of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997, which places an obligation on the organisers to take necessary measures to prevent and control litter arising from the holding of the events such as festivals.

The effect of this section of the Act is to place the responsibility for litter control at festivals and other events with the relevant organisers, who must ensure that waste and litter management provision is incorporated into the planning of their events.”

C/623/07 DISPOSAL OF INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENT

The following question was submitted by Clr. Slowey:-

“What mechanism will Donegal County Council use for charging companies for the disposal of industrial effluent to Council Sewerage Treatment Plants?”

Clr. Slowey was informed that:-

“In the case of very large users, a Specific Users agreement will be entered, based on actual specific costs. In the case of

more minor users the county wide costs are apportioned and charged as part of the metered water charge.”

C/624/07 N56 LOUGHANURE AUXILLARY WORKS

The following question was submitted by Clr. Alcorn:-

“Has this Council any plans to improve the fencing and gates along the N56 in Loughanure village which was done as auxillary works when roadwork improvements was done in the village?”

Clr. Alcorn was informed that:-

“It is understood that agreements made to erect fencing and gates as part of the previous roadworks in Loughanure have been completed. At present there are no further plans in the National Road Design Office to do any additional works to the fencing and gates in Loughanure Village.”

C/625/07 APPEALS PROCEDURES WITHIN SERVICE DIRECTORATES

The following question was submitted by Clr. Slowey:-

“What appeal procedures are in place within Donegal County Council Service Directorates for the refusal of grant applications?”

Clr. Slowey was informed that:-

“Statutory appeals procedures are in place for a number of services provided by the Council. The most obvious example is the appeal of decisions made on planning applications to An Bord Pleanala. In addition, where any customer is not satisfied with a decision made by the Council in their case, or if they are unhappy with the manner in which the decision was made or how their application was processed, they can request the Office of the Ombudsman to review the case. It is accepted, however, that there is a considerable range of services provided by the Council for which no form of statutory appeal currently exists. For this reason, the draft Customer Action Plan provides for a system to allow customers to make a formal appeal against any decision of the Council on an application for services made by them,

where no such right of appeal (other than a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman) currently exists. We will publicise details of these arrangements when they are in place, and we will advise customers of their right of appeal when they are informed of the decision on their application. If the customer is unhappy with the way in which the Council deals with the appeal, they have the right to take the matter up with the Ombudsman. It is hoped to have these arrangements in place by the end of 2008.”

C/626/07

INVENTORY OF COUNCIL ASSETS

The following question was submitted by Clr. MacLochlainn:-

“When will a full report be presented to a meeting of Donegal County Council with an inventory of Council assets throughout the county including the estimated individual value of these assets for discussion by the members, as agreed at a previous meeting of the Council earlier this year.”

Clr. MacLochalinn was informed that:-

“A comprehensive report on Council assets was submitted by the County Manager to the Council’s meeting on the 30th July last. This report included a strategy for the disposal of surplus assets which was approved by the Corporate Policy Group and the Council at that meeting. The report, inter alia, identified commitments which the Council has which requires funding from a range of funding sources including the disposal of surplus assets and work is continuing within the various Directorates to identify other surplus assets which can be assessed and valued and brought to the Council for consideration.”

C/627/07

PAYMENT FOR DISPOSAL OF RECYCLABLE GOODS

The following question was submitted by Clr. MacLochlainn:-

“Have the Water and Environment Section of Donegal County Council queried why householders in various locations in Donegal are being asked to pay the same for the disposal of recyclable goods as ordinary household waste

despite the obvious difference in disposal costs for the private operators, and, if so, will they furnish the members with their response.”

Clr. MacLochlainn was informed that:-

“The matter of setting prices for waste collection services is one for each particular service provider. The Water and Environment Service of the Council is confident that there is good competition in the marketplace and that value for money is being enjoyed by their customers. Nevertheless the question of a price differential between the bin for recycling and the bin for disposal has been raised with the collectors. Their response has been that the introduction of such a price differential would introduce a significant risk of contamination of the recycling bin. Currently the levels of contamination are generally low. The introduction of a cheaper recycling service would act as an inducement to users of the service to take the chance of putting non-recyclables into the cheaper bin. It should also be noted that the demand for recyclable materials is low and that appropriate disposal of these materials is a net cost to collectors, not a net income.”

C/628/07

BOTTLE BANKS ON MOVILLE SHORE FRONT

The following question was submitted by Clr. McDonald:-

“When will the bottle banks on Moville shore front that have been refused planning permission be removed.”

Clr. McDonald was informed that:-

“The Council have been trying for some time to find an alternative suitable site for the bring banks, including consultation with local council members and local Tidy Town Group. It has been proposed that these bring banks could be relocated to Glencrow where Donegal County Council owns land. This proposal is being considered.”

C/629/07

BUNCRANA LEISURE CENTRE

The following question was submitted by Clr. Donaghey:-

“What progress has been made with regard to appointing a design team to progress urgent refurbishment work to Buncrana Leisure Centre.”

Clr. Donaghey was informed that:-

“Before progress can be made on the design of the refurbishment of Buncrana Leisure Centre the submissions already received need to be assessed, ranked and shortlisted before design team appointment can be made. This has not yet been done due to staff turnover issues which continue to hamper progress.”

C/630/07

CIVIC AMENITY SITE FOR BUNCRANA

The following question was submitted by Clr. Donaghey:-

“What progress has been made regarding a Civic Amenity Centre for Buncrana, the second biggest town in Donegal?”

Clr. Donaghey was informed that:-

“Work has been completed on two civic amenity sites- Stranorlar and Laghey. A contractor has been appointed for the construction of three further sites Letterkenny, Dungloe, and Milford and a contractor will shortly be appointed for the upgrade of the Carndonagh site to bring it into line with the other sites. No sources of funding or physical sites have yet been identified for Buncrana or South West Donegal, and identifying same will only commence when the six approved sites are well under construction. In the case of Buncrana there has been some indication that private operators are developing proposals for civic amenity facilities there although no details are available as yet.”

C/631/07

GLENEELY SEWERAGE SCHEME

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGuinness:-

“When will the Council upgrade/sort out the Gleneely Sewerage Scheme and how long will this take?”

Clr. McGuinness was informed that:-

“The wastewater treatment plant currently serving Gleneely has limited spare treatment capacity such that further multiple development within the catchment is incapable of being treated to the required standards. Expansion of the treatment works in conjunction with and financed by new developments may be possible subject to the receiving waters being able to assimilate the discharge. Such assessments will be carried out if it becomes clear that there is real and significant development demand to support the expansion of the existing works.”

C/632/07 OVERHEAD WIRES ON APPROACHES TO MOVILLE PIER

The following question was submitted by Clr. McDonald:-

“What plans, if any, does this Council have to put ducting in place to remove overhead wires on approaches to Moville pier?”

Clr. McDonald was informed that:-

“The Marine and Roads Sections of the Council have no plans to do this undergrounding work approaching Moville pier.”

C/633/07 FERRY SERVICE –GREENCASTLE/MOVILLE AND TROON

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGuinness:-

“Will the Council reopen discussions with South Ayrshire Council regarding the feasibility of a Ferry Service between Greencastle/Moville and Troon?”

Clr. McGuinness was informed that:-

“The Council will engage with South Ayrshire Council to explore, as part of potential tri-lateral Interreg 4 projects, options to assess the feasibility of such a service.”

C/634/07 ROUNDAABOUT AT CIVIC AMENITY SITE, LETTERKENNY

The following question was submitted by Clr. Larkin:-

“Will the Council be incorporating a roundabout into works to help our new Civic Amenity Site in Letterkenny?”

Clr. Larkin was informed that:-

“The Donegal County Council Road Design Section examined this proposal previously and made a presentation to the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee in which they recommended that priority junctions were adequate for traffic movements in the area with all traffic exiting the side roads being advised to turn left only.

Since that time the road has been adopted as part of the N56 and therefore any future junction change considerations lie with the Donegal National Road Design Office. The question raised will be referred to that office for consideration for a full report to a future meeting of the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee.”

C/635/07 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT THE HOSPITAL CORNER, LIFFORD

The following question was submitted by Clr. Harte:-

“Can the Director of Roads confirm if a pedestrian crossing at the Hospital Corner in Lifford will be installed to help those in the Rehab Centre cross the road?”

Clr. Harte was informed that:-

“The accessibility officer met with the Regional Road Safety Engineer at the area surrounding the hospital, bus stop and crossing points in the vicinity and a number of possible improvements were identified. The matter will be followed up and an application made to the NRA in due course.”

C/636/07 UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENTS IN LETTERKENNY

The following question was submitted by Clr. Larkin:-

“How does this Council prioritise how they deal with unauthorised developments in Letterkenny area and how do the Council choose which unauthorised developments to deal with in the Letterkenny Town area?”

Clr. Larkin was informed that:-

“The Planning and Development Act, 2000 imposes a duty on a planning authority to investigate complaints of alleged unauthorised development within set timeframes and thereafter determine the legal actions to follow. While the majority of current enforcement work is initiated on foot of complaints received throughout the county (including town council areas), planning personnel remain alert to the need to be proactive on alleged breaches of planning control. Additional staff have been assigned to the directorate this year and this has assisted in increased activity being progressed in respect to both historical and new alleged breaches. The legal action, if any, to be followed has been measured, appropriate and reflective of the significance of the alleged breach in the planning law. Section 160 injunctions and emergency enforcement notices are considered in serious cases (e.g. significant adverse impact on the environment). In less serious cases it is practice to attempt to resolve or halt unauthorised development activity by agreement and this does not require additional demands upon the service. However, if the breach is not resolved or halted by agreement enforcement notices or injunctions may be deemed necessary. In such instances the case is discussed with our legal advisors and ultimately legal action is authorised by way of a Manager’s Order. The case is then referred to the Council’s Solicitor to pursue legal proceedings.

Letterkenny Town Council is a separate planning authority and it is a matter for them to determine the approach to alleged breaches. Donegal County Council do provide technical support to the Town Council on an agency basis wherein recommendations are furnished to them on how they should proceed in respect of particular cases.”

C/637/07

UNFINISHED WORKS AT ARD NA MEALA, ST. JOHNSTON

The following question was submitted by Clr. Crawford:-

“What progress has been made in finding a resolution to the ongoing problems of unfinished works at Ard na Meala, St. Johnston?”

Clr. Crawford was informed that:-

“Permission was granted to BGN Development & Civil Engineering Ltd. in 2002 for 20 dwellings and installation of a wastewater treatment plant (planning application ref 01/6361 refers) at St. Johnston. The development is known as “Ard na Meala” and is now occupied but the developer went into liquidation before completion of the development to the standards required in the grant of permission. The most significant difficulties arising from this has been that the wastewater treatment system was not managed or maintained, the public lighting was not operative, the footpaths and roads have not been provided with overlay and the footpath into the village was not provided. The ESB have disconnected the development and the lights are not currently operative.

The Council’s Solicitor wrote to K.P.M.G. (the liquidator of BGN Development & Civil Engineering Ltd) in September of this year advising them that Donegal County Council have been pursuing the company by way of enforcement action under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 related to the failure to comply with outstanding obligations in relation to the development. They were advised that the breaches are serious and require significant expenditure to have the development conform with the planning permission granted. They were asked to confirm the position with regard to the liquidation and what if any funds are available to meet the said obligations. A response has not been received to date.

In terms of the wastewater treatment system I can advise that Council staff from a number of Directorates have been in discussion with a separate developer (Castlethird Properties Ltd.) who have taken the benefit of a permission for 5 dwellings located to the rear of “Ard Na Meala” with connection to its wastewater treatment system. Castlethird Properties Ltd. has initiated desludging and undertaken remedial works necessary to satisfy the terms of the grant of permission. It should be noted that a further application to rear of 04/6410 has been lodged by Castlethird Property

Developments Ltd for 11 houses and is the subject of a further information request. The request seeks details regarding the wastewater treatment system and who shall be responsible for its upgrading and maintenance (application ref 07/40616 refers).

The Roads Directorate continue to pursue the provision of the estate to required standards and are currently seeking an undertaking from the ESB to secure public lighting within the development. Once the supply has been provided it shall be possible to examine if the public lighting system requires expenditure and if the utilisation of the security bond of €35,546 can be utilised to remedy deficiencies. The bond may be utilised on a priority basis towards securing the completion of capital works to roads, footpaths, lighting etc. As of 07th December the present position is that contact has been made with the ESB and a response is awaited from them on the status regarding the lights.”

C/638/07

ASSISTANCE OF MANORCUNNINGHAM ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

The following question was submitted by Clr. McDaid:-

“What practical measures are this Council offering to Manorcunningham Environmental Group to assist and support them in their efforts to carry out much needed environmental improvements to the village and its environs?”

Clr. McDaid was informed that:-

“The Planning and Economic Development Directorate recognises the need for ongoing town and village renewal works throughout the county. In the period 2000-2007, the Directorate has implemented a widespread Renewal Programme through its Strategic Framework Document 2000-2006, completing substantive Environmental Improvement Works in many urban and rural centres. The Directorate has successfully leveraged a wide variety of external funding sources in its efforts to finance this programme. To date, funding for village renewal works, in particular, has been mainly sourced from An Roinn Gnothai Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta (Gaeltacht Villages) and Peace II funding (non-Gaeltacht villages) and works have

been completed by the Roads and Transportation Directorate. I would advise that no proposals have been received from the Manorcunningham Environmental Improvement Group for assistance/support for their proposed environmental improvement works. Any proposal or submission by local groups, such as the Manorcunningham Environmental Group, will be examined by the Planning and Economic Development Directorate should any funding source become available.

As you may be aware, financial assistance from our external funding sources may not be available past 2007 and therefore any request for financial support may have to be considered in the context of funding available from the Council's own resources (i.e. development charges). Priority however, would be given to current Environmental Improvement Schemes/Flagship projects in the Letterkenny Electoral Area.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the group and wish them every success in their proposals. I would welcome any queries, which the group may have on how best to progress their initiatives."

C/639/07 LAGAN PHASE 3 WATER

The following question was submitted by Clr. Crawford:-

"What progress has been made to bring Lagan Phase 3 water to Manorcunningham and surrounding areas?"

Clr. Crawford was informed that:-

"The Lagan Desert Phase 3 and Desertegney Water Supply Scheme contract commenced in September, 2007. Although initial progress was slow the contractor has now dedicated the required resources to the contract and progress is expected to improve rapidly."

C/640/07 FLOODING IN GARDENS OF COUNCIL HOUSING SCHEMES

The following question was submitted by Clr. McDaid:-

"When can this Council expect to be furnished with the report on flooding in gardens of Council Housing Schemes promised by the Director of Housing and Building Services

in response to my motion at the Council Meeting of November, 2006 and subsequent question at March 2007 Council Meeting?”

Clr. McDaid was informed that:-

“Having examined this matter the Council is not aware of any countywide problems of flooding in the gardens of Council housing schemes. In cases where issues arise, having regard to the general weather conditions, individual cases are attended to by the area housing offices. At design stage, proposals are examined with regard to the adequacy of drainage within a development and where issues arise in relation to non-compliance with general specification the developer/contractor is requested to remedy same.”

C/641/07

KILLYBEGS SEWERAGE SCHEME

The following question was submitted by Clr. Pringle:-

“Is there any approval of the Killybegs Sewer Scheme contract documents expected from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government?”

Clr. Pringle was informed that:-

“The contract documents for Killybegs Sewerage Scheme contracts 2 and 3 (main pumping station, outfall, and town network) were submitted to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in August and September 2007 respectively. It is impossible to predict when approval will issue and consequently when the Council will be able to tender the listed contracts. Construction will be subject to the Council being in a position to source the required funding.”

C/642/07

PRIVATISED SEWERAGE TREATMENT PLANTS IN DONEGAL TOWN AND ROSSNOWLAGH

The following question was submitted by Clr. Pringle:-

“What will be the impact of the privatised sewerage treatment plants in Donegal Town and Rosstown on maintenance budget of Water and Environment Service?”

Clr. Pringle was informed that:-

“Whether operated and maintained by Donegal County Council or on the Councils behalf by private service providers, the construction of large water and wastewater treatment plants and sludge treatment centres will result in significant increases in the Councils water services operation and maintenance budgets. In particular, the combined 2008 full year predicted increase in the operation and maintenance budget arising from the main pumping stations, rising mains and wastewater treatment plants of Donegal Town, Rossnowlagh, and Ballyshannon, along with the sludge treatment centre at Donegal Town is €1.7m.

C/643/07 SEWERAGE TREATMENT AT CARRICKBOY, BALLYSHANNON

The following question was submitted by Clr. O’Neill:-

“ Will Donegal County Council proceed with works to provide sewerage treatment at Carrickboy, Ballyshannon with the provision of a pumping station to serve the houses inside the town boundary that have been excluded from the new multi million euro town scheme?”

Clr. O’Neill was informed that:-

“The houses in question are 6 dwellings located at Carrickboy, Ballyshannon on the southern fringe of the Ballyshannon Sewerage Network. The network has already been extended in this area as far as can be economically justified. As noted, a pumping system would be needed to connect these houses to the main sewers. The cost of providing a pumping station, rising main, and collection network is of the order of €100k, giving a unit cost per dwelling in excess of €16k which exceeds the limit of funding deemed economic by the Department.”

C/644/07 PRIVATE REFUSE COLLECTION

The following question was submitted by Clr. Kennedy:-

“Does Donegal County Council monitor the private refuse collection and have proper recycling measures been put in place?”

Clr. Kennedy was informed that:-

“All private waste collectors are required to hold Waste Collection Permits, which are issued by the Council. It is a condition of these permits that collectors maintain records of all waste collected and details of where it is delivered for disposal or recovery. Permit holders must submit annual returns to the Council summarising their activities in the previous year. Where collectors are involved in domestic waste collection, it is a condition of their collection permits that they provide a kerbside collection service for mixed dry recyclables. All relevant collectors are offering this service to their domestic customers.

In addition, all waste brought to the Council’s landfill is weighed and recorded. Where municipal waste is being taken outside the county for disposal or recovery, the collector must obtain the approval of the Council and notify it on a weekly basis of the tonnage of waste involved. The Council also inspects all loads of waste being transported to Northern Ireland for recovery.

All waste facilities being operated by the private sector (such as transfer stations and material recovery facilities) require a Waste Permit. The Council issues these permits and inspects the facilities regularly to confirm compliance with the permit conditions.”

C/645/07

TOWN CENTRE CAR PARK IN BALLYSHANNON

The following question was submitted by Clr. O’Neill:-

“Will Donegal County Council proceed to construction with the new town centre car park in Ballyshannon considering that CPO’s are now being put in place?”

Clr. O’Neill was informed that:-

“The intent of purchasing that lands for the car park is to allow for the construction of the actual car park. The first step is to prepare the CPO. It should be noted that funding has not been put in place at this time for the construction of the car park and that will need to be done in due course.”

C/646/07 WORKS AT NORMA STEWARTS, BALLYMALEEL, LETTERKENNY

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGarvey:-

“What is the total cost of the work being carried out to the road at Norma Stewarts, Ballymaleel, Letterkenny from start to completion?”

Clr. McGarvey was informed that:-

“This has been a complicated project on a very busy stretch of road. The works involved earthworks, drainage, retaining walls, fencing, pavements and tie in to private properties. The length of road is 0.85 km and cost €2.3million.”

C/647/07 RESERVOIR AT MILFORD

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGarvey:-

“With regard to the commencement of works at the proposed reservoir at Milford, has the necessary land been acquired, and if not, what are the problems?”

Clr. McGarvey was informed that:-

“Both the location and cost of the site for the proposed reservoir at Milford have been agreed with the landowner. The maps are complete and the land agreement will be sent to him shortly with a view to completing the land transfer as quickly as possible. The tender documents for the works have now been checked and minor amendments are being made to the documents by consultants. It is expected that the contract will be advertised week commencing 10 December 2007 with work commencing in 2008.”

C/648/07 GLENVAR WATER SCHEME

The following question was submitted by Clr. McBride:-

“What progress has been made on the Glenvar Water Scheme and what is the proposed start date?”

Clr. McBride was informed that:-

“The tender documents for the above works have now been checked and minor amendments are being made to the documents by the consultants. It is expected that the contract will be advertised week commencing 10 December, 2007 with work commencing in 2008.”

C/649/07 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT WORKS IN MILFORD

The following question was submitted by Clr. McBride:-

“When can we expect the Environmental Improvement Works to start in Milford?”

Clr. McBride was informed that:-

“Negotiations are at a conclusion in connection with the purchase of the lands to facilitate the carrying out of the environmental improvements in this case.

When the necessary contracts are in place I will arrange to submit a report to the Milford Electoral Area Members setting out a timescale for the project.”

C/650/07 BALLYBOFEY/STRANORLAR BYPASS

The following question was submitted by Clr. A. Bonner:-

“On what date is the Compulsory Purchase Orders and Environmental Impact Study for the Ballybofey/Stranorlar bypass to be published?”

Clr. A. Bonner was informed that:-

“The NRDO have received final version of the EIS from McCarthy Hyder Consultants on 16th November and are currently carrying out a final review. The EIS has also been referred to VP McMullins for final review. This review is scheduled for completion by the end of November and assuming there are no further issues raised and NRA approval is confirmed, it is proposed to publish before the Christmas break.”

C/651/07 PREBYTERIAN CHURCH, CONVOY

The following question was submitted by Clr. Reid:-

“Has any progress been made in negotiations with the Presbyterian Church, Convoy in relation to road repairs?”

Clr. Reid was informed that: -

“Negotiations are ongoing between the Area Engineers and the Planning Department with a view to progressing this situation. A site meeting has been arranged for next week to help make progress on this matter.”

C/652/07 BALLYBOFEY/STRANORLAR SWIMMING POOL

The following question was submitted by Clr. A. Bonner:-

“Will this Council please appoint a Project Manager to the Ballybofey/Stranorlar swimming pool to support the great work being carried out on this project?”

Clr. A. Bonner was informed that:-

“The allocation of dedicated staff to advance Leisure Centre and Public Facility projects and in particular the Ballybofey Stranorlar Leisure Centre is being considered at present along with the investigation of all possible funding sources for the projects and support staff.”

C/653/07 INTERREG PHASE 4 AND THE GATEWAYS INNOVATION FUND

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGowan:-

“Can a full report be given on all projects under consideration by this Council through the Interreg Phase 4 and the Gateways Innovation Fund etc. so that the elected representatives might have an input?”

Clr. McGowan was informed that:-

“Members of the North West Region Cross Border Group held their last meeting on the 13th November 2007, at which a request was made by the group that the four member councils convene a meeting of the executives to consider the

submission of a draft multi-annual plan bid for Interreg IV funding to the SEUPB. Executives held this meeting on the 20th November 2007 and a process has been agreed to enable member councils to feed into the preparation of the multi annual plan bid for funding. Donegal County Council has undertaken preparatory work on the identification of key strategic projects under the four themes of infrastructure, enterprise, tourism and collaboration. A summary of the strategic projects proposed by Donegal County Council for inclusion in the multi-annual plan bid for funding are outlined in the attached table. It is intended to agree a draft multi-annual plan bid with the respective councils under the NWRCBG to ensure the most effective targeting of resources for the northwest region. Member of the NWRCBG will be presented with the draft multi-annual plan bid for funding for final agreement.

A meeting of the ICBAN board took place on the 24th October, 2007 at which members councils endorsed a methodology for the implementation of the Interreg IV programme and ratified the multi-annual plan bid for funding as presented. Members councils in the ICBAN region have identified projects under each of the themes of enterprise, tourism and ollaboration and have indicated particular projects where the local authority will act as the lead implementing body in areas of interest. A summary of the projects included in the draft multi annual plan bid for Interreg IV funding for the entire ICBAN region is included in the attached annex.

Gateway Innovation Fund

The Gateway Innovation Fund provides an opportunity to implement the national and regional spatial strategies on a cross-border partnership basis. Secondly, the fund offers the opportunity for a significant investment into the physical, social and economic infrastructure of the North West Gateway to complement mainstream funding.

The four projects submitted as part of the bid to the Gateway Innovation Fund are outlined in the attached document. The proposal and supporting appendix has been submitted in response to the call for proposals under the Gateway Innovation Fund. The proposal incorporates projects to underpin a variety of development strategies adopted over the last 10 years to promote Donegal as a prime competitive

and attractive location for job creation, investment and to release the potential of the bi-polar Letterkenny/Derry Gateway as the engine for the regeneration of the North West Region.

Within this context, the emphasis on the preparation of the submission has been placed on the development of interlinked projects that have the broad agreement of local and regional stakeholders. The consultations highlighted the need for a continuing focus to be placed on addressing the infrastructural deficits in the Gateway, both at regional level in terms of service provision and high quality access, and locally in terms of ensuring that Letterkenny develops in a manner that reflects the quality and consolidation agendas of the Local Authorities in Donegal.

The willing engagement of the partner organisations in the development of the proposal, reflecting the long standing tradition of collaboration in the North West, has been a prime factor in making this ambitious submission. Key partnerships between the Councils, the Development Agencies, 3rd level colleges and the business community have enabled the submission of a strong package of projects that will impact on the services and facilities that the Gateway can provide into the future. This initiative helps to put the quality of life agenda uppermost in the minds of residents, visitors and investors alike.

The proposal was submitted to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government on 15th November and a decision on the successful bids is expected in January, 2008.”

C/654/07

ANNUAL REPORT FROM BODIES/GROUPS

The following question was submitted by Clr. McGowan:-

“Can an annual report be given to the Council from bodies/groups that this Council is represented on outlining achievements and any issues dealt with throughout the year?”

Clr. McGowan was informed that:-

“The following obligations were imposed on members of local authorities by the Local Government Act, 2001;-

Section 141 – (1) Duty of members appointed to other bodies.

Where one or more than one member of a local authority is elected, appointed or nominated by that authority to another body, whether established by or under statute or otherwise, it is the duty of that member or members to represent the local authority and to present a report to it on the activities and operation of that body-

- (a) annually, or
- (b) at any other time, if so requested by resolution or by the Cathaoirleach

- (2) every report to which subsection (1) relates shall be presented by the member or members concerned to a meeting of the local authority.
- (3) Nothing in this section requires the disclosure of information to the authority which is confidential or which could not otherwise be disclosed.
- (4) This section also applies to any person who holds membership of a body, by virtue of being Cathaoirleach or any other member of a local authority.

Members are reminded of the above at the AGM.

The following motions from other Council's were noted:

C/655/07

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Fingal County Council, on foot of the discovery of unsuitable building materials used in the construction of floor plinths in residential dwellings within our jurisdiction, write to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government with regard to creating additional regulation for chemical/petrographic analysis of all backfill materials used in excavations floors, road bases etc and that the relevant technical guidance documents of the Building Control Act, 1990 and 2007 be altered to reflect same.”

- C/656/07 KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL
“That, Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government be requested to amend Section 246(b) of the Planning Act, 2000 which requires that public representatives pay a statutory fee of €20.00 in respect of a submission made on a planning application. The amendment should abolish the fee requirement for public representatives in their local authority area.”
- C/657/07 GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
“That Galway County Council call on the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to remove the cap 10,000euro per house on the amount of money he is prepared to provide for sewerage schemes in accordance with Circular L7/06”
- C/658/07 MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
“That this Council expresses its disappointment with the Government for its intention to implement a new Community Childcare Subvention Scheme without any real consultation with Community Childcare providers. That we further declare that the present system of providing staffing grants is a more equitable measure rather than the direct subvention proposed under the new scheme which will benefit a small minority of parents which will likely lead to the closure of many community crèches and playschools. We hereby call on the Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, T.D. to support the role of community childcare outlets recognising that they have been responsible for providing a vital service which has allowed many parents to return to the workplace and equally important offering early learning opportunities for pre school children. We demand that the proposed scheme be abandoned in favour of a more equitable scheme based on the current model.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.