

22nd February, 2011

TO ALL MEMBERS OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
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The Adjourned January Meeting of Donegal County Council, will be held on Monday 28th February, 2011 at 10.00am, in the County House, Lifford.

Items 7, 8C, 8D, 13, 14, 15

Please ensure that you bring the agenda previously distributed to the meeting.

Eunan Sweeney

Meetings Administrator

ADJOURNED MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL, HELD
IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD ON MONDAY 28TH
FEBRUARY, 2011

C/34/11 MEMBERS PRESENT

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

C/35/11 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Clr O'Domhnaill who was unable to attend the meeting.

C/36/11 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Seamus Neely, County Manager, Mr Liam Ward, Director of Corporate and Housing, A/Meetings Administrator, Mr John McLaughlin, Director of Roads and Transportation, Mr Joe Peoples, A/Director of Water and Environment, Mr Michael Heaney Director of Community, Culture and Planning, Mr. Garry Martin, A/Head of Finance and Director of Emergency Services, Mr. Bernard Cuning, Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. Tony Curran, Executive Engineer, Ms Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/37/11 DÁIL ÉLECTIONS

Congratulations were extended to all who had been successful in the recent Dáil Election, in particular former councillors Charlie Mc Conalogue, Pádraig Mac Lochlainn and Thomas Pringle.

Members acknowledged the contribution of the outgoing TDs and wished them well in their chosen paths.

They acknowledged also the efficient manner in which the election count had been carried out and thanked Deputy Returning Officer Liam Ward and County Council and Court Service Staff for their professionalism and efficiency.

C/38/11 PRESENTATION ON WATER CONSERVATION

Mr. Joe Peoples A/Director Water & Environment welcomed Mr. Bernard Cuning, Senior Executive Engineer and Mr. Tony Curran, Executive Engineer to the meeting.

Introducing the presentation, Mr Cunning advised that the objectives of the Council's water conservation programme were in line with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's water conservation policy. The objectives of the policy was to reduce the overall level of water losses in water supply systems in the county and to maximise the value of economic investment in, and the cost effectiveness of, existing or proposed capital works. Overall the aim, it was confirmed was to lower operating costs and facilitate improved operational and demand management of water supply infrastructure, combined with an improved level of supply to customers whilst protecting and facilitating the improved management of finite water resources.

Members were updated in relation to the various stages of the water conservation programme. A comprehensive analysis of the following stages were provided:-

Stage 1 Implementation of Water Management Systems

Stage 2 Active Leakage Control

Stage 3 Rehabilitation

Essentially the four pillars of leakage management were deemed to be:

- Leakage Management
- Pressure Management
- Active Leakage Control
- Speed and Quality of Repairs

Mr Cunning in conclusion affirmed that the overall benefits of the programme included:

- An actual understanding of system performance.
- Reduced out of hours phone calls/call outs.
- Reduced leakage/operating costs
- Improved supply to customers
- Active management of the network
- The need for capital investment could now be determined by proven facts.

Mr Tony Curran, Executive Engineer proceeded to demonstrate the operational logistics of the SCADA

Telemetry System whilst providing an overview of the nature and extent of the Public Water Supply System in the county. This was backed up with a statistical analysis of the water supply network. Overall it was acknowledged that there were 38 Telemetry outstations installed throughout the county with all data from analytical equipment at these outstations transmitted back to a SCADA System. The data is monitored by 7 council staff (electricians and fitters) rotated through the various telemetry projects. All Regional Water Supply Schemes, it was confirmed, had now been fitted with the telemetry system. It was noted that there had been substantial completion of Stage 1 work by June 2010. Welcoming the comprehensive nature of the presentation the County Manager stated that the system was effectively a Management Information System and provided real time information on both a macro and micro level. The system, he affirmed, had been extremely helpful over the recent severe weather period, and had allowed resources to be more effectively allocated.

A heated debate ensued with members raising a wide range of issues including:-

- Request that cost breakdown be provided in relation to the provision of the system.
- Extensive consideration as to why the programme had not encompassed a parallel pipe replacement programme.
- It was suggested that consideration be given to the use of "grey water" and that recognition of same be included in the review of the County Development Plan
- Potential anomalies in the system were highlighted particularly in relation to Group Water Schemes and water sourced from Northern Ireland.
- Enquiry as to the overall cost of "lost water" and associated repair costs.
- Query as to whether the Water Monitoring System in Quigley's Point was operational.
- Outlined necessity of utilising the Water Conservation System to obtain an in depth knowledge of the leakage problems.

Individual members alluded to a range of problem areas throughout the county noting that funding was of paramount importance if there was to be any improvement in the situation. It was noted that the SCADA System had eliminated much of the ambiguity in relation to water usage and had been most successful when piloted in Letterkenny. Members of the Stranorlar Electoral Area expressed grave concern in relation to water and sewage problems in the Finn Valley Area. Clr. Mc Gowan called for a meeting with the various Directors of Service to discuss wide ranging infrastructural deficits. It was suggested that that this be followed up with meeting with the County Manger. Clr Mc Brearty stated that Donegal County Council as the Local Authority was responsible for water and sewerage services, noting that over the last ten years record funding had been available to provide such infrastructure. He asked that a full breakdown of infrastructural needs in the Finn Valley area be provided as soon as possible.

Responding to the range of queries raised the County Manger advised that the Department criteria in relation to funding for pipe replacement was very specific and required the telemetry system to be operational prior to funds being allocated for replacement works. He confirmed that he had both as Director of Service and County Manager made considerable effort at Department level to promote a parallel approach to water conservation. Acknowledging that he was accountable for ensuring that the Department were fully aware of this county's needs, he noted however that it was only possible to spend whatever funds were allocated.

He was he advised concerned that one Electoral Area wanted to meet with individual Directors re the prioritisation of investment. This he warned would not be constructive and detracted from the overall decision making capability of the full Council. Essentially he affirmed it would be necessary to look at whether the distribution of funding/resources would be based on need at county level and exactly what criteria would be needed at this juncture. He warned however that if individual Electoral Areas got into the business of competing with one another then it would damage the overall capability of the County as a whole to obtain funding. In conclusion he acknowledged that water quality in the Finn Valley Area was

superb and met all standard requirements. There were he admitted infrastructural deficiencies and that a specific cost analysis together with a dedicated plan of action was necessary to eliminate such deficiencies.

Mr. Bernard Cuning concluding the debate informed members that considerable effort had been made to obtain funding for the replacement of ageing pipe networks but that the Department were adamant that monies could not be released for pipe replacement until Stage 1 and Stage 2 works had been completed.

C/39/11 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

It was agreed at this juncture on the proposal of Clr. Brogan, seconded by Clr. Gallagher to adjourn the meeting for ten minutes.

C/40/11 TO NOTE UPDATE IN RELATION TO THE NORTHWEST PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

C/41/11 UPDATE ON STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Members considered the report circulated during the meeting in relation to the above.

Welcoming the initiative members asked that consideration be given to providing funding for Donegal Ancestry, the Balor Theatre, and the various ferry services in the county. Mr. Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture and Planning responding to a number of queries outlined the various aspects incorporated in the Tourism Development Fund. In reference to the Sports Bursaries he acknowledged the fact that there had been little activity on this front over the past three years and that the allocation for 2011 would be considered in this context. He agreed to bring a report to the next appropriate Council Meeting.

The Strategic Development Fund he confirmed would assist economic re-generation in the county with the priority focus being employment creation. Details of the Scheme he noted were being advanced and members would be updated in relation to the progress. It was noted that projects seeking funding under this scheme would have to meet the following criteria:

- Have a county wide impact- economic, social and cultural
- Employment creation potential
- Business Model/ Plan Assessment
- Cost/Value for Money
- Sustainability with a proven track record
- Additionality (added value) across the county/other projects

C/42/11

MAYOR'S BUSINESS

LAMA Awards

Members were informed that the LAMA Awards had taken place in Dublin on the 22nd January, 2011 with Donegal County Council nominated for the following awards:

- Council of the Year (Conservation Project under this category)
- Ardara Environmental Improvement Works
- Killybegs Environmental Improvement Works

The Mayor congratulated Ardara Environmental Improvement Works for obtaining the award in their category.

On the proposal of Clr. Alcorn, seconded by Clr. Mc Gowan the attendance of the Mayor together with Clrs Mc Eniff, Alcorn and O' Neill at the LAMA Awards on Saturday 22nd January, 2011 was approved.

Oideas Gael Scholarship

The Mayor reminded members that two adult scholarships had been offered to the Council's Coiste na Gaeilge, specifically for the benefit of the elected members of Donegal County Council . It was noted that the deadline for the submission of expressions of interest had been the 25th February, 2011.

Invitation to the Mayor of Gaza

On the proposal of Clr Mc Gowan, seconded by Clr. Mc Brearty, it was resolved to extend an invitation to the Mayor of Gaza, Mohammed Jawad A H Alfarra to visit the Donegal to discuss areas and matters of mutual interest.

ACART Group

The Mayor alluded to correspondence she had received from Mary Clinton, ACART, seeking funding. She asked any members with outstanding balances in their Development Fund allocation to consider making a donation to the group.

Sports Star Awards

Congratulations was extended to all who had been successful at the recent Sports Stars Awards.

Local Reception –Donegal Ladies Football Team

On the proposal of Clr. Mc Gowan, seconded by Clr. Donaghey it was resolved that a Local Reception be afforded to the Donegal Ladies Football Team in recognition of their outstanding sporting success.

Launch of the Flight of the Earls Book.

The Mayor read into the record correspondence from the Donegal Person of the Year, Brian Friel, expressing his delight at being asked to launch the Flight of the Earls Book.

Acknowledgement of Donegal County Council Motions.

The Mayor read into the record messages of support from the following Local Authorities in respect of Motions passed by Donegal County Council.

PSO Levy

Dublin City Council
Clonmel Borough Council
Mullingar Town Council
Macroon Town Council

Prioritisation of Alzheimers and other forms of Dementia

Dublin City Council
Macroon Town Council
Clonmel Borough Council
Mullingar Town Council

Protection of An Post from the Liberalisation of the Postal Services/Vital role of the Postal Service in Rural Ireland.

Monaghan Town Council

Issues facing the Undocumented Irish in America
Monaghan Town Council

Submission of Ethics Declaration.

The Mayor reminded members of their obligation under (Part 15) of the Local Government Act, 2001 to submit a Declaration of Interest by 28th February, 2011.

St Patrick's Day Celebrations –USA

The Mayor advised that she would not be travelling to the USA for the St Patrick's Day celebrations. There was she indicated considerable benefit in promoting the county in the USA, but that this was something that could be progressed at any stage during the year.

It was imperative at this juncture she noted to promote tourism initiatives in conjunction with local St Patrick's Day festivities. She outlined her intention to develop such a blueprint, which hopefully could be progressed and advanced by future Mayors.

Votes of Sympathy

Votes of sympathy were extended to the following:-

- Cyril Mc Ateer formerly Housing, Letterkenny on the death of his mother Margaret Mc Ateer.
- Brian Greene, Dungloe Fire Brigade on the death of his father Michael Greene.
- The family of the late Jimmy Moohan (retired Lorry Driver)
- The family of the late Dan Sheridan (retired Clerk of Works, W.E.E)
- Muiris Ó Gallachóir, Gweedore Fire Brigade on the death of his brother, Conchbhair Ó Gallachóir, former Planning Officer.
- The family of the late Bobby Curran, former Roads Overseer, Letterkenny Roads.

- John A Mc Laughlin, Retired Revenue Collector on the death of his wife, Ann Mc Laughlin.
- The family of the late Denis Farren, (retired Lorry Driver)
- The family of the late Breda Doherty, formerly Regional Training Centre
- Rosita Mc Fadden, Community and Enterprise on the death of her mother, Annie Mc Fadden.
- Pat O' Donnell, Milford Roads and Noel O' Donnell, Mobile Litter Unit on the death of their sister, Kathleen Fisher.
- Eugene Duffy, Stranorlar Fire Brigade on the death of his father, James Duffy.
- Sean Doohan, Roads Overseer on the death of his uncle, John Mc Clafferty.

C/43/11

MANAGER'S REPORT

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

C/44/11

MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES

The following motions from other authorities were noted:-

SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

“South Tipperary County Council calls on the Government to recognize the unique and vital role of the postal service in Ireland, particularly rural Ireland, as a means of communication, as a vital economic tool and as an intrinsic part of the fabric of the community.

Our postal service has a social value and an economic value; these must be properly protected as the Government drafts legislation to open the postal market to full competition. Postmen and women provide an important public service and also function as an integral part of the social fabric of their community, particularly for the elderly and the isolated citizens whose only human contact might be their post

person. Furthermore An Post's extensive delivery and collection network, is an intrinsic part of the economic and business infrastructure of the country. Reaching every corner of the country and by delivering to every front door An Post is an essential partner in business from a marketing, payment collection and business generation point of view.

As Ireland prepares to liberalize its postal market it is essential that the Government acknowledges this important public service, ensures that the Universal Service Obligation is protected by legislation and does not allow the opening of the market to lead to wide spread job losses, social dumping and an erosion in service levels as has happened in other countries who have already opened their postal market to competition.”

SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

“That in view of the recent European Court of Auditors report on the international sugar industry, this Council calls on the Government to consider measures which would result in Ireland reacquiring its sugar beet production quota and encourage the re-establishment of the sugar processing industry in Ireland and further that this Council would facilitate a meeting of interested parties with a view to progressing any proposal in this regard.”

MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

“That this Town Council calls on the Minister for Finance not to increase the VAT rate in the forthcoming budget.”

MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

“That this Council calls on the Government to address the plight of the self-employed, who now find themselves unemployed, to access welfare assistance more speedily.”

MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

“That this Council calls on the Government to increase the fuel allowance.”

MONAGHAN TOWN COUNCIL

“That Monaghan Town Council implore the Competition Authority to implement measures that will enhance competition within the bulk LPG (Liquified Petroleum Gas)

market. Restrictive licensing agreements have resulted in domination of this market by Calor Gas and Flogas. The Competition Authority have acknowledged since 2005 improvements are necessary but have failed to date to protect the consumer.”

WATERFORD CITY COUNCIL

“That this Council,

Recognising that,

- The National Minimum Wage is an important designed to prevent worker exploitation.
- Low paid workers and those on the minimum wage are struggling to get by and cannot afford to take any reduction in their incomes.
- Any reduction in the minimum wage or the incomes of low paid workers would force more families to rely on supplementary welfare assistance from the state.
- Economic recovery will not be achieved by driving down wages or by becoming a low wage economy.

Opposes any reduction in the National Minimum Wage.”

NEW ROSS TOWN COUNCIL

“Mindful of the recent report of the Radiological Protection Institute and aware that New Ross is designated a “High Radon Area” this Council calls on the Minister for the Environment to implement a scheme of free Radon tests in areas of high risk – as recommended by the RPI – and that a grant system for remediation works be likewise put in place.”

MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL

“That the Members of Mayo County Council call on the Minister for the Environment to immediately bring into operation Section 60 of the Civil Liability Act, 1961, and the Motion, when passed, be sent to every other Local Authority Seeking their support.”

LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL

“That, in the case where a said planning application is about to expire that the site assessment and sightlines pertaining to that application transfers to any new application on the said

site by another applicant who satisfies the need and all other relevant criteria to obtain planning.”

CASTLEBAR TOWN COUNCIL

“That Castlebar Town Council calls on the Minister for Education to ensure that the following protocols are introduced in all primary and secondary schools:-

1. A Book Rental Scheme (including all examination papers).
2. A standard method of facilitating the use of Stick-on-Crests on all school uniforms.
3. Provision of a Confidential Information Box as part of Anti Bullying Policy.”

EDENDERRY TOWN COUNCIL

“Edenderry Town Council calls on the Government to recognise the vital role of the postal service in Ireland and its particular importance in rural Ireland as a means of communication, as a vital economic service and as an intrinsic part of the fabric of the community. Reaching every corner of the country and by delivering to every front door An Post is an essential partner in the business and social life of the country.

Postmen and Women provide an important public service and also function as an integral part of the social fabric of their community, particularly for elderly and isolated citizens for whom they may be the only regular human contact.

Our postal service has a social and economic value which must be properly protected by Government in the legislation to open the postal market to full competition.

An Post has a universal service obligation which obliges to provide a single price service regardless of location, cross subsidising the loss making rural services from profitable urban routes. The legislation must protect against unfair ‘Cherry Picking’ where competitors will complete only on the profitable urban routes. This will lead to a reduction in income from profitable routes, endangering the visibility of rural services which depend on them and collapse the Universal Service Obligation.

As Ireland prepares to liberalise it's postal market it is essential that the Government acknowledges this important public service, ensures that the Universal Service Obligation is protected by legislation and does not allow the opening of the market to lead to a reduction in services, widespread job losses and social dumping as has happened in other countries who have already opened their postal market to competition."

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

"That this Council write to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requesting the introduction of a rain water harvesting grants scheme for Domestic, Commercial and Agricultural Users in the upcoming Budget."

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

"That this Council write to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Finance requesting the implementation of a new scheme for Medical Cards for people who are diagnosed with cancer. Upon written diagnosis by a Consultant, a person should automatically receive a full medical card for a minimum one year period or such time as treatment is completed and should not be subjected to means assessment, and that action should be taken to streamline the processing and issuing of medical cards."

MACROOM TOWN COUNCIL

"That any monies collected for N.P.P.R. Charges be collected by the Local Authority involved, be it Borough, Town, County or City Council and be re-enforced within that Council."

This concluded the business of the meeting.