

# COMHAIRLE CHONTAE DHUN NA nGALL

Oifig Riathóir na  
gCruinnithe  
Aras an Chontae  
Leifear  
20 Meán Fómhair

## FÓGRA CRUINNITHE

### DO GACH BHALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE

#### A Chara

Beidh Cruinniú de Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall ar siúl **Dé Luain 26 Meán Fómhair 2022** ag **11.00am in in Ionad Fóillíochta an Aura, Salach an Ghráin, Leitir Ceanainn**. Tá Clár an chruinnithe leis seo. Seolfar nasc leictreonach chuig an chruinniú i gcomhfhreagras eile.

Beidh Clár Orduithe an Phríomh-Fheidhmeannaigh le feiceáil ag an chruinniú

Mise, le meas



Pádraig Ó Laifearthaigh  
Riathóir Cruinnithe

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## DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Office of Meetings Administrator  
County House  
Lifford  
20<sup>th</sup> September 2022

### NOTICE OF MEETING

#### TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of Donegal County Council will be held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022, at **11.00am in the Aura Leisure Centre, Sallaghgrane, Letterkenny**. The agenda for the meeting is attached. An online link to join the meeting will issue separately.

The Register of Chief Executive Orders will be available for inspection at the meeting.

Yours sincerely



Patsy Lafferty  
Meetings Administrator

## **AGENDA**

1. **Confirmation of Minutes**
  - a) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022.
  - b) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Adjourned Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022.
  - c) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022.
  
2. **Disposal of Land – Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000**
  - a) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of land at Crana Crescent, Buncrana to the Frederic Ozanam Trust (SVDP)
  - b) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of plot of land at St Patrick’s Terrace, Ballindrait to John & Betty Doherty.
  - c) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of plot of land adjacent to Raphoe Boxing Club to Raphoe Boxing Club.
  - d) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of plot of land at Barrack Hill, Carndonagh to D4 Products Ltd.
  - e) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of plot of small farmer’s cottage at Meenderryherk, Dungloe to Denis Mc Gee.
  - f) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of small farmer’s cottage and land to at Meenderryherk, Dungloe to James Doherty.
  - g) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of plot of land at Barrack Hill, Carndonagh to the legal representatives of Richard Marnier.

3. **Taking of decision pursuant to the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (Part XI), and the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001**

- a) To approve the carrying out of works so as to facilitate the development of the “Letterkenny 2040 - Reimagined Market Square”.
- b) To approve the carrying out of works so as to facilitate the construction of a new covered outdoor seating area with cultural performance area and storage including all associated ancillary works in respect of the Bundoran Oceanside (Outdoor Dining and Entertainment Space), Bundoran, Co Donegal.
- c) To approve the carrying out of regeneration works and the erection of a canopy structure at the Diamond, Donegal Town.
- d) To approve the construction of a single storey 2-bed single storey dwelling including sewerage treatment plant and all associated site development works at Largymore, Kilcar, Co Donegal.
- e) To approve the carrying out of works in relation to the widening of footpaths on the L-5354 Chapel Road and R236, Derry Road to St Baithin’s National School, St Johnston.
- f) To approve the carrying out of works in relation to the widening of footpaths on the L-5752 Church Street and R245 Ramelton Road to St Mary’s National School, Ramelton.
- g) To approve the carrying out of works in respect of a new pedestrian footpath on the L-1915 Lough Eske Road, Donegal Town.
- h) To approve the carrying out of works in relation to the provision of a new widened footpath on the R232 Pettigo Road to St Mary’s National School, Pettigo.
- i) To approve the carrying out of works in respect of the provision of new pedestrian footpath on the L-20854 Old Golf Course Road and R-267 in Donegal Town a new pedestrian footpath.
- j) To approve the carrying out of works in respect of a new pedestrian footpath on the R263 Malinmore Road, Glencolmcille.

4. **Presentation**

To receive presentation on the National Broadband Plan from National Broadband Ireland. (12.00 noon)

5. **Finance**

- a) To agree date for the 2023 statutory Budget Meeting.
- b) To agree Overdraft Accommodation of €10,000,000 for the full year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.
- c) That Members consider whether they wish to pass a resolution to vary the rate of Local Property Tax in County Donegal by up to 15% in respect of a period of one or more years commencing in 2023.

6. **Corporate**
  - a) To nominate 4 number members to the Western Inter-County Railway Committee.
  - b) To approve the holding of a Civic Reception for the Finn Valley Vikings.
  
7. **Planning**
  - a) To note the next steps in the process following the “Notice of Intention to Issue a Direction” issued by the Minister for Local Government and Planning on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022 in relation to the Variation to the County Development Plan, 2018-2024 (As Varied) in respect of Wind Energy Policy.
  - b) Residential Zoned Land Tax: Briefing Note.
  - c) County Development Plan Review: Strategic Directions. Whether or not to issue strategic directions in relation to the core strategy.
  
8. **Community Development**

To note the nomination of Andrew Mc Nulty to fill the vacancy on the on the Donegal Local Community Development Committee.
  
9. **Endorsement of Minutes.**
  - a) To note minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2022.
  
10. **Attendance at Conference, Seminar 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, and the Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations, 2014(as amended)

### **Conferences**

#### *Celtic Conferences*

- “A Practical Guide to Budget 2023” to be held in Carlingford from the 30<sup>th</sup> September to the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2022.
- “The role of Local Government in addressing the needs of Older People” to be held in Carlingford from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

### **Abroad**

- Attendance of the CPMR Representative at the 50<sup>th</sup> CPMR General Assembly to be held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> October in Crete, Greece.
- Attendance of the CPMR Representative at the CPMR Fisheries Working Group Meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 in Brussels.

- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the London Irish Vintage Club Day in London on the 4<sup>th</sup> September.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the Donegal New York Association Dinner and function in New York on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the Golden Bridges Events in Boston from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## **MOTIONS**

### **GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Corporate**

11. Cllr Marie T Gallagher  
"That this Council call on the whole of Government to address the crippling cost of living crisis that our people are experiencing".
12. Cllr John S O' Fearraigh  
"That this Council call on Minister Ryan to abandon his criminalisation policy of our turf cutting population".

### **INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Housing**

13. Cllr Albert Doherty  
"Donegal County Council demands that the Government and Minister for Housing Minister Darragh O'Brien:
  - 1) Increase the base line income threshold for social housing eligibility,
  - 2) Increase significantly the social housing build number for Donegal
  - 3) Provide affordable housing schemes across the county,
  - 4) Financially assist the Council and Donegal communities to attack  
And arrest the scourge that is vacancy and dereliction in towns and villages in the county".

### **LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Corporate**

14. Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh  
" That Donegal County Council write to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris and ask that he support the inclusion of all full-time participants in Apprenticeship - Programmes in all Student Card Schemes".
15. Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle  
Citizens' Assemblies by the Irish Government.  
Further notes that Citizens' Assemblies are powerful democratic exercises that inform citizens, allowing them to debate specifics, develop positions

and inform policy. They have operated effectively in many jurisdictions across the world.

“This Council calls on the Irish Government to establish an all-Ireland Citizens’ Assembly to debate and discuss our constitutional future. The debate on Irish Unity is live and growing, and we must plan for constitutional change, in the context of the Good Friday provision for a Unity referendum. This Council also invites officials from the Taoiseach’s Shared Island Unit to present to Council and provide an update on activity and plans for the future”.

This motion should be forwarded to the Office of the Taoiseach.

### **Housing**

16. Cllr Ian Mc Garvey

"That Donegal County Council enter into negotiations with contractors who want to sell property for housing need”.

## **LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

### **Housing**

17. Cllr Gary Doherty

"That Donegal County Council immediately introduce support clinics or support 'Hubs' in each of the Municipal Districts affected by Mica and defective blocks, as was previously agreed, in order to provide essential advice and assistance to families applying for the redress scheme”.

### **Corporate**

18. Cllr Liam Doherty

“I am asking the Donegal County Council to write to the Minister for Transport to urgently review and resolve the school transportation system so as to provide students and families with security and peace of mind that the children have transport to and from school”.

## **DONEGAL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

### **Roads & Transportation**

19. Cllr Michael Mc Mahon

“That this Council give an update regarding the present state of Cycleways, Walkways and Greenways and that they give a breakdown of figures as it has been reported that monies were returned to the exchequer and not utilised”.

### **Corporate**

20. Cllr Noel Jordan

“I am asking this Council for additional staff to our roads workforce and additional resources to planning on the urban and rural regeneration programmes”.

21. Cllr Micheál Naughton

"I am asking Donegal County Council to call on the Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohoe and the Minister for Public Expenditure, Mr. Michael Mc Grath to make sure this country does not become a cashless society".

22. Cathaoirleach's Business

23. Chief Executive's Management Report

## **QUESTIONS**

### **GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Planning**

24. Cllr Marie T Gallagher

Could I be supplied with details in relation to the resources that are in place to develop RRDF applications for each Municipal District?

### **INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Housing**

25. Cllr Albert Doherty

What are the known "Homeless" numbers in each Council Municipality in DCC and what response and assistance has Donegal County Council offered the North West Simon Community following their application for assistance to provide Homeless prevention and outreach services to the Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim Local Authority areas?

26. Cllr Albert Doherty

*Mica Redress Application Process.*

What are the clarifications and responses required by DCC from the Government and Dept of Housing to enable prompt progress with processing of Mica Redress applications and when and why did DCC request clarification on the Mica Redress application process and when was the latest correspondence from Government received?

### **LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Roads & Transportation**

27. Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh

Is Donegal County Council getting any of the new rapid pothole fixing machines currently being piloted by Louth County Council?

28. Cllr Donal Coyle

I request an updated progress report and proposed timeline for the TEN-T Project.

29. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

Can we have an updated report on the Ten-T Project, Strabane to Manorcunningham, Bonagee Link and Twin Towns By-pass and the scheduled timeframe for same?

30. Cllr Ian Mc Garvey

What progress has been made in relation to obtaining funding for necessary roads infrastructure?

**Water & Environment**

31. Cllr Ian Mc Garvey

What can be done to make more connectivity between ourselves and Irish Water?

**Housing**

32. Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle

How many New Houses/Apartments have been built this year by/for Donegal County Council, where are they situated and how many are currently occupied?

33. Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle

Can I be informed as to what role do Donegal County Council have in the resettlement of refugees in Donegal, are we responsible for the accommodation inspections, fire inspections of accommodation that house the refugees and if not who is responsible?

34. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

Can we get a updated report on what progress we have made as a Council on the "Rebuilding Ireland Programme" and "Housing for All" in areas of Donegal (per MD ) since 2016 to 2022, in acquiring land, new build units completed, purchase of unit's, CPO of derelict buildings and CPO of derelict land and rural housing units ?

**Planning**

35. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

Can we have an updated report on the URDF and the RRDF, and small town and rural regeneration projects in Donegal?

**LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

**Housing**

36. Cllr Gerry Crawford

The HAP scheme rate has been changed from 20 percent to 35 percent from July. For a single person approved for HAP who can't get accommodation within HAP limits the Local Authority can increase rate to that allowed for couples. How many of either changes have been applied for to DCC and does the Local Authority inform HAP tenants of these changes?



37. Cllr Gary Doherty

Can this Council provide me with a list of all housing provided in Donegal since the introduction of the 'Housing for All' Scheme under the following headings?

- Social Housing
- Affordable Housing
- First Home
- Cost Rental
- Project Tosaigh
- Local Authority Home Loan

**Corporate**

38. Cllr Gerry Crawford

Has this Council employed anyone off the live register over the past 3 years?

**Roads & Transportation**

39. Cllr Gerry Crawford

What percentage of funding allocated to this Council for walking and cycling projects in years 2020, 2021 and 2022 to date has been spent?

40. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

Please can I have copies of all correspondence to the relevant Department on this Councils county-wide priority strategic roads list agreed by this Council in 2020 and all responses written, and verbal received to date?

41. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

Please give an update on my previous motion “ That a survey is carried out as a matter of urgency on Tier-Two Towns footpaths starting with the largest to identify faults, trips and areas that are a cause for concern under health and safety within town boundaries and prioritise funding with health and safety and persons with disabilities in mind”.

**Environment**

42. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

Can I have list of all public conveniences (Public Toilets) across the County operating all year round and seasonal with relevant details on operations, cleaning, and costs etc.?

43. **Motions from Other Councils/Bodies**

**Mayo County Council**

“Calling on the Minister for Housing to update the criteria for the first-time buyer’s derelict property grant Croí Cónaithe, to enable derelict properties in rural areas to be eligible to avail of the scheme to help address the critically low supply of house across the country. Currently, only homes available in towns and villages are eligible for the scheme.”

**Sligo County Council**

“That Sligo County Council carry out a county wide audit of the availability of disabled parking places. This to include all urban areas and tourist amenities. A copy of this motion to be sent to all Local Authorities in the state.”

**Sligo County Council**

“For this Council to write to the Minister for Finance to introduce a windfall tax on energy companies excessive profits at a time when ordinary people cannot afford to heat their home, and the funds from this windfall tax be ring-fenced for redistribution over the winter to those most in need. Can this motion also be shared with other local authorities around the country.”

**Tipperary County Council**

“That we, the members of Tipperary County Council, call on the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform to provide significant additional funding to Local Authorities in 2023 having regard to the unprecedented levels of inflation, in particular, spiralling energy costs, rising construction costs, enhance payroll commitments, impact of the cost of living on other revenue streams such as rents and rates. Such additional funding is crucial to maintaining essential services. Subject to the agreement of the members this NOM would be also circulated to all other local authorities”.

**Wexford County Council**

“The Council agrees to write to Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, the Oireachtas Health Committee and the HSE CEO Paul Reid requesting that the provision of Long Covid Clinics is retained and expanded. The Council also agrees to raise it without regional health board and/or local hospital and at any other suitable juncture. The Council then agrees to circulate this motion to other Councils asking them to consider the same.”

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2022 IN THE AURA LEISURE CENTRE, LETTERKENNY**

C/318/22 **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllrs L. Blaney, Cathaoirleach, K. Bradley, C. Brogan, P. Canning, T. Conaghan, D. Coyle, G. Crawford, N. Crossan, T. Crossan, A. Doherty, G. Doherty, R Donaghey, M Farren, M.T. Gallagher, M. Harley, D. M Kelly, N. Kennedy, M. McBride, M. Mc Clafferty, M. McDermott, I. Mc Garvey, N. McGarvey, P. McGowan, J. McGuinness, M. Mc Mahon, G. Mc Monagle, A. Molloy, M. Naughton, J. O Donnell, J. S Ó Fearraigh, and B. Sweeny.

*Online:* N Jordan, J. Kavanagh, M MacGiolla Easbuig.

C/319/22 **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE**

John Mc Laughlin, Chief Executive, Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services, Meetings Administrator, Liam Ward, Director of Community Development & Planning Services, , Bryan Cannon, A/Director of Roads & Transportation, Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services, Michael Mc Garvey, Director of Water & Environment, Richard Gibson, Head of Finance, Paul Christy, Senior Executive Planner, Eunan Quinn, Senior Planner, Brian Boyle, Head of Information Services, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, William Colvin, Assistant Communications Officer, Róise Ní Laifeartaigh, Ránóg na Gaeilge, Cliona Ni Laifeartaigh, Translation Services, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/320/22 **VOTE OF SYMPATHY**

A vote of sympathy was extended to the Devenney and Sullivan families on the death of father and daughter, Patrick Devenney and Margaret Sullivan. A minute's silence was held and on the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr Kelly the meeting was adjourned for a short period as a mark of respect.

C/321/22 **MOTION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS**

A request signed by Cllrs Mc Bride, and seconded by Cllr Coyle to have the following motion discussed under urgent business in accordance with Standing Order No 27 was submitted to the Meetings Administrator:

*“That Donegal County Council write to the President of the Atlantic Technological University and the Minister for Education, Ms Norma Foley, T.D. asking that site accommodation at the Atlantic Technology University be provided due to the lack of rental accommodation which is being accelerated by the influx of Ukrainian refugees and further pressures that will present when the Mica Redress Programme commences in earnest.”*

It was unanimously agreed to consider same prior to the close of business.

**CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 11<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022**

On the proposal of Cllr Kelly, seconded by Cllr I McGarvey the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were adopted.

Cllr N Crossan proposed, seconded by Cllr I Mc Garvey that clarity be provided in relation to the allegations of corruption that had been directed towards Donegal County Council members and staff. He said that he was of the opinion that these had not been fully examined.

Cllr Mc Clafferty said that it was inexcusable that an elected member could throw out all kinds of accusations and then hide behind social media.

Cllr Kennedy queried if an apology had been received to date in writing.

The Chief Executive responding said that he believed that members were referring to comments made by Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig at the Annual Budget meeting in November 2021. He confirmed that correspondence had issued to the member in question in December 2021 seeking further clarity in relation to his comments together with a request that information be provided to substantiate such claims. It was noted that there had been no reply to date.

Several members concurred with this assessment.

Cllr Mc Clafferty said that follow-up was required asked that a separate letter issue to Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig enquiring as to what knowledge he had of recent damage to signage in the county.

Cllr Crossan said that it was now the end of September and a satisfactory explanation had not been forthcoming. He asked if it could be explored through the appropriate legal channels and enquired as to what the next step in the process would be.

The Chief Executive responding said that it would be possible to write again to the member concerned with a shorter response deadline of two to three weeks. He would, he stated, take legal advice on what steps were to be taken if that was not replied to, and would revert to members at that juncture.

Cllr Crossan proposed, seconded by Cllr Mc Clafferty that this action be taken, and that sufficient updates be provided to members.

The Chief Executive said that he would be writing to the members in the next two to three weeks and that an update would be provided at the next meeting of Council.

- C/323/22 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022**  
On the proposal of Cllr Sweeney, seconded by Cllr Gallagher the Minutes of the Adjourned Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were adopted.
- C/324/22 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022**  
On the proposed of Cllr Brogan seconded by Cllr Coyle the Minutes of the Donegal County Council Meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were adopted.
- C/325/22 **DISPOSAL OF LAND AT CRANA CRESCENT, BUNCRANA TO THE FREDERIC OZANAM TRUST (SVDP)**  
Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.  
  
On the proposal of Cllr Donaghey, seconded by Cllr O’Fearraigh, it was resolved to dispose of land at Crana Crescent, Bunrana to the Frederic Ozanam Trust (SVDP) in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).
- C/326/22 **DISPOSAL OF PLOT OF LAND AT ST PATRICKS TERRACE, BALLINDRAIT TO JOHN & BETTY DOHERTY**  
Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.  
  
On the proposal of Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr G Doherty, it was resolved to dispose of a plot of land at St. Patricks Terrace, Ballindrait to John & Betty Doherty in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).
- C/327/22 **DISPOSAL OF PLOT OF LAND ADJACENT TO RAPHOE BOXING CLUB TO RAPHOE BOXING CLUB**  
Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.  
  
On the proposal of Cllr G Doherty, seconded by Cllr Crawford, it was resolved to dispose of a plot of land adjacent to Raphoe Boxing Club to Raphoe Boxing Club in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).
- C/328/22 **DISPOSAL OF PLOT OF LAND AT BARRACK HILL, CARNDONAGH TO D4 PRODUCTS LTD**

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

On the proposal of Cllr A Doherty, seconded by Cllr McDermott, it was resolved to dispose of a plot of land at Barrack Hill, Carndonagh to D4 Products Ltd in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

C/329/22

**DISPOSAL OF PLOT OF SMALL FARMERS COTTAGE AT MEENDERRYHERK, DUNGLOE TO DENIS MCGEE**

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

On the proposal of Cllr N McGarvey, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was resolved to dispose of a plot of small farmers cottage at Meenderryherk, Dungloe to Denis McGee in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

C/330/22

**DISPOSAL OF SMALL FARMERS COTTAGE AND LAND AT MEENDERRYHERK, DUNGLOE TO JAMES DOHERTY**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr N McGarvey, it was resolved to dispose of a small farmers cottage and land at Meenderryherk, Dungloe to James Doherty in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

C/331/22

**DISPOSAL OF PLOT OF LAND AT BARRACK HILL, CARNDONAGH TO THE LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES OF RICHARD MARNER**

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

On the proposal of Cllr A Doherty, seconded by Cllr McDermott, it was resolved to dispose of a plot of land at Barrack Hill, Carndonagh to the Legal Representatives of Richard Marner in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

C/332/22

**TO APPROVE THE CARRYING OUT OF WORKS SO AS TO FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LETTERKENNY 2040 – REIMAGINED MARKET SQUARE.**

On the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr McMonagle, it was resolved to defer the matter to later in the meeting.

C/333/22 **CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW COVERED OUTDOOR SEATING AREA IN RESPECT OF THE BUNDORAN OCEANSIDE (OUTDOOR DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT SPACE) BUNDORAN**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Naughton, seconded by Cllr McMahon, the carrying out of works so as to facilitate the construction of a new covered outdoor seating area with cultural performance area and storage including all associated ancillary works in respect of the Bundoran Oceanside (Outdoor Dining and Entertainment Space), Bundoran, Co. Donegal, was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

C/334/22 **REGENERATION WORKS AND THE ERECTION OF A CANOPY STRUCTURE AT THE DIAMOND, DONEGAL TOWN**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Conaghan, seconded by Cllr Sweeny the carrying out of regeneration works and the erection of a canopy structure at the Diamond, Donegal Town, was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

C/335/22 **CONSTRUCTION OF A SINGLE STOREY TWO BED DWELLING AND ALL ASSOCIATED SITE DEVELOPMENT WORKS AT LARGYMORE, KILCAR, CO DONEGAL**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Kennedy, seconded by Cllr Sweeny the construction of a single storey 2-bed dwelling including a sewerage treatment plant and all associated site works at Largymore, Kilcar, Co Donegal was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

C/336/22 **CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO THE WIDENING OF FOOTPATHS ON THE L-5354 CHAPEL ROAD AND R236, DERRY ROAD TO ST BAITHIN'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, ST JOHNSTON**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr G Doherty the carrying out of works in relation to the widening of footpaths on the L-5354 Chapel Road and the R236, Derry Road to St Baithin's National School, St Johnston was approved in accordance with Part XI of the

Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/337/22 **CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO THE WIDENING OF FOOTPATHS ON THE L-5752 CHURCH STREET AND R245 RAMELTON ROAD TO ST MARY'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, RAMELTON**

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

On the proposal of Cllr I Mc Garvey, seconded by Cllr Mc Bride the carrying out of works in relation to the widening of footpaths on the L-5752 Church Street and R245 Ramelton Road to St Mary's National School was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/338/22 **CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO A NEW PEDESTRIAN FOOTPATH ON THE L-1915 LOUGH ESKE ROAD**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Conaghan, seconded by Cllr Sweeny the carrying out of works in relation to the construction of a new pedestrian footpath on the L-1915, Lough Eske Road was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/339/22 **CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO THE PROVISION OF A NEW WIDENED FOOTPATH ON THE R232 PETTIGO ROAD TO ST MARY'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, PETTIGO**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Naughton, seconded by Cllr Mc Mahon the carrying out of works in relation to the construction of a new widened footpath on the R232 Pettigo Road to St Mary's National School Pettigo was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/340/22 **CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO THE PROVISION OF A NEW PEDESTRIAN FOOTPATH ON THE L-20854 OLD GOLFCOURSE ROAD AND R-267 IN DONEGAL TOWN**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Naughton, seconded by Cllr Conaghan the



carrying out of works in relation to the provision of a new pedestrian footpath on the L-20854 Old Golfcourse Road and the R267 in Donegal Town was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/341/22

**CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO THE PROVISION OF A NEW PEDESTRIAN FOOTPATH ON THE R263 MALINMORE ROAD, GLENCOLMCILLE**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Kennedy, seconded by Cllr Sweeny the carrying out of works in relation to the provision of a new pedestrian footpath on the R263 Malinmore Road, Glencolmcille was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/342/22

**NATIONAL BROADBAND IRELAND - PRESENTATION ON THE NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr T. J Malone and Mr Joe Lavin to the meeting. He said that there were deep concerns county-wide regarding the delivery of rural broadband and that members had specific issues regarding the impact of same on local communities. On behalf of all the elected members, he raised the following issues:-

1. The rollout of the National Broadband plan in County Donegal is extremely slow. In comparison with similar counties on the Western seaboard and the border region the progress is very disappointing. Why is this the case?
2. In comparison with County Kerry which is similar in size, similar in population and similar in physical landscape, by the end of 2024 Kerry will have rolled out to 69% of the Intervention Area whereas Donegal will have rolled out to 32%. Why in this period will Donegal be ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> and Kerry ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the NBP rollout?
3. Currently 11 of County Donegal's 22 Deployment Areas are at survey pending stage. This includes the Inishowen Peninsula, Stranorlar/Central Donegal area and Donegal Bay area. 50% of the population of Donegal live in these areas or 53% of the Intervention Area premises. When will this half of County Donegal be surveyed?
4. Given the implications of Brexit, now evident in many coastal communities and associated towns and villages in Donegal, where job losses are guaranteed in certain employment sectors such as fishing, on shore-processing and support industries, there must surely be an argument to fast-track mitigating investment, such as fibre

through the NBP ? How can we help you to have this issue, predominantly impacting Donegal to a greater extent than elsewhere, expedite fibre rollout?

5. If Donegal were to assign dedicated concierge services through its broadband officer and supported by technical staff to expedite the road opening and consent process, would this assist in NBI accelerating roll out? As an example, in comparison with County Kilkenny, it is noted that Kilkenny will progress from 50 currently passed premises to a planned 12,207 by the end 2022, ranking them as 1<sup>st</sup> in the NBP rollout. Can the Donegal rollout be similarly accelerated? Similarly, what other areas can we collaborate on to agree an expedited process, that will also help you meet your required, contractual, targets?
6. Can you now commit to working with our team to review existing timelines and existing targeted connections, to collaborate on accelerating the existing timeline and to having quarterly meetings with the team to review progress which can be reported back to the Council?

Mr T J Malone, Chief Executive Officer, Deployment Executive, Team delivered the National Broadband Plan Project overview and informed members that the NBP was the largest ever telecommunications project undertaken by the Irish State and aimed to radically transform the country's broadband landscape through the delivery of quality affordable high-speed broadband to all parts of Ireland where such services were not available commercially. Details of the Network Design and Build Process together with updated information on infrastructure upgrades was provided. The need for effective collaboration was highlighted.

Members then received a Fibre to the Home update in respect of County Donegal. Information on Broadband Connection Points and a school's update was also provided.

Attention was also drawn to the fact that the latest county information was also available on the NBI website and that there was functionality there for constructive feedback.

Members welcomed the comprehensive presentation and outlined a number of issues that they said required further clarification. These included:

- Clarification as to the number of staff working on the ground in Donegal, in what areas, and the plans if any to augment same.
- Reasons as to why Donegal was lagging in terms of service availability.
- Whether the impact of Covid-19 had impacted negatively on delivery.
- If consideration had been given to the impact of Brexit on Donegal.

- Explanation as to the rationale for the connection pattern and apparent haphazard connectivity.
- Was provision fast tracked in some instances?
- Can additional personnel be drafted in to speed up the process in Donegal?
- Killybegs and environs lagging behind in terms of connectivity which is having a detrimental effect on diversification plans for the industries located there. Impact also for the education sector and the ATU Campus.
- Coastal communities need access to broadband if they are to survive in the post Brexit climate.
- Cognisance to be taken of the importance of the blue and green economies and associated connectivity implications.
- Whether additional providers can be brought into the county.
- Rural services a priority for third level education students.
- Small business sector needs adequate service access if extra staffing needs are to be met and they are to survive in the current economic climate.
- Query as to whether sufficient monies were available to complete service delivery in Donegal.
- Enhanced services needed in Inishowen and a dedicated timeframe for same.
- Connection problems in South Donegal, especially in border areas and in Rossnowlagh.
- Possibility of working with companies in Northern Ireland.
- Clarification sought on the definition of an "Intervention Area".
- Given that some areas will not be fully complete until 2026/2027 will the current technological infrastructure be viable at that point in time.
- Apparent that some service providers are dragging their heels.
- Detail requested in relation to the cause of the delay in the delivery of the programme.
- Query as to what percentage of houses to be covered in Donegal are under construction at present.
- How many houses will be connected in Donegal by the year end and how will this compare with the predicted target?
- Noted that two areas in Donegal have passed the survey and design stage yet are not scheduled to be completed until 2026. Query as to why there is such a lengthy delay.
- Suggested that contact be made with KN regarding additional capacity.
- How long will it take to provide fibre optic and copper broadband throughout the county?

There was acknowledgement also that considerable work had been done to date and that there had been quality investment in parts of the county.

It was agreed that a copy of the presentation would be circulated to members.

The Chief Executive noted that there were many areas in Donegal that had access to good broadband and that the emphasis now was on filling service gaps. It was disappointing, he added, that Donegal now seemed to be at the back of the queue. Alluding to the suggestion that a dedicated working group be put in place, he said that it would be possible to facilitate same and that a periodic update could then issue to members.

Mr Malone responding to members queries said that it would be possible to put together a working group with the local authority to see what could be done to accelerate the programme.

He said that it would be possible to look at bringing in additional contractors if available. It was acknowledged that the problem was not specifically a lack of manpower but rather the logistics of trying to move forward with 26 counties at the one time. He advised that NBI were also reliant on Eir to make ready their network and that contact had been made with them regarding the possibility of carrying out some of their settling work. There was ongoing contact, he said with EIR and Comreg regarding the speeding up of the process.

With regard to network gaps, NBI were working, he said to ensure that these were filled in as speedy manner as possible.

He advised of the fact that there were severe implications for the company if the project was not delivered and that they had from the outset been the only company willing to roll out broadband throughout the country despite the risks involved.

It was noted that Covid-19 had impacted on service delivery as national guidelines had to be adhered to. He alluded also to the fact that Ireland was the only country in Europe where the Government had committed to connecting every single premises.

Members were advised that cutting edge technology had been used initially to ensure the viability of the product going forward.

It was confirmed that there was ongoing communication with service providers regarding additional capacity.

Mr Malone said that it would be possible for members to get in contact with NBI regarding issues in their own particular districts

The Cathaoirleach responding to members calls for the NBI to provide updates at municipal level stated that the issue was one that needed to be addressed county-wide. He alluded to the fact that NBI had agreed to look at the staffing issue and to the suggestion by the Chief Executive that bi-monthly reports be provided to members.

Concluding Mr Malone confirmed that Letterkenny and Creeslough were close to completion with approximately 6000 premises targeted. It was noted that three of the Donegal Island communities were service ready. He said that it would be possible to provide the bi-monthly reports as requested but drew attention to the fact that most of the in-

formation was already available on the NBI website which was updated monthly basis. Going forward, he said it was clear that further interaction was needed with the local authority to accelerate the delivery of broadband in the county.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the NBI representatives for their input to the meeting. Members would, he said welcome the bi-monthly reports and looked forward to the acceleration of the broadband programme in Donegal.

C/343/22

**DATE FOR HOLDING OF STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING**

On the proposal of Cllr Harley, seconded by Cllr G Doherty it was resolved to hold the 2023 statutory Budget Meeting at 10am on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2022.

C/344/22

**OVERDRAFT ACCOMMODATION OF €10,000,000 FOR THE FULL YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Kennedy, seconded by Cllr Brogan it was resolved in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001 and subject to the sanction of the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage that:

- a) It is in the best interests of the Council and in line with its statutory rights and obligations to avail of the facility and provide the Guarantee up to an amount of ten million euro (€10,000,000).
- b) Accordingly, the Council agrees to avail of the facility and provide the Guarantee.
- c) Each of the persons undertaking the roles of Donegal Chief Executive and the Head of Finance from time to time be authorised, together and separately, to negotiate the terms of each of the facility letters put, and to be put, in place to document the facility (each, a "Facility Letter" and together, the "Facility Letters"), together with any amendments or variations to the Guarantee or replacement Guarantee, and to sign each such Facility letter and Guarantee by way of acceptance of the terms of such document (including, without limitation, all terms and conditions referred to in each such Facility letter) and that each such signed Facility letter and Guarantee shall be fully binding on, and enforceable against, the Council; and
- d) The Council ratifies the availing of the Facility by the Council, within the limits specified, and confirms the execution of all Facility Letters together with the Guarantee.

C/345/22

**VARIATION OF RATE OF THE LOCAL PROPERTY TAX IN COUNTY DONEGAL BY UP TO 15% IN RESPECT OF A PERIOD OF ONE OR MORE YEARS COMMENCING IN 2023**

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

Cllr I Mc Garvey said that the Council should borrow more and look for additional funding to advance projects many which have been at the planning stage for years. He cited the need for ongoing engagement with our national representatives.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the work that had been done to date by the Head of Finance and his team. He drew attention to the update that had been circulated prior to the meeting and provided an overview of the contents. He highlighted the fact that the Council had to look beyond the immediate crisis and plan for a better economic development future for the County. He noted that the success of the Council's strategic investment programme would be critically reliant on the extent of own-resource funding to co-fund the many projects listed. Without sufficient funding, he said, the Council would have to limit its scale of ambition. It was important, he added, that the Council was in a position to respond to the development needs of the county and able to participate in and achieve the maximum benefit from the programme of funding applications emanating from central government.

It was acknowledged that the decision on the Local Property Tax was the first step in the making of the budget and work programme for 2023, and as such it was important that the Council did not worsen its position on the LPT fund.

Members were advised that it would be prudent to maintain the LPT fund at the same level for 2023 as was achieved in 2022 thus holding the amount at the base figure plus 15% in line with the decision taken in 2022.

Cllr A Doherty asked for confirmation that the capital spend table remained unchanged from that adopted at the end of 2021, and whether the capital spend adopted at the end of last year was unchanged. He queried the implications if any regarding the designation of the county as a "Lagging Region" and whether or not there were any financial benefits that might accrue.

The Chief Executive said that it was down to affordability and advised that there was ongoing engagement with the Oireachtas Members who were aware of the requirements within the county. He alluded also to the fact that there was a greater need than the amount of money actually available for capital projects.

Cllr Mc Bride said that the public were financially hard pressed given the current cost of living crisis and that the message needed to go out that there was an understating of the level of hardship being experienced. He thus proposed that the rate of the Local Property Tax in Donegal return to the base level.

Cllr G Doherty said that he was fully aware that service provision depended on adequate funding, but that the people of Donegal were paying more than their fair share of taxes.

Sinn Fein, he said, believed that the LPT was regressive, unjust and an unnecessary measure.

His party had at successive budgets, he said, proposed a tax system that raises sufficient revenue for national and local government in a manner that is fair and progressive achieved through the introduction of a wealth tax on those that can afford to pay, such as the solidarity tax proposed for those earning over €104,000.

He spoke at length on the impact of the current economic crisis which, he said, was spiralling out of control and all homeowners were feeling the pinch. The current method of funding local government it was noted was broken and not working. He alluded to the fact that there was a budget surplus nationally, yet local authorities were struggling to raise monies locally. He contended that mica homeowners should also have the option to self-declare.

Concluding, he seconded the proposal by Cllr Mc Bride to return the rate of the Local Property Tax in Donegal to base level.

Cllr Brogan asked for clarification on the implications of this and alluded to the fact that back in 2019 the decision had been taken to increase the rate by 15% from the baseline. He noted that there had been no increase in 2020 and 2021 and that the proposal today was to retain the same baseline. It was misinformation, he said, to tell the public that a 15% increase was being proposed when it was clearly not.

The new all sharing Council back in 2019 he noted, had taken a leap of a faith which allowed the executive to deliver on a range of projects. He referred to the significant amount of funding that had come into Donegal in the last number of years and referenced a number of such projects that had benefitted from same. It was important, he added, that the implications of the decision to be taken today were communicated to the staff and the general public, including details on the various projects committed to.

His understanding, he confirmed, was that this was not an increase for 2023-2024 but would leave the LPT at the same rate as was established in 2019. It was important, he said, that the cost to the homeowner was highlighted and all concerned were aware of the implications of the decision.

Cllr Harley concurred with this assessment and said that if the rate was not retained at the current level then the Council would not be in a position to reap the benefits of the gains made over the last number of years.

Cllr Farren acknowledged that a number of significant projects had progressed as a result of the funding to date and alluded in particular to the works at Greencastle Harbour. He was, he said, happy to leave the rate of the LPT as is but noted that Central Government needed to step up in terms of assisting individual households.

Cllr N Crossan noted that out of the 31 Local Authorities in Ireland only three had reduced the LPT for the coming year. It was noted that these were all in Dublin and were able to rely on an extended rate base. The question, he said, was whether this was a progressive or regressive Council. It was important, he added, that the projects in train continued and progressed. This, he contended, was one of the fairer taxes and those in social housing and householders with stage 1 mica were not required to pay, and there were also deferral options for those on low income. His fear, he said, was that approximately 80% of the people in Donegal had valued their house in the lower band and thus there was a need to look at the bigger picture if Donegal County Council was to be serious about progress in the future.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig said that the tax should be reduced to the lowest point possible in light of the fact that families were presently struggling to put food on the table.

The Chief Executive, responding to members queries stated that the purpose of the chart circulated was to illustrate some of the projects that required co-funding, and which linked back to the LPT as a funding source. Co-funding monies, he said, were sourced from the revenue budget or through the LPT process. The €20 million loan approved a few months ago, he noted, necessitated a €1.2 million loan payment each year over a twenty years period and the expectation was that the loan requirement would be met through the LPT process. This, he acknowledged was a significant draw but tied into the progressive agenda that the Council had been pursuing over the past number of years.

He informed members that the base rate plus 15% was decided a number of years ago and that in each successive year a request to renew same was initiated. The proposal from the executive, he confirmed, did not represent an increase but simply called for the retention of the rate at the level agreed in previous years, which was the base level plus 15%.

It was clear, he added, that less money meant that projects would have to be reduced or other areas would have to be paired back to facilitate development. How the Council advances, he said, was a decision that had to be taken collectively. It was noted that consultation was ongoing at national level with regard to an increase in the funding structures, and the possibility of rule changes in relation to some of the packages in place.



The Council, he confirmed, were chasing projects over and above what was listed today and that these again were linked to the co-funding options available. Efforts were also being made, he confirmed, to seek funding at national level and through our colleague Councils in terms of increased energy costs.

There was, he noted, a pressure to seek money elsewhere and the question is always asked in relation to the Council's capability to maximise its own borrowing potential.

The position, he said, to hold the rate at 15% plus the base rate was the right thing to do at this point in time.

Cllr Brogan welcomed clarification that base rate was the same as that agreed in 2019 and said it was very important that misinformation was not put out there. He thus proposed that the Council adopt the rate as agreed in 2019 and that same be retained for the next two years. This was seconded by Cllr Harley.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig reiterated the point that the rate should be reduced to the lowest possible point. There was no seconder for his proposal.

The Cathaoirleach called on members to consider the following proposals:

1. That that the rate of the Local Property Tax in Donegal be reduced to the base rate as proposed by Cllr Mc Bride and seconded by Cllr G Doherty.
2. That the rate of the LPT in Donegal be retained at the level agreed in 2019 and subsequently retained in 2020 and 2021 respectively, as proposed by Cllr Brogan and seconded by Cllr Harley.

A recorded vote was then taken by the Meetings Administrator in respect of the proposal by Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr Harley.

This resulted in 20 voting for with 12 voting against.

Those voting for included:

Cllr Blaney, Brogan, Canning, Conaghan, Coyle, Crawford, N Crossan, Donaghey, Farren, Harley, Kavanagh, Kelly, Kennedy, Mc Dermott, N Mc Garvey, Mc Gowan, Mc Guinness, Molloy, Naughton, and Sweeny. (20)

Those voting against included:

Cllrs Bradley, T Crossan, A Doherty, G Doherty, Gallagher, Jordan, Mac Giolla Easbuig, Mc Bride, I Mc Garvey, Mc Mahon, Mc Monagle,

and O' Fearraigh. (12)

Thus it was resolved that the rate of Local Property Tax in County Donegal be retained at the level agreed in 2019 which equated to the baseline rate plus 15% and that this be retained for 2023 and 2024 in accordance with Section 20 of the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended)

C/346/22 **NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO THE WESTERN INTER-COUNTY RAILWAY COMMITTEE**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above. It was unanimously agreed to defer the matter to a future meeting of Council.

C/347/22 **CIVIC RECEPTION FOR THE FINN VALLEY VIKINGS**

It was unanimously agreed that a Civic Reception be held to honour the achievements of the Finn Valley Vikings and their success in the recent AWAPC World Championships including the breaking of several European and World records.

C/348/22 **NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS FOLLOWING THE "NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ISSUE A DIRECTION" ISSUED BY THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PLANNING IN RELATION TO THE VARIATION TO THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 2018-2024 (AS VARIED) IN RESPECT OF WIND ENERGY POLICY**

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

Cllr G Doherty enquired as to what the process was going forward and whether additional commentary was required at this juncture. He asked if there would be an opportunity at a later date to examine the Chief Executive's report.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning said that the issue was for noting and advised that the Minister for Local Government & Planning had written to the Chief Executive on the 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 indicating his intention to issue a direction to the Council in relation to its wind energy variation. Consequently, he said, that procedures had to be put in place to allow for the publication of the "Notice of Intention to issue a Direction" together with a process for inviting submissions from the general public. He noted that a workshop had also been held to discuss the matter further. It was acknowledged that the period of public consultation had now expired and that approximately 100 submissions had been received, including 12 no. submissions from elected members in relation to the proposed direction.

The Planning Authority would now, he confirmed, prepare a Chief Executive's report which was obligatory within four weeks of the closure of the consultation process and submit to the Minister for

Local Government & Planning together with the Planning Regulator. A copy it was noted would also be forwarded to each of the elected members.

The office of the Planning Regulator would, he stated, consider the report and provide further guidance or recommendations to the Minister on whether or not to proceed with the direction as indicated or to potentially materially alter it.

It was clarified that the report would go directly to the Minister and to the Planning Regulator with a copy issued to the elected members, and that there was no requirement for the members to meet in plenary session to consider the report.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig called on the Chief Executive to take on board the views of the members generally as the executive and the members working together would be a powerful force in showing that the people of Donegal had specific concerns in relation to wind energy

C/349/22

**RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX - BRIEFING NOTE**

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

C/350/22

**COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW - STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS IN RELATION TO THE CORE STRATEGY**

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

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services noted that a public consultation exercise in respect of the review of the County Development Plan had been completed by the 3rd June, 2022 and that a Chief Executive's report detailing the submissions received had been issued to members on the 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2022.

The next step, he advised, was for the members to consider if they wished to issue strategic directions to the Chief Executive and the Planning Authority regarding the preparation of the new plan. He noted that several options had been looked at through the workshop process and that that these were now included in the appendix to the report issued with the agenda.

There had been, he advised, qualified support for Option 3 and he called on members to direct the Chief Executive in relation to the further exploration of that direction.

Cllr Mc Dermott said that he could not support any option unless there was specific guidance and answers from the Executive as to what was happening in respect of the rural settlement issue. He highlighted specific concerns regarding rural areas i.e. (settlements) of less than 1500 population. Cllr Gallagher concurred and said that provision for rural housing was critical.

Cllr Mc Gowan asked that Castlefin and Killygordon be included under the “ Border Settlement” designation given that these areas as a result of their location had suffered immensely over the past 40 to 50 years and were at the mercy of currency fluctuations, Brexit etc.

Cllr Sweeny noted that Ballyshannon had also suffered as a result of the troubles and should also be classed as a “Border Town”.

Several members concurred with Cllr Mc Dermott in relation to the need to protect rural Donegal. and said that further clarification was warranted before any decision could be taken.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that he believed that the comments raised at the workshop had been captured in the body of the report, and that whilst it represented the broad direction of travel, there was room for further engagement. He said that there had on the day been qualified support for Option 3. It would be possible, he advised, to look at the category amendments referenced by members in a workshop setting. He alluded to the fact that there had been definite acknowledgement that the rural housing provision had to be provided for in the core strategy. The rural element, he confirmed, was not being ignored and there was room for further categorisation in relation to the categorisation of towns. Option 3, it was noted, could be progressed with members as the preparations for the new plan progressed. The avenue open to members to issue a broad direction of travel was provided for in the legislation, he said, and there was a requirement on members to consider same. If members were generally happy to follow Option 3 as outlined, he said, that additional clarity would be provided at workshop level.

He clarified that a border town categorisation was a not a pre-requisite for peace funding.

The Cathaoirleach noted that Option 3 provided for the regional growth centre as Letterkenny, with medium towns coming in at 4000 to 5000 population to 8000 to 10,000 population and small towns 1500 -5000 population and rural areas with settlements of less than 1500. He queried why there was no mention of rural settlements like Rosnakill, Tamney, Glenvar, Glen and Churchill, and asked for clarity on their specific designation under and within this option. He expressed concern that these were now not even designated as a town or village. He referred also to the fact that there was no mention of rural areas and settlements of less than 1500 and said that it was inevitable that there would be repercussions if these were left out. He noted that there had been reference in the last Development Plan to the amount of housing permitted in named towns and villages and that this was lacking in the current proposals. Further clarification was sought in relation to a number of rural areas throughout the county.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services cited the need for further conversation and engagement as to how these towns and villages would be categorised going forward. He alluded to the fact that 3 options had been presented in the workshop and that it had been Option 3 that had garnered the most support. The issues raised, could, he added, be developed with members in a further workshop

Cllr Gallagher proposed that Option 3 be adopted on the basis that the issues raised during the debate would be given additional consideration. This was seconded by Cllr Kennedy.

Cllr Canning alluded to the fact that the Rural Planning Guidelines had not yet been published, yet the Council was statutorily bound to proceed with the preparation of the new County Development Plan. Members were now, he stated, going to make decisions based on population growth, yet the new Guidelines could render some of that work impractical and ineffective. He cited for example the “Connection to the Land” clause and whether or not this would be incorporated into the new Guidelines. He proposed that a meeting be arranged with the Planning Regulator so that clarity could be sought in relation to the concerns raised by members.

Cllr O’ Donnell called for a further workshop and suggested that the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Planning be invited to address members and clarify the situation.

Cllr Mc Dermott urged caution as there was still no clear guidance as to what was happening in relation to rural housing, as specific categorisation at this stage could be detrimental in the future he added. It was imperative, he said, that rural housing was not impacted adversely by any decisions taken today.

Members highlighted the uncertainty of the situation and cited the need to have clarity going forward.

Mr Liam Ward, Director of Community Development & Planning Services advised that this was the last opportunity for members to issue strategic directions to the executive. He said that if members decided not to issue a direction then the executive would proceed with the preparation of the core strategy and that there was no option to defer until the 12<sup>th</sup> October as suggested earlier in the meeting. It would be possible, he confirmed, to consider the matter further in a dedicated workshop and tease out the many issues that had arisen in respect of the rural housing guidelines. It may be more appropriate, he said, to invite the Minister and his staff to meet with members as it was the Department who would finalise the Rural Housing Guidelines as opposed to the Office of the Planning Regulator.

Cllr Canning in response said that the Planning Regulator should also be invited as there was genuine concern as to what might be included in the new Rural Housing Guidelines, together with the suggestion that the bloodline connection could possibly be omitted going forward.

The Director of Services said that he was not in a position to confirm what was in the guidelines. He said that members could now if they wished propose and second the direction to proceed with the core strategy and that the planning Authority would work with them on the various issues of concern that had been highlighted.

Cllr Gallagher noted that the executive had the power to proceed without any input from the elected members and urged caution on proceeding on this basis.

A number of Cllrs queried the role of the members in the process and said that as the detail provided had been vague, they would not be in a position to support Option 3 as presented.

The Director of Services welcomed the feedback from members and reiterated the fact that there was an obligation to proceed with the process of preparing the new Development Plan. There had, he noted been considerable discussion at the workshop held previously and it had appeared that Option 3 had garnered the most support. The executive would, he advised, continue with the process and come back to members in a dedicated workshop.

Cllr Crawford proposed, seconded by Cllr Brogan that Option 3 should not proceed.

It was agreed to proceed with the remaining business on the agenda and revisit the matter later in the meeting.

C/351/22 **VACANCY ON THE DONEGAL LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above. It was noted that Mr Andrew Mc Nulty had filled the casual vacancy on the Donegal Local Community Development Community arising from the resignation of Ms Kathleen Bonner.

C/352/22 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022**

Members noted and endorsed the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2022.

C/353/22 **ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES/SEMINARS OR EVENTS**

Having noted the revised arrangements under Section 142 of the Local Government Act, 2001, together with the Local Government (Remuneration & Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations

2010 -2021, as amended and directives issued by the Minister in that regard, on the proposal of Cllr Brogan seconded by Cllr Donaghey, it was resolved to authorise any member, if he/she so wished, to attend the following conferences/ events, subject to the normal procedures:-

- i. Individual members not exceeding their annual budget for attendance at conferences.
- ii. Payment of expenses for attendance to be conditional on the member furnishing documentary evidence of attendance.
- ii. Submission of a Conference Report.

### **Conferences**

#### *Celtic Conferences*

- “A Practical Guide to Budget 2023” to be held in Carlingford from the 30<sup>th</sup> September to the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2022.
- “The role of Local Government in addressing the needs of Older People” to be held in Carlingford from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

### **Abroad**

- Attendance of the CPMR Representative at the 50<sup>th</sup> CPMR General Assembly to be held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> October in Crete, Greece.
- Attendance of the CPMR Representative at the CPMR Fisheries Working Group Meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 in Brussels.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the London Irish Vintage Club Day in London on the 4<sup>th</sup> September.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the Donegal New York Association Dinner and function in New York on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the Golden Bridges Events in Boston from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

C/354/22

### **COST OF LIVING CRISIS**

Members agreed at the request of the Cathaoirleach to limit the debate on each motion to a two-minute contribution from the proposer of the motion only.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr G Doherty it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That this Council call on the whole of Government to address the crippling cost of living crisis that our people are experiencing".*

She received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr Gallagher said that the impact of the crisis was wide reaching and that many families and small businesses were already struggling to survive. The impending winter, she stated, would see many homeowners at breaking point. It was hoped, she added, that the

national budget would bring some benefit to those most adversely affected.

There was no opposition to the motion.

It was agreed that a copy of the motion would be forwarded to the Department of the Taoiseach for consideration.

C355//22

### **TURF CUTTING POLICY**

On the proposal of Cllr O' Fearraigh, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That this Council call on the Minister Ryan to abandon his criminalisation policy of our turf cutting population".*

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr O' Fearraigh noted that there were many people in rural Ireland who depended on turf to heat their homes. This policy, he advised, had left many elderly people afraid to buy turf. He alluded to the fact that there was no prohibition on coal or oil.

There was no opposition to the motion.

It was agreed that a copy of the motion would be forwarded to the Minister for the Environment, Climate & Communications, Mr Eamon Ryan, T.D for consideration.

C/356/22

### **SOCIAL HOUSING IN DONEGAL**

On the proposal of Cllr A Doherty, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

"Donegal County Council demands that the Government and Minister for Housing Minister Darragh O'Brien:

- 1) Increase the base line income threshold for social housing eligibility,
- 2) Increase significantly the social housing build number for Donegal
- 3) Provide affordable housing schemes across the county,
- 4) Financially assist the Council and Donegal communities to attack And arrest the scourge that is vacancy and dereliction in towns and villages in the county".

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr Doherty said that his motion reflected current issues regarding the provision of SI housing in rural areas, the need to address the mica issue taking into account the Priority 1 eligibility criteria for housing and the baseline income thresholds. He noted that on the 14<sup>th</sup>



September 2022 there were five counties where the local income threshold for Eligibility for Council Housing was raised, namely Clare, Laois, Carlow, West Meath and Galway. Donegal's threshold of €25k, he added, had not been changed since 2011, thus leaving modest income families abandoned and in need of help. A swift review, he stated, was warranted at this point in time, and the income threshold increased. Donegal County Council, it was acknowledged, had 9% of its housing stock classed as social housing compared to a 24% rate in the 26 Counties as a whole.

Cllr Doherty alluded also to the fact that during the period from the 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2022 to the 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2022, statistical information had indicated that up to 10,500 people had been assessed for emergency homeless accommodation. He referred to the many hidden homeless and the fact that they did not appear in any Government homelessness figures.

He said that workshops would be needed to discuss the issues further, given that monies were available for the refurbishment of derelict properties, maintenance works etc and better used needed to be made of the repair and lease scheme. The need to collaborate with the town centre health checks was also raised so that data could be collected to reduce vacancy levels around the country and to report , map and measure dereliction levels.

There was no opposition to the motion.

It was agreed to circulate a copy of the motion to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, Mr Darragh O' Brien, T.D. for his attention.

C/357/22

### **REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

On the proposal of Cllr Kavanagh, seconded by Cllr Harley it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That Donegal County Council write to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris and ask that he support the inclusion of all full-time participants in Apprenticeship - Programmes in all Student Card Schemes".*

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr Kavanagh said that these were important trades and thus called on the Minister for Further & Higher Education to prioritise the Apprenticeship Programme. It was essential, he added, that students who went down this route were encouraged and not considered to be any less important than their main-stream colleagues. They deserved, he said, to be have full access to the student card scheme, given that the application of same would not be expensive in monetary terms.

There was no opposition to the motion.  
It was agreed to circulate a copy of the motion to the Minister for Further & Higher Education Mr Simon Harris, T.D. for his attention.

C/358/22

### **CITIZEN'S ASSEMBLIES**

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Monagle, seconded by Cllr A. Doherty it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*Citizens' Assemblies by the Irish Government.*

*"Further notes that Citizens' Assemblies are powerful democratic exercises that inform citizens, allowing them to debate specifics, develop positions and inform policy. They have operated effectively in many jurisdictions across the world.*

*"This Council calls on the Irish Government to establish an all-Ireland Citizens' Assembly to debate and discuss our constitutional future. The debate on Irish Unity is live and growing, and we must plan for constitutional change, in the context of the Good Friday provision for a Unity referendum. This Council also invites officials from the Taoiseach's Shared Island Unit to present to Council and provide an update on activity and plans for the future".*

*This motion should be forwarded to the Office of the Taoiseach.*

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that the establishment of a Citizen's Assembly would enable political and civic entities to get involved in the process of change, whilst putting citizens at the heart of shaping a new Ireland. It must, he said, be open and inclusive to all on this Island including the Diaspora. Unionism and Orangeism was also, he said, part of our shared history and our shared future. The Assembly, he contended, must issue a sincere invitation to all who call this Island home to enter into the discussion so that their voices can be heard. The new Ireland, he said, must have inclusivity and respect, with citizen's rights at the core whilst embracing the various cultural entities.

It was important, he added, that the invitation to participate was extended to the whole Island and that the Shared Island Unit be invited to present to Council.

Following a request from Cllr A Doherty and with the agreement of the members it was resolved to take a contribution from the seconder of the motion.

Cllr Doherty referred to the fact that the Local Authority Times had outlined 6 key principles for the holding of a Citizen's Assembly, namely openness, fairness, equality of voice, efficiency, respect and collegiality. Previous assemblies, he noted, had valuable policy outcomes and this function could be utilised by local councils and planning bodies.

Cllr N Crossan said that whilst he was not against the ethos of the motion, he had an issue in that Citizen's Assemblies were not directly elected and were based on random selection criteria. He said that he believed that an Assembly would not be of any great benefit and would be detrimental in the long run. He referred to the fact that Governments North and South were working for peace and that North South collaboration had significantly increased over the past number of years. For this reason, he said, he could not see any reason for the Citizen's Assembly to get involved. He proposed, seconded by Cllr Bradley that the motion should not proceed.

A show of hands was then taken by the Meetings Administrator in relation to the proposal by Cllr Crossan to oppose the motion.

As the majority of members were opposed to the objection the motion as submitted by Cllr Mc Monagle was duly adopted.

C/359/22

### **PROPERTY FOR HOUSING NEED**

On the proposal of Cllr I Mc Garvey, seconded by Cllr Bradley, seconded by Cllr A. Doherty it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That Donegal County Council enter into negotiations with contractors who want to sell property for housing need".*

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr Mc Garvey said that given the implications of the current housing crisis, it was imperative that the executive entered into negotiations with contractors so that additional housing capacity could be sourced going forward. He said that there were contractors out there who would be more than willing to partake in discussions.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services noted that the Council had already entered into engagement with landowners in terms of acquiring land at various locations throughout the county under the "Housing for All" Programme". This, he said, would ensure that the local authority would have more control over the programme and its delivery. The Council, he said, was examining the expressions of interest received and looking at property, which was for sale on the open market, together with the identification of other sites that might be suitable for housing in our towns and villages.

It was noted that 47 priority sites had been identified to date but that the acquisition of land would entail a significant cost to the Council and that the early recoupment of costs from the Department was necessary so that acquisition could continue on an ongoing basis.

He said that this might necessitate going down the road of the CPO process and that all options needed to be kept under consideration.

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/360/22

**SUPPORT HUBS AND SUPPORT CLINICS FOR FAMILIES AFFECTED BY MICA**

On the proposal of Cllr G Doherty, seconded by Cllr A Doherty, seconded by Cllr A. Doherty it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That Donegal County Council immediately introduce support clinics or support hubs in each of the Municipal Districts affected by Mica and defective blocks, as was previously agreed, in order to provide essential advice and assistance to families applying for the redress scheme".*

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr Doherty said that this was a simple ask and noted that there was a model in place already in terms of the established Planning Clinic process. It was, he said, a small ask of the Local Authority to facilitate a service for those families affected by mica and defective blocks. He asked that the motion be implemented without delay.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the Council had made an application to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on behalf of Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) and Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP) seeking funding and approval for the appointment of facilitators to supported affected homeowners. Indications were, he said, that there would be a favourable response by the Department.

C/361/22

**REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

The following motion submitted by Cllr L Doherty was not moved:

*"I am asking the Donegal County Council to write to the Minister for Transport to urgently review and resolve the school transportation system so as to provide students and families with security and peace of mind that the children have transport to and from school".*

C/362/22

**UPDATE ON THE PRESENT STATE OF CYCLEWAYS, WALKWAYS, AND GREENWAYS**

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Mahon, seconded by Cllr A Doherty, it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*“That this Council give an update regarding the present state of Cycleways, Walkways and Greenways and that they give a breakdown of figures as it has been reported that monies were returned to the exchequer and not utilised”.*

He received a response from the A/Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above.

Cllr Mc Mahon alluded to the fact that several excellent projects were ongoing including a number in conjunction with our cross-border colleagues. He asked that clarity be provided regarding recent reports that monies to the value of €5 million had been returned to the Exchequer and not spent on what were much needed and progressive ventures.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Bryan Cannon, A/Director Roads & Transportation noted that there were highly important works going on county-wide regarding the development of facilities for walking and cycling. These, he added gave citizens the opportunity to choose more sustainable methods of transport and allowed for improvements in the streetscape for persons with various accessibility needs and together with improvements in health and wellbeing, whilst offering opportunities for recreation and tourism. The report circulated with the response, he noted, set out the wide variety of works undertaken in parallel with projects on our National Roads and reference was also made to the various projects ongoing throughout the county. He commended the elected members on their ongoing support for the projects.

Cllr Mc Mahon asked for a response in relation to reports that Donegal County Council had returned monies to the Department.

Mr Bryan Cannon, A/Director Roads & Transportation said that the National Transport Authority had provided approx. €73m to 19 Local Authorities outside the Greater Dublin area and the Regional Cities in 2020/2021 which was year 1 of a five-year plan to develop active travel infrastructure in urban areas. It was noted that nationally 56% of this infrastructure had not been spent as many of the projects were required to pass through a range of processes, stages prior to construction.

He confirmed that significant expenditure had been incurred in Donegal on “quick win” projects where the construction of replacement footpaths/cycle facilities were delivered through the Council’s direct labour resources. This, it was noted, negated the need for the preparation of tender documentation and the procurement of contractor processes and permitted works to be completed in 2021. The remainder of the monies allocated was for the development of projects, and the Council had progressed these through 2021. He said that many did not draw down their full funding allocation within the

prescribed funding period, but that these funds were carried over along with additional requests for further funds in 2022. It was anticipated, he said that most of the allocated funding would be expended in 2022 with a small carry over to 2023.

C/363/22

**ADDITIONAL STAFFING FOR THE ROADS WORKFOCE AND RESOURCES FOR THE URBAN AND RIURAL REGENERATION PROGRAMMES.**

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*“I am asking this Council for additional staff to our roads workforce and additional resources to planning on the urban and rural regeneration programmes”.*

He received a response from the Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Cllr Jordan noted that there had been numerous calls over the years for an increase in the road’s workforce. He said that this needed to be resolved once and for all as the timeline for replacing retired staff needed to be reviewed. This, he said, was reflected in in the backlog of works and noted that monies had been allocated for footpath repairs and was still not spent at this juncture.

He alluded also to the limited number of staff working on urban and rural regeneration programmes which ultimately impacted on the timely delivery of such schemes.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services, advised that both areas of work were reliant on funding from central government. Some, he noted, provided full grant funding whereas others allowed local authorities to recoup the cost of staff working directly on these projects. In some instances, he said, capital funding was forthcoming for the specific element of a project, yet the staffing resourcing required to implement such works was not always provided.

This, he added, put specific pressure on the Council’s staffing and funding resources. The Council, he said, continued to make the case to the Department for the appropriate levels of funding.

Members were informed that where the funding of additional staff is not included within the funding approval the only option available to the local authority was to fund the staffing costs through the Annual Revenue Budget process.

C/364/22

**IRELAND – CASHLESS SOCIETY**

On the proposal of Cllr Naughton, seconded by Cllr Brogan it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"I am asking Donegal County Council to call on the Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohoe and the Minister for Public Expenditure, Mr. Michael Mc Grath to make sure this country does not become a cashless society".*

He received a response from the Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services in relation to the above.

Cllr Naughton said that serious debate was needed in relation to the role of cash in society. This was, he said, particularly relevant for those in the low-income bracket who were being penalised for holding cash. Banks, he advised, were pushing people away as they had issues with cash and were using this initiative as a means of reducing overhead costs. The banks, he noted made millions yet seemed to want to distance themselves more and more from everyday service delivery by pushing people into using credit cards and online banking. Cash, he contended, was very important for families, many of our senior citizens and for those living in rural Ireland. There were issues also, he noted with internet accessibility and associated power supplies. Reference was also made to the fact that Bank of Ireland had got rid of up to 1200 ATM machines over the past year which highlighted the fact that there was a push to make Ireland a cashless society. Technological advances, he stated, had been invaluable, but there was still a place for the use of cash in society. Recent studies undertaken by the European Central Bank, it was noted, had highlighted the fact that many Irish people favoured the use of cash.

The bigger issue for young people, he contended, was the ability to budget and manage their finances and this was much more easily achieved with the use of cash.

It was imperative, he said, that people retained the ability to use cash going forward.

C/365/22

### **COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW - STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS IN RELATION TO THE CORE STRATEGY**

The Cathaoirleach asked if a consensus had been reached in relation to the Core Strategy.

Cllr G Doherty asked for clarification as to whether the various suggestions made earlier by members could now be incorporated into Option 3 as circulated.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services alluded to the fact that a level of discussion had taken place since the adjournment of the item and that the general feeling was that there were genuinely held concerns regarding the designation of what actually is a "Rural Area", in the context of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

By way of clarification, he confirmed, that a settlement of less than 1500 is deemed rural and that there was a separate clarification for rural settlements and rural areas.

Cllr G Crawford acknowledged that there had been an opportunity in the interim to clarify that the issues raised had been taken on board and that whilst it did not solve the problem, it had presented an opportunity for further discussion regarding the way forward. The issues raised were serious in nature, he added, but based on the clarification provided, he proceeded to withdraw his proposal to oppose the adoption of Option 3 – Settlement Strategy/Hierarchy.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Kennedy it was resolved to direct the Chief Executive to follow the broad direction of travel as outlined in Option 3 as presented at the Plenary Workshop on the 12<sup>th</sup> September and that this was to be the basis for developing a detailed core strategy in consultation with Members.

C/366/22

### **CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS**

#### Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Denise Duffy, Housing & Corporate on the death of her father, Plunkett Mc Intyre.
- Roisin Mc Monagle, Cultural Services on the death of her mother, Rosemary Mc Monagle.
- Eddie Mc Fadden, Water Services, Stranorlar on the death of his mother, Elizabeth Mc Fadden.
- Dave Bradley formerly Facilities Management on the death of his mother, Tess Bradley.
- Sharon Mc Morran, Planning, on the death of her mother, Margo Matthews.
- Martina Mc Collum, Housing & Corporate, Letterkenny Public Services Centre on the death of her brother, Edward Crawford.
- Patricia Mc Intyre, Housing & Corporate on the death of her mother, Maggie Doherty.

#### Events Attended

The Cathaoirleach informed members of his attendance at the following events:

#### *Freedom of the County Award to Paul Mc Ginley*

This took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 in the Rosapenna Hotel in advance of the successful Legends Tour organised by Paul Mc Ginley. Congratulations was extended to the Casey family on the successful hosting of the event.

#### *AER Summer Academy – Events in Letterkenny and Gweedore*



It was noted that over 150 participants from 19 various regions all over Europe had attended the event from the 29<sup>th</sup> August to the 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2022.

*London Irish Vintage Club 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

Representation at this event on the 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2022 provided an opportunity to promote the #Live, #Work, #Remote Work, and # Visit Donegal initiatives and participation in charity event which raised funds for a number of worthy causes.

*Donegal Connect Official Launch*

This launch took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2022 to promoting continued engagement with the Donegal Diaspora and encouraging them to explore the county and discover why it is a great place to visit, live, work, invest, study and do business in.

*Tip O' Neill Awards*

The awards held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2022 in the Inishowen Gateway Hotel recognised the achievements of Kathleen Sheerin, Moya Doherty, Dr Susan K Whoriskey and Ann and Mark Baiada and their continued support for Ireland and the Diaspora.

*Wainfest*

The 2022 Wainfest Children's Art and Books Festival was launched on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022. This was the 26<sup>th</sup> year of the festival and 160 events were scheduled to take place over the nine days of the festival.

*AILG Module 5 & Module 6- Members Training Programme*

It was noted that details of AILG Module 5/6 Training Programme had been received after the publication of the agenda.

It was thus unanimously agreed that members could attend the module entitled "Disability & Inclusion" to be held in the Brehon Hotel in Killarney on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2022 and Module 6, "Data Protection- What Cllrs need to know" on the 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 in Wicklow.

C/367/22

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

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

**1. Community Development & Planning Services**

- A. URDF and RRDF Funding Programmes Update
- B. Planning Services Update
- C. Community Development Funding Programmes Update

(i) *Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)*

(ii) *CLÁR*

(iii) *Town & Village Scheme 2022*

*(iv) PEACEPLUS Partnership Programme 2022 to 2027*

D. Other Capital Projects

*(i) Riverine Community Park*

*(ii) Fort Dunree*

*(iii) Alpha Innovation Centre and Beta Business Centre, Letterkenny*

**2. Finance**

A. Revaluation 2023 - Walk in Clinics

**3. Roads & Transportation**

A. Pollinator/Biodiversity Budget 2022

B. Central Technical Services Division

*(i) 2017 County Donegal Speed Limit By-Laws – Review*

*(ii) BALAMI Funding (Piers and Harbours)*

**4. Water and Environment**

A. Waste and Litter Management

*(i) Holidaying in Donegal Summer Campaign*

*(ii) Household Waste Management Survey*

*(iii) Paint Reuse Pilot Project*

*(iv) Refill.ie at the Irish Legends Golf Tournament*

*(v) Irish Farm Film Plastics Group-Donegal Bring Centres Calendar 2022*

B. Coastal Management

*(i) Big Beach Clean 2022*

C. Central Laboratory

*(i) Septic Tank Inspections*

*(ii) Environment Section-Public Engagement Activities*

*(iii) Environment Section-Public Information Message for Farmers*

*(iv) Agri-Environmental Training for Farmers*

*(v) Local Authority Inspections under the Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters Regulations*

D. Flood Relief Schemes

**5. Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services**

A. Cultural Services

*(i) Library Update*

*(ii) Arts Update*

*(iii) Regional Cultural Centre (RCC)*

(iv) County Donegal Heritage Office

B. Housing

- (i) Social Housing Developments
- (ii) Social Housing through Turnkey Acquisition
- (iii) Lands/Property for Social Housing Purposes
- (iv) Changes to Housing Assistance Payment Discretionary Levels
- (v) First Homes Scheme

**6. Economic Development, Informations Systems & Emergency Services**

A. Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Update

The Chief Executive informed members that they could discuss individual queries with him after the meeting or at MD level whichever was the most practical.

C/368/22

**MOTION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS**

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Bride, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*“That Donegal County Council write to the President of the Atlantic Technological University and the Minister for Education, Ms Norma Foley, T.D. asking that site accommodation at the Atlantic Technology University be provided due to the lack of rental accommodation which is being accelerated by the influx of Ukrainian refugees and further pressures that will present when the Mica Redress Programme commences in earnest.”*

Cllr Mc Bride alluded to the fact that there was a growing housing crisis in the county and that student accommodation was impossible to find in Letterkenny.

He noted that the county was now home to about 3000 refugees and that the accommodation need was also being driven by the fact that a growing number of families were now having to vacate their homes as a result of the mica crisis. The fact that the Atlantic Technological university had attained university status clearly indicated that the college should be facilitated in terms of campus accommodation.

The motion was unanimously adopted.

**Members submitted the following questions:**

C/369/22

**RESOURCES IN PLACE TO DEVELOP RRDF APPLICATIONS IN EACH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

Cllr Gallagher submitted the following question:

Could I be supplied with details in relation to the resources that are in place to develop RRDF applications for each Municipal District?

She received a response from the Director of Community Development

C/370/22 **HOMELESSNESS IN EACH COUNCIL MUNICIPALITY**  
Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:

What are the known "Homeless" numbers in each Council Municipality in DCC and what response and assistance has Donegal County Council offered the North West Simon Community following their application for assistance to provide Homeless prevention and outreach services to the Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim Local Authority areas?

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/371/22 **MICA REDRESS APPLICATION PROCESS**  
Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:

*Mica Redress Application Process.*

What are the clarifications and responses required by DCC from the Government and Dept of Housing to enable prompt progress with processing of Mica Redress applications and when and why did DCC request clarification on the Mica Redress application process and when was the latest correspondence from Government received?

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/372/22 **RAPID POTHOLE FIXING MACHINES**  
Cllr Kavanagh submitted the following question:

Is Donegal County Council getting any of the new rapid pothole fixing machines currently being piloted by Louth County Council?

He received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation.

C/373/22 **PROGRESS REPORT AND TIMELINE FOR THE TEN-T PROJECT**  
Cllr Coyle submitted the following question:

I request an updated progress report and proposed timeline for the TEN-T Project?

He received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation.

C/374/22 **PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE TEN-T PROJECT, STRABANE TO MANORCUNNINGHAM, BONAGEE LINK AND TWIN TOWNS BY-PASS**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:

Can we have an updated report on the Ten-T Project, Strabane to Manorcunningham, Bonagee Link and Twin Towns By-pass and the scheduled timeframe for same?

He received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation.

C/375/22 **FUNDING FOR NECESSARY ROADS INFRASTRUCTURE**

Cllr I Mc Garvey submitted the following question:

What progress has been made in relation to obtaining funding for necessary roads infrastructure?

He received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation.

C/376/22 **CONNECTIVITY WITH IRISH WATER**

Cllr I Mc Garvey submitted the following question:

What can be done to make more connectivity between ourselves and Irish Water?

He received a response from the Director of Water & Environment.

C/377/22 **NUMBER OF NEW HOUSES/APARTMENTS BUILT BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cllr Mc Monagle submitted the following question:

How many New Houses/Apartments have been built this year by/for Donegal County Council, where are they situated and how many are currently occupied?

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/378/22 **ROLE OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES**

Cllr Mc Monagle submitted the following question:

Can I be informed as to what role do Donegal County Council have in the resettlement of refugees in Donegal, are we responsible for the accommodation inspections, fire inspections of accommodation that house the refugees and if not who is responsible?

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/379/22

**UPDATED REPORT ON THE PROGRESS MADE BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL ON THE “REBUILDING IRELAND PROGRAMME” AND UNDER “HOUSING FOR ALL”**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:

Can we get a updated report on what progress we have made as a Council on the "Rebuilding Ireland Programme" and "Housing for All" in areas of Donegal (per MD ) since 2016 to 2022, in acquiring land, new build units completed, purchase of unit's, CPO of derelict buildings and CPO of derelict land and rural housing units ?

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/380/22

**UPDATED REPORT ON THE URDF AND THE RRDF TOGETHER WITH SMALL TOWN AND RURAL REGENERATION PROJECTS IN DONEGAL**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:

Can we have an updated report on the URDF and the RRDF, and small town and rural regeneration projects in Donegal?

He received a response from the Director of Community Development & Planning Services.

C/381/22

**HAP SCHEME RATE CHANGES**

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:

The HAP scheme rate has been changed from 20 percent to 35 percent from July. For a single person approved for HAP who can't get accommodation within HAP limits the Local Authority can increase rate to that allowed for couples. How many of either changes have been applied for to DCC and does the Local Authority inform HAP tenants of these changes?

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/382/22

**HOUSING PROVIDED UNDER THE “HOUSING FOR ALL” SCHEME**

Cllr G Doherty submitted the following question:

Can this Council provide me with a list of all housing provided in Donegal since the introduction of the 'Housing for All' Scheme under the following headings?

- Social Housing
- Affordable Housing
- First Home
- Cost Rental

- Project Tosaigh
- Local Authority Home Loan

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/383/22 **STAFF EMPLOYED OFF THE LIVE REGISTER**

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:

Has this Council employed anyone off the live register over the past 3 years?

He received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate, & Cultural Services.

C/384/22 **STAFF EMPLOYED OFF THE LIVE REGISTER**

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:

What percentage of funding allocated to this Council for walking and cycling projects in years 2020, 2021 and 2022 to date has been spent?

He received a response from the A/ Director of Roads & Transportation.

C/385/22 **DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL COUNTY-WIDE PRIORITY STRATEGIC ROADS LIST**

Cllr Mc Gowan submitted the following question:

Please can I have copies of all correspondence to the relevant Department on this Councils county-wide priority strategic roads list agreed by this Council in 2020 and all responses written, and verbal received to date?

He received a response from the A/Director of Roads & Transportation.

C/386/22 **SURVEY ON TIER-TWO TOWN'S FOOTPATHS**

Cllr Mc Gowan submitted the following question:

Please give an update on my previous motion “ That a survey is carried out as a matter of urgency on Tier-Two Towns footpaths starting with the largest to identify faults, trips and areas that are a cause for concern under health and safety within town boundaries and prioritise funding with health and safety and persons with disabilities in mind”.

He received a response from the A/Director of Roads & Transportation.

C/387/22 **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES ACROSS THE COUNTY**

Cllr Mc Gowan submitted the following question:

Can I have list of all public conveniences (Public Toilets) across the County operating all year round and seasonal with relevant details on operations, cleaning, and costs etc.?

He received a response from the Director of Water & Environment.

This concluded the business of the meeting.