

30th April, 2013

TO ALL MEMBERS OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

The Adjourned April Meeting of Donegal County Council, will be held on Tuesday 7th May, 2013, at 11.00am, in the County House, Lifford.

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

Meetings Administrator

**MINUTES OF ADJOURNED MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY
COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD ON 7TH MAY,
2013.**

C/219/13 **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Clrs. F. McBrearty, Mayor, D. Alcorn, J. Boyle, C. Brogan, B. Byrne, J. Campbell, P. Canning, G. Crawford, M. Doherty, P. Doherty, R. Donaghey, M. Farren, M. T. Gallagher, M. Harley, D. Larkin, M. McBride, S. Mc Eniff, I. Mc Garvey, J. Murray, S. O' Domhnaill, M. Quinn, J. Ryan.

C/220/13 **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE**

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

C/221/13 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Clrs. L. Blaney, B. McGuinness, B. O'Neill and T. Slowey who were unable to attend the meeting.

C/222/13 **VARIATION IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Mayor welcomed Members to the Adjourned Meeting. At the request of the Mayor and on the proposal of Clr. Mc Garvey, seconded by, Clr. Farren, it was resolved to vary the order of business and deal with Items 6, 7, 8 and 9 immediately after the confirmation of the minutes.

C/223/13 **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF DONEGAL
COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 25TH FEBRUARY, 2013**

On the proposal of Clr. McGarvey, seconded by, Clr. M. McBride, the minutes of the meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 25th February, 2013 were adopted.

C/224/13 **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF DONEGAL
COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 25TH MARCH, 2013**

On the proposal of Clr. Farren, seconded by, Clr. Mc Garvey, the minutes of the meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 25th March, 2013 were adopted.

- C/225/13 APPROVAL OF THE 2013 SPECIALIST BRIDGE STRENGTHENING WORKS PROGRAMME
Members noted the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Clr. Farren, seconded by, Clr. McGarvey, the 2013 Specialist Bridge Strengthening Works Programme was approved.
- C/226/13 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING OF ISLANDS COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2012
It was agreed to defer consideration till later in the meeting.
- C/227/13 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING OF INISHOWEN ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 13TH NOVEMBER, 2012
On the proposal of Clr. Farren, seconded by, Clr. Murray, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of Meeting of Inishowen Electoral Area Committee held on the 13th November, 2012.
- C/228/13 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING OF GLENTIES ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 15TH JANUARY, 2013
As there were no members of the Glenties Electoral Area present it was agreed to defer consideration to later in the meeting.
- C/229/13 TO NOTE THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON 18TH FEBRUARY, 2013
Members noted the confirmed minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 18th February, 2013.
- C/230/13 CONFERENCES
Having noted the revised arrangements under Section 142 5(d) of the Local Government Act, 2001, introduced by the Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations 2006 and 2010 and directives issued by the Minister in that regard, on the proposal of Clr. Farren, seconded by Clr. M. McBride, it was resolved to authorise any member, if he/she so wished, to

attend the following conferences, subject to the normal procedures:-

1. Individual members not exceeding their annual budget for attendance at conferences.
 2. Payment of expenses for attendance to be conditional on the member furnishing documentary evidence of attendance.
 3. Submission of a Conference Report
- 5th Annual Laurentic Conference and Commemoration to be held from Wednesday 8th to Friday 10th May, 2013 at the Inishowen Gateway Hotel, Buncrana.
 - Training Seminar for Councillors – Local Tourism & the Councillor, to be held Friday 10th and Saturday 11th May, 2013 in the The Talbot Hotel, Wexford.
 - Tgr Seminars, How to access funding for community programmes relevant to Councillors, to be held Friday 17th to Sunday 19th May, 2013 at the Maldron Hotel, Junction 17, M7 Motorway, Portlaoise, Co Laois.
 - Celtic Conferences – West Cork Tourism Seminar to be held from Friday 24th to Sunday 26 May, 2013 at the Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork.
 - Local Authority Services National Training Group – Local Authority Roads Conference to be held Thursday 23rd May, 2013 in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. WestMeath.
 - National Conference Programme Sport Aiding Mental-Health (SAM) to be held Thursday 30th and Friday 31st May, 2013 at Jacksons Hotel, Ballybofey, Co . Donegal.
 - The attendance of Clr Larkin on the IPA Bachelor of Arts (hons) Degree Programme (Local Government)
 - To facilitate an IT Training Day in relation to the electronic circulation of Council agendas and reports

C/231/13 TO NOTE CONFERENCE REPORTS

On the proposal of Clr. Farren, seconded by, Clr. M. McBride, the following conference reports were noted:-

Clr Padraig Doherty

ACCC Annual Conference held Thursday 7th and Friday 8th March, 2013 in the Tower Hotel, Waterford City.

Clr John Boyle

ACCC Annual Conference held Friday 8th and Saturday 9th March, 2013 in the Tower Hotel, Waterford City.

Clr John Boyle

TJK F.O.I. Conference held Friday 22nd March to Sunday 24th March, 2013 in the Woodfield House, Limerick.

Clr Padraig Doherty

TJK F.O.I. Conference held Friday 22nd March to Sunday 24th March, 2013 in the Woodfield House, Limerick.

Clr Terence Slowey

TJK F.O.I. Conference held Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th March, 2013 in the Woodfield House, Limerick.

Clr Padraig Doherty

LAMA Spring Seminar 2013 held Friday 5th and Saturday 6th April, 2013 in the Ashtown Park, Gorey, Co Wexford.

Clr Jack Murray

Certificate in Local Government Studies Exam held Friday 12th April, 2013 in the IPA Dublin.

C/232/13

OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN MOVEMENTS IMPACTING ON
AFS 2012 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL
CONSIDERATION AND NOTING OF THE REPORT
DETAILING THE REASONS FOR THE MOVEMENT ON
RATES ARREARS, COLLECTION FIGURES AND “WRITE
OFFS” DURING 2012

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

Mr. Garry Martin, Head of Finance, Director of Emergency Services informed Members that he intended to deal with items 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c) collectively after which there would be an opportunity to debate same.

He proceeded to deliver a presentation outlining the primary points of note in relation to the Income and Expenditure A/C for the year ended 31/12/12. It was acknowledged that the accumulated revenue position on 01/01/12 was €12,303,343 and €17,103,244 on the 31/12/12 giving a variance of €4,799,902 at year end. The primary reasons for disimprovement were listed as follows:-

- Under-realisation of Water Accrual (€1.292m)
- Write Offs in excess of provision for Rates (€1.790m)
- Payroll chargeability under-realisation (€0.594m)
- Revenue Expenditure chargeability under-realisation (€2.265m)

➤ Under realisation of LGF (€1.017m)

Data was provided in respect of the major collection accounts for 2012 including a breakdown in relation to the various income categories. It was noted that a cumulative total of €13,507,060 had been collected in respect of the NPPR to 2012 with €3,813,368 collected re the Household Charge at the 31/12/12.

Key concerns for 2013 and into the future were deemed to be:-

- Continuing reduction in income
- Fixed nature of majority of costs.
- Capacity to reduce expenditure further was limited.

The Head of Finance advised that a concerted effort would be made to maximise income collection across all areas and that procurement and purchasing efficiency measures would be further pursued. The policy of managing existing budgets within the designated allocations would, he confirmed, continue to be maintained.

It was intended also, he said, to prepare a multi-annual framework plan to reflecting proposals as to how the Council could prepare and adopt future Revenue Budgets and write down the accumulated Revenue Deficit.

An analysis of the key Rates Indicators for 2012 was provided and Members noted that:-

- There was a collection increase from 2011 to 2012 by €1.378m (57% to 62%)
- Arrears reduced by €1.276m from 2011 to 2012 (54% to 47%)
- Number of large accounts in formal payment plans = 700+ (direct debits, standing orders and electronic fund transfers)
- Properties in 2012 = 4007
- Customers in 2012 = 2969

An overview of Rates Write Offs and a breakdown of same was also provided.

Members considered the reports circulated with the agenda in relation to the above with the Head of Finance providing a detailed

overview of the contents of his reports dated the 16th April and the 23rd April, 2013.

In the ensuing debate a number of issues were raised including;-

- The need for clarity in relation to the arrears figures so as to avoid giving the impression that rates were not being paid.
- Need to take cognisance of the challenges going forward.
- General agreement that resources needed to be put into areas where income was being generated, with Housing Maintenance deemed to be of particular significance. Concern as to the lack of capital funding for housing projects and the general depletion of the Housing Stock.
- Clarity requested with regard to the introduction of the new property tax and the impact on Donegal County Council's funding mechanisms.
- Concerns raised re the use of Debt Collection Agencies.
- Query as to whether there was any hope of collecting outstanding debts.
- The impact of reduced income on national projects in the County.
- Enquired as to what the indicators were for income collection in 2013 to date and whether it was possible to make a comparison with the 2012 figures.
- Noted that increasing demands were being put on the general public, and that this could have a significant effect on year end figures.
- Query as to whether there had been any deviation to date from the agreed budget.
- Concern re the funding of the Donegal County Council property tax liability.
- Suggestion that general administration and payroll costs were being put in front of service provision.
- Whether a dedicated master-plan would be put in place to deal with the issues going forward into 2015 and 2016.

The Head of Finance, Mr. Garry Martin informed the meeting that despite the difficult economic circumstances the vast majority of businesses in the County had co-operated with the Council, a fact underlined by the number of payment plans currently in existence. He thanked the business community for their continuing engagement noting that their contribution was essential for the provision of day to day services.

The overall aim, he confirmed, was to continue to provide key services. Acknowledging the excellent work carried out by Patricia Mc Intyre and the Debtors Management Team, he noted, that every effort had been made to progress engagement between staff and Debtors. Sanction, he confirmed, was not the first preference of the Council but that it was an important feature of the overall process.

The 2013 figures it was acknowledged were holding up, and ahead of last year in some instances. With regard to housing loans the Council, he said, would continue to work in an individual capacity with all of the recipients of such loans.

It was further acknowledged that Donegal County Council having exceeded its 65% collection threshold in respect of the Household Charge would be €309,000 better off in terms of its overall outturn.

With regard to fixed and non-discretionary costs, it was noted that considerable effort had been made over the past few years to progress procurement and efficiency measures so as to ensure the maximisation of services. The need to maintain a reasonable balance at micro and macro level was acknowledged.

The County Manager advised that there had been significant engagement with the Council from debtors over the past year He asked Members to note that €4.6m of the rates write-offs in 2012 were vacancy related.

It was important, he added, to hold the revenue spend at a level which stimulated the local economy. Monies spent on tourism related issues in 2009/2010 had, he confirmed, generated considerable benefits.

A number of factors, it was acknowledged, were impacting on the delivery of Local Government Services including the introduction of the new municipal districts, the proposed changeover to Irish Water and the impact of the Property Tax on the overall funding mechanism for the Local Government Sector.

C/233/13

APPROVAL OF ACTUAL GROSS EXPENDITURE FIGURE OF €140,122,754 ON TABLE 2, PAGE 2 WHEN COMPARED TO THE REVISED BUDGET OF €140,573,892 BUDGET AS AMENDED BY A NET DECREASE IN FUNDING RECEIVED

FOR 2012 FOR ALL DIVISIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SUB SECTION 7 OF SECTION 104 LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ACT, 2001

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

On the proposal of Clr. Mc Eniff, seconded by, Clr. M. Doherty, the Council approved the actual gross expenditure figure of €140,122,754 on Table 2, Page 2 when compared to the Revised Budget of €140,573,892 Budget as amended by a net decrease in funding received for 2012 for all Divisions in accordance with Subsection 7 of Section 104 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

C/234/13 ENDORSEMENT OF CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE
ISLANDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18th
SEPTEMBER, 2012

On the proposal of Clr. Mc Garvey, seconded by, Clr. P. Doherty, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of the Islands Committee Meeting held on the 18th September, 2012.

C/235/13 ENDORSEMENT OF CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE
GLENTIES ELECTORAL AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 15th
JANUARY, 2013

On the proposal of Clr. P. Doherty, seconded by, Clr. O' Domhnaill, it was resolved to endorse the Confirmed Minutes of the Glenties Electoral Area Committee Meeting held on the 15th January, 2013.

C/236/13 CONSIDERATION OF REPORT ON THE PUBLICATION OF
"KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE", "A FRAMEWORK FOR
FIRE SAFETY IN IRELAND", AND TO NOTE KEY ISSUES
AND IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS NATIONAL
POLICY DOCUMENT

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above together with the document "Keeping Communities Safe" circulated during the Meeting.

Clr. Farren took the Chair for a brief period in the absence of the Mayor.

Mr. Garry Martin, Head of Finance, Director of Emergency Services outlined in detail the main aspects of his report and informed Members that a detailed analysis of the implications

arising from this National Policy Document would be included in an updated Section 26, Fire Services Act, 1981, Fire and Emergency Operation Plan due to come before the Council over the coming months.

Donegal, it was confirmed, based on current population figures would be a Single Fire Authority.

The Mayor returned to the meeting at this juncture.

Member's acknowledged the professional manner in which the Donegal Fire Service carried out its duties, noting that the planned procedural changes would inevitably lead to teething problems in the initial stages.

A number of issues were raised including:-

1. How much autonomy the Donegal Fire Service would have in the long run?
2. What the situation would be in relation to "clean-ups" following Road Traffic Accidents and who would be responsible for making the relevant decisions.
3. Concerns re the implementation of standard operating procedures and the situation whereby the Fire Service do not attend all accident call-outs.
4. The variance, if any, that existed between the new policies and the old policies/directives.
5. The need to broaden the remit of the policies to include and address all issues facing communities.

The Director of Emergency Services acknowledged that the new Emergency Operation Plan would see a change in current practices with all national fire services operating to standard operating guidelines. With regard to predetermined response times the Donegal Fire Service, he confirmed, was required to operate within a five minute time-frame. Every effort is being made to achieve this target.

With regard to clean-ups and the most effective use of personnel, it would, he advised, be possible to look at employing other Council Services. This type of activity, he noted, often required a specific call to be made at the scene of an incident and was thus open to review.

Responding to a query from Clr. Crawford, the Director of Emergency Services noted that whilst the policies were there for the good of the public, there were issues to be considered particularly in border areas where there was ongoing collaboration with the Northern Ireland Fire Service. He assured Members that regardless of the service provider the response delivered was at all times in accordance with professional standards.

C/237/13 AGREEMENT ON DATE FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

On the proposal of Clr. Ryan, seconded by, Clr. Farren, it was resolved to hold the 2013 Annual General Meeting of Donegal County Council on Monday 24th June, 2013 at 5pm in the County House, Lifford.

C/238/13 FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCY ON THE DONEGAL LOCAL TRAVELLER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ARISING FROM THE RESIGNATION OF CLR CORA HARVEY

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above. On the proposal of Clr. Murray, seconded by Clr. Gallagher it was resolved that Clr. Quinn fill the casual vacancy on the Donegal Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee occasioned by the resignation of Clr. Cora Harvey.

C/239/13 ADOPTION OF DRAFT NORTH WEST REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN 2013 – 2018

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

On the proposal of Clr. Larkin, seconded by, Clr. Crawford, it was resolved to adopt the Draft North West Regional Homelessness Action Plan 2013-2018

C/240/13 MAYOR'S BUSINESS

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following;-

- Anne Mc Daid, Corporate Services, Carndonagh on the death of her mother, Sadie O' Donnell.
- The family of the late Benny Kelly, formerly Roads Stranorlar.

- Damian Mc Namara, Bundoran Fire Brigade on the death of his mother, Kathleen Mc Namara.
- Mary Hannigan, formerly Housing on the death of her mother, Mary.
- Clr. Rena Donaghey on the death of her mother, Mary Mc Callion.
- Clr. Liam Blaney and the extended Blaney family on the death of his father, Harry Blaney.
- The family of the late Clr. Tadhg Culbert, formerly Letterkenny Town Council.

Launch of Events in the County

The Mayor informed Members that he had attended the launch of the following events:-

- The “Gathering Calendar of Events” on the 26th March, 2013.
- Finn Harps/DSP School Nutrition Programme on the 8th April, 2013.
- Ladies 5K at the Finn Valley Centre.
- Ren Net Launch on the 18th April, 2013
- Launch of the Jigsaw Service in Donegal on the 19th April, 2013.
- River Links Project Boxing Tournament between Raphoe ABC and Two Castles ABC, Newtownstewart.
- Corporate Policy Group Meeting with the Oireachtas Members on the 22nd April, 2013.
- Launch of “Heritage in Hinterland” at the County Museum.
- Attendance at the Lisburn Business Bootcamp- Joint Venture with Belfast City Council and Donegal County Council.
- Launch Border Life Stories.
- The launch of the 16th Annual Bealtaine Festival on the 22nd April, 2013.
- Civic Reception for Natalie Mc Carron on the 29th April, 2013.
- Donegal Sports Partnership – Active Donegal Launch.
- Presentation of the monies raised as a result of the Finn Valley Ladies 5K Run to the Breast Care Unit, Letterkenny General Hospital.
- Launch of the Gum Litter Task Force in Letterkenny on the 5th May, 2013.

- North West Charity 10K Road Race and Walk held on the 5th May, 2013.
- Shaun Cuddy Weekend in the Clanree Hotel on the 3rd-6th May, 2013.
- Launch of the “Local People Exhibition” in the Regional Culture Centre, Letterkenny on the 19th April, 2013. Congratulation was extended to Harriet Purvis, Exhibition Curator and the entire Project Team including photographer Declan Doherty, for their input.
- Launch of the Report on the Activities of Donegal County Council supporting Enterprise in the County House, Lifford, on the 29th April, 2013.

Members were advised of the following events scheduled to take place over the coming month:-

- The Annual Laurentic Conference to be held on the 9th May, 2013 in the Inishowen Gateway Hotel, Buncrana and associated Wreath laying Ceremonies on the 10th May, 2013.
- The Mayor’s Charity Dance and Charity Ladies Football Match to take place on the 30th May, 2013.
- Sport Aiding Mental Health Conference to be held on the 30th and 31st May, 2013 in Jacksons Hotel Ballybofey.

Cyber Bullying

The Mayor advised that he had received correspondence from Caroline Brady, Director Border Regional Authority asking all Local Authorities to support the rollout of training in relation to bullying and cyber-bullying to all schools in the region and the extension of this training to teaching staff, parents and students.

A-Ceart

The Mayor advised that he had received correspondence from Ms Mary Clinton, Chairperson A-Ceart asking Members to make a donation from their Development Fund Allocations to the A-Ceart Action Campaign for Education against Road Tragedies. A copy of the request it was confirmed would be circulated to all Members for their consideration.

C/241/13

MANAGER’S REPORT

Members considered the report circulated during the meeting in relation to the above. An update was provided in respect of the following:-

- (a) Pride of Place 2013 All-Island Competition
- (b) Donegal County Council launches new Tourism Website
- (c) Launch of the Report on “Supporting Enterprise, Local Development and Economic Growth” Donegal County Council Activities in 2012
- (d) Donegal Gathering Update
- (e) Visit of Massachusetts Senate State President to Donegal
- (f) Donegal Diaspora Conference 4th/5th June 2013
- (g) Donegal Craft Village Re-opening on 9th May 2013
- (h) Business Boot Camp

- (i) Bealtaine 2013
- (j) Lasell College Library / Donegal County Library Connection
- (k) Project PARLÉ

- (l) Submission to public consultation on Department for Regional Development: Future Railway Investment
- (m) Submission on behalf of Donegal County Council on the Coillte Public Consultation on Business Area Unit (BAU) Strategic Plans
- (n) Junior Achievement Donegal 2013.

The Mayor responding to a query from Clr. Crawford advised that in accordance with protocol there was no provision for debate on the Manager’s report.

C/242/13

MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES

The following motions from other councils were noted:-

BUNCRANA TOWN COUNCIL

“That Buncrana town council write to the Minister for Health, Mr James Reilly asking him to recognise Polio as a life long illness and to issue medical cards to survivors of same.”

SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

“That we the Members of South Tipperary County Council call on Minister Joan Burton to reverse the cuts to heating and free fuel

schemes implemented since she became Minister for Social Protection”.

SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

“That we the members of South Tipperary County Council call on the Minister for Local Government, Mr. Phil Hogan, T.D. to reverse the cuts to Disabled Persons Grants and Housing for Older People Grants and re-instate the 2012 grant allocation”.

WATERFORD CITY COUNCIL

“That this Council calls on the Minister of Education Ruairi Quinn to recognize the very special place the Waterford College of Further Education plays in deliverance and facilitating access to full scale 3rd level education and to reverse the education cuts that directly affect the Waterford College of Further Education, who will lose 4 to 6 teachers under his proposal and as many as 120 students.

“This at a time when the City of Waterford is experiencing severe job losses and education is identified as a pathway to securing jobs

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Leitrim County Council contact the Minister for Finance and the Minister with responsibility for People with Disabilities to ask them to review the policy whereby a community organisation who is carrying out works to make a facility, disabled friendly, would be able to avail of a VAT exemption in respect of those works.”

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

“Offaly County Council calls on the government to immediately reinstate the payment of the minor works grant to all primary schools.”

SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

“That South Tipperary County Council call on the Government to take action to tackle criminal gangs involved in the laundering of fuel, smuggling of cigarettes and other counterfeit goods, which is estimated to be costing almost 861 million per year to the taxpayer according to the recent Retail Ireland report.”

DUN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL

“That this Council welcomes the reduction in rates in Budget 2013 but also, in the interest of alleviating the continuing burden on struggling businesses, calls on the Minister for the Environment and Local Government to change the legislation with regard to commercial rates, allowing for a differential rating system to be implemented and further commits to write to other local Councils looking for support for this call.”

CLONES TOWN COUNCIL

“That this Council calls on the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Pat Rabbitt and An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny to seek agreement during this period of our E.U. Presidency to expedite the abolition of roaming charges in Ireland and Europe. That this motion be circulated to all Local Authorities in Ireland.”

SHANNON TOWN COUNCIL

“That Shannon Town Council debate recommending to the Minister for Transport to enact legislation making the wearing of high visibility vests or belts/bands by pedestrians compulsory at times of darkness or low visibility in all areas.”

SHANNON TOWN COUNCIL

“Shannon Town Council condemn the proposed planned saving of €721 million by the HSE and the reduction of staff by 4,000 in 2013 because of the impact these measures will have on frontline services.”

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

“We members of Monaghan County Council, by resolution hereby issue a requisition to the County Manager under Section 140 of the Local Government Act 2001 to:

Refrain from increasing the rent payable by local authority tenants as a result of the government’s property tax (Home Tax).”

Clr. Quinn noted that Donegal County Council at Budget time had rejected any increase in housing rents. He called for further reassurance on the matter, and advised that it was important that Donegal County Council did not go down the same route

Members were informed that no change had been made to the 2013 Budget as adopted.

Responding to a query from Clr. Crawford as to why debate had been allowed in relation to this item, Mr. Liam Ward, Meetings Administrator confirmed that motions from other Councils as a matter of form were noted and that general debate did not take place.

Clr. Crawford proceeded to enquire as to why the meeting with the President of Massachusetts State Senate, Ms Therese Murray and the Massachusetts Delegation was being held in the Letterkenny Public Service Centre and not at Lifford Headquarters.

Mr. Michal Heaney, Director Community, Culture & Enterprise advised that it was not a formal reception but a business meeting and that Letterkenny IT and CoLab were also scheduled to attend.

C/243/13 WORKSHOP IRISH WATER

On the proposal of Clr. Larkin, seconded by, Clr. Murray, it was resolved to hold a workshop on the changeover to Irish Water on Wednesday 22nd May, 2013 at 12 noon in the County House, Lifford.

C/244/13 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Members unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting for lunch at this juncture.

C/245/13 RECEPTION OF DEPUTATION FROM CASTLEFINN PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE LTD ON THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF "THE WHITEHOUSE GARDEN"

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Michael Carlin, Director, Mr. Patsy Callaghan, Chairman, Mr. Charlie Catterson, Mr. Stephen Carlin and Mr Michael Gamble, from Castlefinn Partnership Initiative to the meeting.

Mr. Michael Carlin addressed Members and briefed them initially on the history of the Castlefinn Partnership Initiative which had been founded in 1999. The overall aim of the project it was established was to promote and encourage the social, cultural, educational and sporting needs of the community, whilst providing for the provision of a range of services including commercial floor space, health services, childcare facilities, indoor/outdoor sport and

recreational facilities, and IT training facilities. The centre it was confirmed served as a service hub for a range of cross-border and inter-agency organisations.

Sustainability it was noted was a major factor in the success of the project with considerable income being generated each year from various initiatives, including the letting/leasing of units and the hiring out of facilities for various social activities.

Mr. Carlin informed Members that the Partnership was continually striving to provide integrated services for the local community something which was recognised nationally in 2012 when the CPI were winners of the Community Garden category in the Pride of Place Awards. He alluded also to the success of the Northwest Garden Show and the fact that it was now the largest garden and outdoor living event outside Dublin and Belfast. The show, he confirmed, had become an annual two day event with approximately 21,000 visitors in 2012.

He proceeded to update Members on the proposal to present the plans for the gift of a garden from the people of Ireland to the people of the United States as a symbol of love, friendship and common history. The replica garden at the CPI, he said, would become a national tourist attraction, a venue for cultural events and a tribute for local connections to the United States.

The aim of the CPI at this juncture, Mr. Carlin added was to raise the awareness about the development of the Whitehouse Garden and in partnership with Donegal County Council. This he hoped would create a sustainable tourist attraction for the people of the North West and Finn Valley area providing a strong link also for the Diaspora.

Concluding the presentation, he thanked Donegal County Council, the staff in the Community & Enterprise Section and all associated funding agencies for their co-operation to date.

Members acknowledged the interesting and enthusiastic presentation noting that the development of the Whitehouse Garden Project offered great potential for the Finn Valley area as a whole. They commended the Members of the company present on the operation of the centre itself, acknowledging that it was a

vibrant and positive initiative contributing in a massive way to community life in the Castlefinn area.

It was suggested also that the “Whitehouse Garden Initiative” could be further developed to capitalise on the Ulster American Heritage of the Northwest region.

The Mayor in conclusion thanked the delegation for their presentation noting that it demonstrated clearly what could be achieved in a small rural town with the required initiative and the backing of the local community.

This concluded the business of the meeting.