

31st December, 2013

TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

The Adjourned Budget Meeting of Donegal County Council for the financial year 1st January – 31st December 2014 will be held at 10.00am on Monday 6th January, 2014 in the Council Chamber, County House, Lifford.

You are hereby summoned to attend this meeting.

Please ensure that you bring the Agenda and enclosures previously issued to you on 11th December, 2013.

Yours sincerely,

Liam Ward
Meetings Administrator.

MINUTES OF ADJOURNED BUDGET MEETING HELD ON
6TH JANUARY, 2014 IN COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD

C/1/14 MEMBERS PRESENT

Clr McGarvey, Mayor, Clrs Alcorn, Blaney, Boyle, Brogan, Byrne, Campbell, Canning, Crawford, Doherty (G), Doherty (M), Doherty (P), Donaghey, Farren, Gallagher, Harley, Larkin, McBrearty, McBride (M), McBride (N), McEniff, McGowan, McGuinness, O Domhnaill, O Neill, Quinn, Ryan and Slowey.

C/2/14 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr S Neely, County Manager, Mr L Ward, Director of Corporate & Housing Services, Mr G Martin, Director of Financial Services, Mr J Peoples, Director of Water & Environment, Mr J McLaughlin, Director of Roads & Transportation, Mr E Quinn, A/Director of Community, Culture & Planning, Mr B McGlynn, SEO, Finance, Ms A M Conlon, Communications Officer, Ms A M Quinn, A.O., Finance and Ms K Browne, SO, Corporate
At the outset of the meeting Mayor McGarvey extended his New Years wishes to all the Members, Press and staff of Donegal County Council.

C/3/14 VOTES OF SYMPATHY

Members expressed their sympathies to the family of the late Clr John Kelly who had died and to the families of Mrs Maura Porter and Angeline and Jolene Brogan who had been tragically killed in recent days. Mr S Neely, County Manager joined with members to express his sympathy to the families also.

C/4/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

On the proposal of Clr Brogan, seconded by Clr O Domhnaill, the members agreed to adjourn the meeting until 2pm as a mark of respect to the bereaved families.

C/5/14 Recommencement of Meeting

The meeting recommenced at 2pm.

Mr S Neely, County Manager, addressed the meeting regarding the various queries and questions raised by members at the last meeting. Mr Neely provided responses to these questions under the various directorate headings.

C/6/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

On the proposal of Clr Brogan, seconded by Clr Byrne, members agreed to adjourn the meeting until 4.15pm to allow parties to meet with the County Manager.

C/7/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting resumed at 4.15 and was called to order. On the proposal of Clr P Doherty, seconded by Clr M Quinn, members agreed to ruther adjourn the meeting until 5pm.

C/8/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting resumed at 5pm. On the proposal of Clr O Neill, seconded by Clr McBride, members agreed to further adjourn the meeting.

C/9/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting resumed at 5.55 pm. On the proposal of Clr O Neill, seconded by Clr McBride, members agreed to further adjourn the meeting to 7 pm.

On the proposal of Clr. M. Doherty, seconded by Clr. Slowey, it was further resolved in accordance with Standing Order No. 29 to suspend Standing Order No; 3 to continue the meeting beyond 6 pm for the consideration of Budget 2014.

C/10/14 CONSIDERATION OF 2014 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET

The meeting resumed at 7 pm. Clr. Brogan proposed that as members were present from early morning that the meeting should now be adjourned to 11 am the following day Tuesday 7th January, 2014. This proposal was seconded by Clr. McEniff

Clr. Campbell requested that in accordance with Standing Order 41, the proposals put forward by Fine Gael should be circulated in writing for consideration.

Clr. Quinn advised that the Sinn Fein party did not have an opportunity to meet with the County Manager and requested a further adjournment to allow this to happen

Clr. M. Doherty stated that he could not be in attendance on 7th January and wished to be part of the adoption of Budget 2014. On this basis, Clr. Doherty indicated that he did not support the call for an adjournment to the following date.

Clr. Brogan indicated that he wished to withdraw the proposal to adjourn the Budget meeting to the following day.

Clr. Quinn again requested an opportunity to meet with the County Manager, advising that Sinn Fein had previously suggested that an email response be issued in relation to the questions and queries that had been raised at the previous Budget meeting.

Clr. Brogan stated that Fianna Fail had no difficulty in supporting a further adjournment to facilitate the other parties in meeting with the County Manager and Head of Finance.

The Mayor appealed to all parties to work together to collectively adopt the Budget for 2014.

C/11/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

On the proposal of Clr McGuinness, seconded by Clr Boyle, members agreed to adjourn the meeting until 8.30 pm.

C/12/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting resumed at 8.30 pm. On the proposal of Clr N. McBride, seconded by Clr M. Doherty, members agreed to adjourn the meeting to 9.30 pm.

Clr. Brogan stated that he wanted it recorded that the Fianna Fail members had made significant efforts to be present for the Budget deliberations.

C/13/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting resumed at 9.30 pm. On the proposal of Clr O'Domhnaill, seconded by Clr McBrearty, members agreed to adjourn the meeting to 9.45 pm.

C/14/14 CONSIDERATION OF 2014 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET

The meeting resumed at 9.45 pm. The Mayor confirmed that at this juncture all parties had been facilitated in relation to meetings with the County Manager and Head of Finance.

Clr. O'Neill acknowledged that the Fine Gael party had been provided with an opportunity to set out their concerns to the County Manager and Head of Finance and were satisfied with the responses received.

Clr. O'Neill proposed that the Fine Gael party were happy to support the adoption of the draft Budget for 2014 as presented by the County Manager, subject to the following amendments:
5 % Reduction in Commercial Rates – to assist the Business Community in County Donegal. This would mean an overall decrease of 11.5 % on Rates over the lifetime of the current Council.

The Council to support the ongoing Government Review of the Commercial Rates system

Development Fund Initiative to be increased from €100 K to €150 K per Electoral Area – to assist Community Groups and organisations

€50 K increase in Members Development Fund

€20 K to be provided in each Electoral Area for small repair fund to assist with repairs to local roads.

The development of the 'Donegal' brand be further examined and advanced in 2014.

Centralised Tourism Fund of €150 K to be created which is to be used to lever matched funding from Tourism agencies.

€25 K to be provided for the Donegal GAA Centre of Excellence Development in Convoy.

Clr. O'Neill concluded that he was happy to put forward this proposal on behalf of the Fine Gael party and would welcome the opportunity to engage with other parties as a basis upon which agreement could be reached.

Clr McGuinness formally seconded the proposal by Clr O'Neill.

C/15/14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Clr Brogan proposed an adjournment of the meeting to 10.30 pm. This was seconded by Clr O'Domhnaill.

Clr. McGuinness proposed that each party now present their proposals to the floor. This was seconded by Clr Boyle.

The proposal to adjourn the meeting was put to the floor with 16 voting in favour and 9 voting against. The Mayor declared that the meeting stood adjourned to 10.30 pm

C/16/14 CONSIDERATION OF 2014 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET

The meeting resumed at 10.30 pm. The Mayor offered the County Manager an opportunity to comment on the proposal before the meeting.

The Manager thanked the members for the opportunity to meet with them within their respective parties and individually and to provide the clarifications requested. In response to a query from the floor of the chamber, the Manager confirmed that the proposal as presented did not represent a balanced option upon which the draft Budget for 2014 could be adopted. The proposal as outlined provided for a decrease in Income and an increase on the Expenditure side. The Manager confirmed that he was happy to work with the parties to see if a balanced proposal could emerge.

C/17/14

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

On the proposal of Clr Campbell, seconded by Clr Quinn, members agreed to adjourn the meeting to 1.00 pm, the following day 7th January, 2014.