

9th June, 2015

TO ALL MEMBERS OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
--

The Adjourned May Meeting of Donegal County Council, will be held on Monday 15th June, 2015 at 11.00am, in the County House, Lifford to consider the unfinished business listed at Items below:-

Items 8, 10, 11 – 31, 32, 33, 34 – 61.

The agenda and reports for the May Council Meeting are available on the Member's Extranet. You can access same through the SPConnect app on your home screen. By clicking on Member's Extranet and Full Council Documents you will be directed to the current meeting folder.

Please arrange to bring your Samsung Tablet to the above meeting in order to access the reports electronically as over the coming months it is intended to move to a fully fledged electronic agenda.

Liam Ward
Meetings Administrator

MINUTES OF ADJOURNED MAY MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY
COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD ON 15TH JUNE
2015

C/236/15 MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs J Campbell, Cathaoirleach, Blaney, E Bonner, C Brogan, P Canning, T Conaghan, G Crawford, N. Crossan, , A Doherty, G Doherty, L Doherty, R Donaghey, M Farren, M T Gallagher, M Harley, N Jordan, J Kavanagh, N Kennedy, F Mc Brearty, J P Mc Daid, M McDermott, S McEniff, I Mc Garvey, P McGowan, G McMonagle, J Murray, S O'Domhnaill, J O' Donnell, J S O' Fearraigh, B O' Neill, M Quinn, D Shiels, T Slowey.

C/237/15 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Seamus Neely, Chief Executive, Mr Liam Ward, Director of Housing, Corporate & Planning Control/ Meetings Administrator, Mr Garry Martin, Head of Finance & Director of Information Systems & Emergency Services, Mr John McLaughlin, Director of Roads and Housing Capital, Mr Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture & Development Planning Director of Community Culture & Development Planning, Mr Denis Kelly, Senior Executive Planner, Mr Sean O'Daimhin, Oifigeach Na Gaeilge, Ms Anne Marie Conlon, Communications Officer, Ms Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer, Corporate Services.

C/238/15 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mac Giolla Easbuig and Ryan who were unable to attend the meeting.

C/239/15 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ISLAND COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 21ST JANUARY 2014

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by, Cllr Mc Garvey , the Minutes of the Meeting of Island Committee held on the 21st January 2014 were endorsed.

C/240/15 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE VALUE FOR MONEY COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 5TH MARCH 2014

On the proposal of Cllr Canning, seconded by, Cllr Kavanagh, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Value for Money Committee held on the 5th March, 2014 were endorsed.

C/241/15 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE VALUE FOR MONEY COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 2ND OCTOBER 2014

On the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by, Cllr Mc Monagle, the Minutes of the Value for Money Committee held on the 2nd October, 2014 were endorsed.

C/242/15 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE VALUE FOR MONEY COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 22ND JANUARY 2015

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Monagle, seconded by, Cllr Jordan, the Minutes of the Value for Money Committee held on the 22nd January, 2015 were endorsed.

C/243/15 NOTING OF THE MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MEETING HELD ON THE 23RD MARCH 2015

Members noted the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on the 23rd March, 2015.

C/244/15 CONFERENCE REPORTS

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Gowan , seconded by, Cllr Farren , the following Conference Reports were noted:-

Cllr James Pat McDaid

Governments Construction 2020 Strategy Local Government Housing Supply held Friday 6th and Saturday 7th February, 2015 in the Whites Hotel Wexford.

Cllr Terence Slowey

AILG Governance of Local Authorities Part 1 held Saturday 21st February, 2015 at the Arklow Bay Hotel, Wicklow.

Cllr Martin Harley

Co-operation Ireland “Regeneration Local Spaces Through Effective Community Planning.” held Thursday 26th February, 2015 at Dublin Castle.

Cllr Martin Harley

A.I.L.G., Conference held Thursday 12th and Friday 13th March, 2015 at Nuremore Carrickmacross.

Cllr Ian McGarvey

Nottingham Visit from Monday 16th to Wednesday 18th March, 2015.

C/245/15 CALL FOR THE ENDING OF THE FULL BODY SEARCHES OF REPUBLICAN PRISONERS IN MAGHABERRY PRISON

The following motion submitted by Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig fell in the absence of a proposer and seconder:-

"Go dtacaíonn an Chomhairle seo le deireadh a chur le cuardach táireach lánchoirp a dhéanamh ar chimí polaitiúla poblachtánacha i Maigh gCabraí, agus go dtacaíonn an Chomhairle seo le Comhaontú Lúnasa 2010 a chur i bhfeidhm ina iomláine, comhaontú ar cuspóir leis réimeas príosúin nua-aimseartha a chruthú atá ag teacht go huile is go hiomlán leis na caighdeáin is airde cearta daonna"

"That this Council supports the ending of the degrading process of full-body searches of republican political prisoners held within Maghaberry Prison and for the full implementation of the August 2010 Agreement designed to create a modern prison regime that is fully compliant with the highest human rights standards"

C/246/15 COUNCIL REVIEW OF THE FUNDING OF THE THEATRES IN DONEGAL

On the proposal of Cllr O’Fearraigh, seconded by, Cllr, the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council look at the overall funding for Theatres in Donegal, and across each Municipal District so that provision for funding can be included in the Annual Budget.”

Members were informed that:-

“Donegal County Council is in ownership of 2 no. theatre facilities, The Abbey Centre in Ballyshannon and An Grianan Theatre in Letterkenny and on that basis the Council is required to ensure the viability of these assets and to provide budgets accordingly. Members of Donegal County Council have through various other sources financially assisted other theatres in the County in recognition of the important work that they are carrying out in their communities and beyond e.g. assistance provided through the DFI / Strategic Development Fund. Such facilities have also been assisted through the DCC Strategic Partnership Fund.”

Cllr O’ Fearraigh outlined in particular the need to ensure adequate funding for Theatres particularly the Irish Language Theatre in

Gweedore. He said that every effort was needed to ensure the promotion and preservation of the Irish language.

Cllr Gallagher outlined her support for the Irish Language Theatre Project acknowledging the importance of same in promoting the language.

It was acknowledged that further discussion on the matter was warranted but that this was something that could be pursued closer to budget time.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director, Housing and Corporate alluded to the fact that specific funding opportunities could be pursued through the Strategic Development Fund. It was also something, he said, which could be revisited in the context of the 2016 Budget.

Cllr O' Fearraigh concluding the debate cited the necessity of progressing the motion not only in the context of the promotion of the Irish Language Theatre but also as a means of supporting and developing the Irish language .

C/247/15 EXTENSION OF THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY TO INCLUDE PREVIOUSLY OMITTED ROADS

On the proposal of Cllr O' Domhnaill, seconded by, Cllr Brogan, it was resolved to defer the motion to later in the meeting.

"That Donegal County Council investigate if the Wild Atlantic Way be extended to include some roads omitted from Wild Atlantic Way e.g. Light House Road Aranmore Island and Back Road at Kilcar."

C/248/15 DISCUSSION ON THE PROCESS OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE REGISTER IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT GARDA STATION CLOSURES

Cllr A Doherty proposed, seconded by, Cllr Murray that the following motion be adopted:-

"Given the closure of many rural Garda Stations, that this Council, 1) discuss the application process for inclusion in the "supplement to the register", 2) advertise, promote and encourage inclusion in the supplement list by an official of the council in each of the

Municipal District Councils, 3) urge the Dept of Environment and Minister to amend and or delete an applicant's need "to establish in writing that he/she is unable to progress the registration process in the presence of a member of the Garda Siochana."

Members were informed that:-

“Local Authorities maintain the Electoral Register and associated Supplements to the Electoral Register as agents on behalf of the Franchise Department in the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government. Having contacted the Franchise Section of the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government, the following information was made available:

The Programme for Government provides for the establishment of an electoral commission that would subsume the functions of existing bodies and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. Establishment of an electoral commission will be a major body of work. Issues for consideration include international best practice, the commission’s structure and functions, who it reports to, its relationship with other bodies currently involved in electoral administration, and the approach to be followed in relation to the extensive legislation that will be required, as well as practical matters including staffing and funding arrangements.

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government hopes to advance proposals on this commitment in 2015.

In this regard, any changes to existing arrangements are a matter for the Department. Should the motion be adopted by the Council, arrangements can be made to bring these concerns to the attention of the Minister.”

Cllr Doherty said that a number of issues had arisen in the lead up to the recent referendum and particularly with regard to the “Supplement” to the register.

The current process, he said, had recently been described as a 19th century system and served only to disenfranchise rural Ireland. The requirement for applications to the Supplement to be signed and stamped locally in the presence of a Garda was, he contended,

long outdated. With the closure of rural Garda Stations and the demise of many other aspects of rural life, there was, he said, an urgent need to find a new and updated way of compiling electoral data.

He asked that the motion be forwarded to the local Oireachtas Members and An Garda Síochána.

Cllr Murray concurred with these comments and noted that many young people in the Inishowen area had not been able to get on to the Supplement prior to the recent referendum. It was imperative, he said, that the Minister was informed of the problems being experienced at local level.

Cllr O' Domhnaill opposed to the motion and alluded to the fact that the Chief Superintendent had at a recent JPC Workshop made reference to specific measures for dealing with this issue. It had been suggested, he said, that workshops/forums could be set up with a Garda in attendance to facilitate those who wanted to be included on the register.

The motion if passed, he contended, would downgrade the services of An Garda Síochána and he thus called on the Chief Superintendent to address the problem as she said she would.

Cllr Mc Guinness called for greater clarity. The motion, he said, seemed to suggest that the input of the Gardai could be dispensed with. This, he contended, would be a retrograde step especially along border areas. The difficulty he here, he said, was that the Gardai might then decide that service provision in relation to the Register was no longer required at any level.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Housing & Corporate, alluded to his response and said that the current Government were proposing to establish an Electoral Commission to subsume the functions of the existing body and the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government. He informed Members that since the issuing of the reply a request had been received internally for submissions in relation to the establishment of a commission.

The supplement, he confirmed, was compiled and distributed over a very short period of time. There was a possibility, he said, that the Electoral Commission would look at moving to a rolling register.

He agreed at the Member's request to bring the motion if adopted to the attention of the Department, the Oireachtas Members and An Garda Siochana.

Cllr Mc Guinness paid tribute to Ms Siobhan Mc Daid who compiled and maintained the Register of Electors in Donegal.

He was informed that the passing of the motion would in no way remove Gardai from the equation.

Cllr Doherty said that he had introduced the motion as a means of supporting the National Youth Council of Ireland and the eligibility of young people to vote. It was also intended, he said, to support rural Ireland and was not undermining in any way those who compiled the Register. He called on Members to support the motion as a show of support for rural Ireland.

A show of hands was then taken by the Meetings Administrator.

This resulted in 13 voting for and 13 voting against.

As there was an equality of votes the Cathaoirleach exercised his right to determine the matter and voted in favour of the Cllr Doherty's motion.

The motion was duly adopted.

C/249/15 ERECTION OF A MONUMENT AT THE COUNTY HOUSE IN MEMORY OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE EASTER RISING

On the proposal of Cllr Murray, seconded by, Cllr Mc Monagle, the following motion was considered:-

"As we approach the centenary of 1916 this Council resolves to erect a monument at the County House in memory of the participants of The Easter Rising and all those who gave their lives for Irish freedom."

Members were informed that:-

"Following a motion carried at the November meeting last year the Members resolved to establish a working group in respect of the 1916 commemorations and agree a plan. The Department has also recommended that a steering group be formed locally. The 1916

Commemoration will be a key focus for Donegal County Council in 2016 and now in the lead up to 2016. A local Steering Group is to be formed and will work with all stakeholders to develop a draft action plan for the County in respect of the 2016 Commemorations. It is expected that the steering group will be meeting in the coming weeks to discuss proposals and feedback from the public consultation event which was held on Tuesday, 19th May in Letterkenny. It will then report back to Council and it is proposed that 2016 be a standing item on the Council agenda over the coming year. The Council itself will lead out on a range of key projects as a core part of the 2016 Commemoration and this work can include erection of a monument should the Members so resolve.”

Cllr Murray welcomed the response and said that the County House would be an ideal location for the location of a memorial.

Cllr Mc Monagle concurred with these remarks and cited the significance of locating a memorial in Lifford given the historical significance of the town. It was imperative, he said, that this was done within the next 12 months.

A number of Members at this juncture called for clarity in relation to the wording of the motion and exactly what was meant by “all those who had given their lives for freedom”.

Mr Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture & Development Planning Director Community, Culture & Economic Development alluded to his reply and the fact that a local Steering Group would look after all aspects of the commemoration locally. The project, he confirmed would focus fully on the events of 1916 and every effort would be made to ensure that the various interest groups were able to commemorate the event in the most appropriate manner.

Cllr Murray said that he could not see why there would be opposition to the proposal and asked Members to reconsider as the proposal in question fully complimented the work of the 1916 Committee.

The Cathaoirleach at this juncture outlined his intention to put the matter to a vote.

Cllr Mc Guinness called again for clarification in relation to the wording of the motion.

Cllr Mc Gowan contended that it was similar to his own proposal which had been before the Council back in November 2014.

Cllr Mc Monagle said he was of the opinion that the above motion added additional substance to Cllr Mc Gowan's proposal in calling for the erection of a permanent memorial. He further advised that the motion as submitted by Cllr Murray referred to those who had fought and died in 1916.

Cllr Brogan called on Members to pay particular attention to the comments made by the Director of Community, Culture & Planning Development.

It had been made clear to date, he noted, that the focus was on the events of 1916 and nothing else. It was imperative, he added, that the Council was united in its approach and had confidence in the approach taken by the Community, Culture & Planning Directorate

A show of hands was then taken by the Meetings Administrator. This resulted in 8 voting for with 12 against.

The motion fell as a result.

C/250/15 CALL FOR THE VARIATION OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012/2018 TO EXTEND THE PLANNING BOUNDARY OF CARNDONAGH TO INCLUDE AREA SERVICED BY SEWERAGE SCHEMES AND THE EXISTING HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

On the proposal of Cllr McGuinness, seconded by, Cllr Mc Dermott, the following motion was adopted:-

"That the Council amend/vary the County Development Plan 2012/2018 to extend the Planning Boundary of Carndonagh to include the area serviced by Sewerage Schemes and the existing Housing Developments."

Members were informed that:-

"The preparation of a Local Area Plan for Tier 2 settlements (i.e. Ballybofey-Stranorlar, Ballyshannon, Bridgend, Carndonagh, Donegal Town, Dungloe and Killybegs) was committed to in the

County Development Plan. This work has now advanced to the initial stage in the process, with fieldwork and consultation also underway locally. Activity in this regard shall intensify in the third quarter this year and the issue of settlement boundaries, as referenced in the motion, will form an important consideration, so that appropriate lands within the sewer catchment areas and existing housing developments are contained within the town plan envelope and this will be agreed with Members locally for each town.”

Cllr Mc Guinness said that there was a serious anomaly in the County Development Plan and that it had been the intention of the Members that the existing town boundaries would remain as they were. He asked that the plan be adjusted to accommodate the areas serviced by Sewerage Schemes and existing housing developments. He was, he said, somewhat concerned that it could take up to two years to progress the matter through the medium of the Local Area Plans. On this occasion he called for an adjustment to the County Development Plan.

There were, he noted, difficulties with planning permissions in the area in question, and many of the lands in question were now useless. The Council it was acknowledged needed to find a mechanism to address such issues.

He alluded to specific arrangements for planning purposes only which had been put in place a number of years ago to accommodate development on the Bridgend to Buncrana Road. He asked that a similar type arrangement be looked into with regard to the lands in question.

Cllr Canning supporting the motion advised of the need for a workshop/meeting so that Members could be more fully informed as to how the Planning Section carried out its business

Mr Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture & Development Planning Director of Community, Culture & Planning Development said that if the matter was to be dealt with by way of a variation then it would be subject to the full rigours of the planning process, including public consultation. He noted that it would be possible to pursue same through the LAP route within a one year timeframe.

Cllr Mc Guinness said that he was willing to accept the latter on the basis that the issues raised would be addressed within the specified timeframe.

As there was no opposition the motion was passed.

C/251/15 ROADS MAINTENANCE TEAM ASSISTANCE FOR TIDY TOWN VOLUNTEERS

On proposal of Cllr Canning, seconded by, Cllr Mc Gowan, the following motion was adopted:-

"I would request that this Council directs its roads maintenance team throughout the County to allow one week in their calendar year to assist the countless volunteers that we have within our County that take part in our Tidy Towns competition and help them to ensure that their town is looking its best for the adjudicators when they arrive."

Members were informed that:-

"The spirit of this motion is fully understood and its merit is acknowledged. Voluntary Tidy Towns Committees and other Clean-Up Groups do remarkable work and take great pride in their locality. The Council assist different Groups from time to time in a range of ways.

It is suggested that this request is best considered in the context of preparation of the Council's Annual Budget and Municipal District Service Plans. The cost of diverting all of the Council's road maintenance teams for a full week is significant and it would not be appropriate to divert this amount of the roads budget as adopted by the Elected Council to fund non roads activities. In addition, it would not be appropriate or allowable to spend State Road Grants on such activities which would mean it would fully have to come from Own Resources which is under significant strain from general road maintenance activities.

The Council may if they wish make provision in the annual budget if the Council intend to proceed on such a course. It should also be considered that this work is likely to directly conflict with the time of the year when our road maintenance workers can be most effective and offer best value for money in improving the county's

roads, i.e. during better weather conditions and longer daylight hours.

In summary, the Council acknowledge the merit if the Tidy Towns work, believe a special budget should be provided rather than take it from the roads budget and that a programme of help be agreed each year at Municipal District level.”

Cllr Canning noted that valuable assistance was already being provided by the Environment Section in terms of the litter aspect. There was room however, he added, for additional assistance in terms of the heavier aspects of these clean ups including assistance with machinery, insurance issues and the use of materials such as weedkiller etc. The Council having the expertise, could, he advised, assist particularly in the run up to the Tidy Towns Event. He said, he was of the opinion that these groups were saving the Council money in the long-run and that it was time to give something back to the many volunteers who kept our towns and villages clean and tidy all year round.

Cllr Mc Gowan supported the motion and said that at least two days could be given over to helping with many of the heavier tasks involved.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr John Mc Laughlin, Director, Roads & Transportation informed Members that if works were diverted in this manner then other routine tasks would have to be put to one side. He said he was happy to pursue same if directed to do so. He alluded to the specific budgetary implications and said that if such works were to proceed then they needed to be task led.

Cllr Canning in conclusion advised of the need to have the matter included on the agenda at budget time.

C/252/15 CALL FOR 30% OF SOCIAL HOUSING UNDER THE SOCIAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2020 TO BE LOCATED IN RURAL AREAS

On the proposal of Cllr McDermott, seconded by, Cllr Mc Daid, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council would ensure that 30% of all social houses built or bought under the Social Housing Strategy 2020 will be located in rural areas and that this motion will be passed to all other Local Authorities."

Members were informed that:-

"Under the Social Housing Strategy, confirmation was received from the DECLG by way of letter dated 17th April, 2015 in relation delivery targets under a range of housing programmes in the period 2015 – 2017 as follows:

Current & Capital Targets 2015 - 2017 (Number of Housing Units) (Current and Capital)	Estimated cost of delivery
507	€34.1 million

The 507 units are to be provided through a number of mechanisms as follows:

Construction, Acquisition, Capital Assistance Scheme, Returning Vacant Stock to Rent	170
Social Housing Current Expenditure Prog (Social Housing Leasing Initiative)	244
Rental Accommodation Scheme	93
Total	507

Following this correspondence, a further letter from DECLG was received on 7th May, 2015, where approval in principle was confirmed in relation to three housing projects to proceed to Stage 1 of the four stage approval process for housing developments under the strategy. The schemes in question are as follows:

Project Name / Address	No. of Units	Estimated Cost
Ardara (Phase 3)	8	€1,300,000
Donegal Town	24	€3,650,000
Newtowncunningham	6	€850,000

Totals	38	€5,800,000
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In addition to the above schemes, the Council has submitted a number of other project appraisals in various parts of the County and these are with the department for consideration.

The Council has also submitted a number of projects under the Capital Assistance Scheme call for proposals which closed on 29th April, 2015 and these are currently being considered by the department.

The Council is also awaiting confirmation from the DECLG in relation to specific approvals in relation to a programme of acquisitions and also confirmation of funding in relation to the returning of Vacant Stock to productive use. It is understood that these will be confirmed in the coming weeks.

A number of the schemes submitted for project appraisal are located in rural towns and villages in the County. In addition, the Council does have regard to the acquisition of housing in rural towns and villages to meet specific needs on the housing waiting lists. It should be noted that the provision of housing in any particular area is driven primarily by the need within the location.”

Cllr Mc Dermott said that the location of at least 30% of all social housing in rural areas would help to assist small local communities who were currently struggling to survive. Persons completing applications at present had, he said, no option but to look for accommodation in the larger urban areas. Current statistics, he contended, were not reflective of the demand for housing in rural areas. He asked that the motion if agreed be forwarded to all local Authorities and the Oireachtas Members for consideration.

Cllr Mc Daid supporting the motion said that it reflective of the need to fight against rural decline.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Housing & Corporate acknowledged that the spirit of the motion was to provide support for rural areas. At this point in time, he said, there was no specific allocations for SI Housing. Housing, he advised, was dictated by where the need

was. He said that it would be possible to circulate same to all Local Authorities and the Oireachtas Members.

Concluding Cllr Mc Dermott advised of the need to re-examine the statistical data available as it did not reflect the obvious demand that existed in rural areas.

C/253/15 REDUCTION IN DEVELOPMENT CHARGES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The following motion submitted by Cllr O'Donnell, fell as there was no proposer or seconder.

"Calling on this Council to reduce development charges for first time home occupiers to €500 as the fee is just far too expensive at present for young people on top of the expense of building a house."

See C/266/15

EXTENSION OF INVITATION TO THE IDA

On the proposal of Cllr McDaid, seconded by, Cllr Brogan, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council invite the IDA at the earliest opportunity to give a presentation in relation to their work in this County at present."

Members were informed that:-

"The IDA is part of the Council's Economic Development Committee and in this context have contributed to the LECP process. The Council is also participating in the preparation of the Regional Action Plan for Jobs which is being led out by the IDA. In previous years, the Council has met in workshop format with relevant economic development agencies to discuss the county's economic development agenda. An invite to meet with the broader membership of the Council can be extended to the IDA if the Members resolve."

Cllr Mc Daid said it was evident that small strands of economic recovery were emerging and that Donegal given its remote geographical location needed to be in a position to avail of all available opportunities. Statistical evidence, he said, confirmed that

Donegal was lagging behind and had suffered over the years through emigration and consistently high rates of unemployment.

Supporting the motion Cllr Brogan called for all relevant stakeholders to be invited to attend.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Thus on the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr Mc Daid it was resolved to amend the motion as follows:-

“That this Council invite the IDA , Enterprise Ireland, Local Enterprise Officers, and the LYIT to come together and at the earliest opportunity to give a presentation in relation to their work in this County at present.”

This was duly agreed.

Mr Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture & Development Planning Director Community, Culture & Development Planning agreed to accommodate same in workshop format.

C/254/15

CALL FOR ALL EMPLOYERS TO GUARANTEE A MINIMUM WAGE TO ALL EMPLOYEES IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT WAGE INCREASE WON BY DUNNES STORES WORKERS

On the proposal of Cllr Quinn, seconded by, Cllr Mc Monagle, the following motion was adopted:-

"Donegal County Council welcomes the wage increase awarded to Dunne's Stores workers but we believe that it is now time for all employers to guarantee their employees a minimum and liveable number of hours of employment."

Cllr Quinn said that the motion was about fairness and the need for zero hour contracts to be stopped. It was important, he said, that employees had access to real wages and job security. This method of employment, he advised, was cruel to say the least and needed to be eliminated.

He asked that the motion be circulated to all Local Authorities and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that zero hour contracts were unfair and afforded the employee little or no work life balance. He called for the motion to be circulated to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and innovation.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Quinn thanked all who had supported the motion and said that considerable political goodwill was needed to bring this practice to an end.

C/255/15 CALL ON PRESENTATION OF QUARTERLY REPORTS TO THE ELECTED MEMBERS ON ALL CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ONGOING WORK PROGRAMMES BY EACH DIRECTORATE

On the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by, Cllr Blaney, the following motion was adopted:-

"I propose that this Council present quarterly reports to Elected Members on all capital projects and ongoing work programmes by each directorate."

Members were informed that:-

“The Council is happy to facilitate the presentation of quarterly reports to Elected Members on Capital Projects and ongoing work programmes in each Directorate. At present there are arrangements in place to facilitate detailed reporting of Capital Projects and Work Programmes at each monthly meeting of Municipal Districts.

Under the Local Government Reform agenda, provision exists for extensive reporting by the Executive to Council under the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report which appears as an agenda item for each meeting of Council. Arrangements will be made to examine the most appropriate template to capture the level of reporting required and to make the information available to Council in a regular and ongoing basis.”

Cllr Brogan welcomed the reply and said that he would be happy to receive any such updates by way of an email. It was important, he added, that Members were kept up to date in relation to all key projects.

Cllr Blaney also outlined his support.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Housing Corporate & Planning Control said that arrangements would be made to agree a template for same going forward.

C/256/15 CANCER CARE SERVICES IN DONEGAL

On the proposal of Cllr Shiels, seconded by Cllr Campbell, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council calls on the Minister for Health to (1) undertake to upgrade the existing cancer care services at Letterkenny General Hospital and commit to immediately invest the necessary resources to develop a centre of excellence for Cancer care at Letterkenny General Hospital with a view to ending for once and for all the intolerable cruelty being suffered by Donegal Patients in having to travel huge distances to Galway and Dublin for cancer care and (2) in the interim while Donegal patients may have to continue to travel long distances due to government inaction, to provide substantial financial assistance to the Good and New charity which provides a vital bus service for Donegal patients forced to travel long distances for cancer treatment but which receives no financial assistance whatsoever to assist it in providing such service to Donegal Patients."

Cllr Shiels noted that Donegal's geographical location was a contributory factor to the problem. It was extremely important, he said, that the Government, the HSE and the Minister for Health recognised the fact that the situation in Donegal could not continue as it was adversely affecting many of the most vulnerable in the community. The creation of a Centre of Excellence in Letterkenny would, he confirmed, prevent the diminution of much needed services.

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/257/15 DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORT OF THE IRISH DEAF SOCIETY'S CALL FOR IRISH SIGN LANGUAGE TO BE RECOGNISED AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

On the proposal of Cllr Blaney, seconded by Cllr Brogan , the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council supports the Irish Deaf Society's call for Irish Sign Language to be recognised as an Official Language"

Cllr Blaney stated that in the interest of equality it was imperative that Irish Sign Language was recognised as an official language. He noted that it was currently recognised as such in Northern Ireland.

Cllr Brogan said it was imperative that the Council supported this motion.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Blaney asked that it be forwarded to all Local Authorities for consideration.

C/258/15 REQUEST FOR THE COUNCIL TO DISCUSS THE LOSS TO BUSINESS IN DONEGAL DUE TO THE VALUE FOR MONEY POLICY

On the proposal of Cllr McGarvey, seconded by, Cllr Crossan, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council discuss the loss to business in Donegal due to the Value for Money Policy."

Members were informed that:-

“It is a requirement for every organisation that they obtain value for money when incurring expenditure. This is particularly the case for public sector organisations given that it is often taxpayer’s or ratepayer's money that is funding the particular activity.

While there has always been an onus on the Council to obtain value for money (and the Council has initiated and applied numerous actions in recent years in this regard) there has, however, since the advent of the recession and the Government response to it, been a more overt emphasis on getting - and being seen to get value for money. To that end, Government has introduced a range of initiatives, with a particular focus on reforming public procurement. The appointment of a Chief Procurement Officer and the establishment of the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) were amongst the headline actions taken. The role and actions

taken by this body to date have been reported on, on an on-going basis, to the Council's VFM committee.

Whilst the concept of national contracts and frameworks predates the launching of the OGP, there is now an increased focus on that approach. When a contract/framework is in place, it is government policy that public sector organisations should use them, unless they can demonstrate better value for money by another means – whilst remaining compliant with all public procurement rules. The series of framework agreements that the Local Government Operations Procurement Centre (LGOPC) puts in place under the LAQuotes banner in no way disadvantages relevant local businesses as it provides them with a structured means of competing for business on an ongoing basis through the mini-competition (Request for Tender – RFT) process, helping avoid either the perception or reality of a select few getting preferential treatment. Examples of key expenditure categories where such frameworks work well include Plant Hire and Road Making Materials.

National contracts for certain common goods and services do, undoubtedly, present challenges for small local suppliers. In areas such as Stationery, Paper, etc., the price differentials can be so great that it would be imprudent not to avail of them.

It is in situations where the value to be obtained through a national contract/framework is only marginally more beneficial where the question arises as to absolute value. Given that many such businesses are rate payers to the Council there is a rounded argument that could be propositioned, that such businesses might be deserving of some marginal premium on the best National price available, (and all other considerations being equal as to areas such as quality, deliverability etc.) given the symbiotic relationship and virtuous cycle that exists with the business being a recipient of services provided by the Council and the Council being the recipient of Rates that pays for those same services.

Paying a marginal extra cost to keep business local should not be an unreasonable proposal and would make sound economic sense (although defining at what point the margin would become unjustifiable would require appropriate and balanced consideration).

However, EU Treaty principles and Procurement Directives currently prohibit the Council from favouring local suppliers in public tenders.”

Cllr Mc Garvey noted that very often initiatives aimed at achieving value for money were less than successful and only served to impact adversely on the local community. Donegal, he added, had been severely impacted in terms of service delivery and economic development. He called on the Government to make Donegal a priority and identified the need for a special case to be made for the County at national level.

He asked that report be provided in relation to the impact of value for money policies as a whole.

Cllr Crossan advised of his support for the motion.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Head of Finance, Director of Emergency Services said that the Value for Money Committee could examine some of the specific issues raised by Cllr Mc Garvey.

C/259/15 ADJOURNMENT FOR LUNCH

On the proposal of Cllr Donaghey, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was resolved to adjourn the meeting until 2.00pm.

C/260/15 REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC TENDERING POLICIES OF THE COUNCIL

On the proposal of Cllr McMonagle, seconded by, Cllr Gallagher, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council commences a root and branch review of all our public tendering policies so as to ensure that local rate payer's are not unfairly disadvantaged."

Members were informed that:-

“In all its procurement activity, the Council has several over-riding obligations to meet, chief amongst them being:

- Obtaining best value for money
- Compliance with EU and National procurement regulations

- Abiding by Government policy
- Supporting local businesses is also a key objective, but it must be done within these other constraints.
- Regardless of contract type or size, certain EU Treaty principles must be observed:
 - Equal treatment and non-discrimination - potential suppliers must be treated equally
 - Transparency - contract procedures must be transparent and contract opportunities should generally be publicised
 - Proportionality - procurement procedures and decisions must be proportionate to the objective
 - Mutual recognition - giving equal validity to qualifications and standards from other Member States, where appropriate

Hence, the Council is not permitted advertise tenders in a manner that gives any geographic region, sector or individual supplier/contractor an advantage.

At the highest levels, EU Directives require that works contracts over €5,186,000 and goods/services contracts over €207,000 must be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

Below that, Government policy (as most recently stated in Circular 10/14 - Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement) requires that goods/services contracts over €25,000 and works contracts over €50,000 must be publicly advertised. Publication of a tender notice on the eTenders website is now the standard means of complying with these requirements.

Below those thresholds, the Council has the option of inviting quotations from a number of selected suppliers (usually 3/5), known to be competent and capable of meeting requirements. At this level, local suppliers, if available, are likely to feature strongly as they will have the advantage of being close at hand – and Council buyers are more likely to be familiar with them.

In terms of Government policy, there is an increasing emphasis on national contracts and frameworks (some of which may operate on a regional basis). All public bodies are expected to use such contracts/frameworks unless they can demonstrate better value for money via an alternative procurement route – whilst remaining

compliant with all public procurement regulations. This naturally places some restrictions on what can be purchased locally.

Circular 10/14 does encourage SMEs to compete for national contracts/frameworks, either alone or a part of a consortium.”

Cllr Mc Monagle said that the policies currently in place were disadvantageous to local ratepayers and that businesses here were losing out to companies nationally. Taking the cheapest route was, he added, not always the best policy and that inevitably it was the people of Donegal who lost out. He called on the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to look again at the various regulations.

Cllr Gallagher said it was obvious that small and medium enterprises had been precluded from the tendering process. EU legislation, she contended, did permit the inclusion of a social clause and this option was available to the Government here. Countries such as Belgium, France and Germany had, she confirmed, successfully implemented same.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Head of Finance, Director Emergency & Information Systems noted that the matter had been discussed on a number of occasions by the VFM Committee, but that there were obligation to comply with both EU and national procurement policies. He said that he would have no difficulty in conveying Member’s sentiments to the Minister.

C/261/15 DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL AND FAILTE IRELAND DISCUSSIONS ON THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY TO FURTHER ENHANCE ROUTES THROUGH HEDGE CUTTING AND CREATION OF LAYBYS FOR BUSES ETC EXTENSION OF THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY TO INCLUDE PREVIOUSLY OMITTED ROADS

Members agreed at this juncture to deal with Items 13 and 27 collectively as they covered topics of a similar nature.

On the proposal of Cllr Kennedy, seconded by, Cllr Bonner, the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council together with Failte Ireland discuss the Wild Atlantic Way routes to further fund hedge cutting at scenic areas to create and maintain lay-bys for bus routes to follow on from the WAW signage phase."

Members were informed that:-

"The Council in conjunction with Failte Ireland have invested significantly in developing and promoting the Wild Atlantic Way in marketing terms, provision of signage and infrastructural improvements at both the discovery points and signature points. The Council will engage further with Failte Ireland to discuss hedge cutting at scenic areas to provide lay-bys for buses."

Cllr Kennedy said that what was required was simple maintenance along the routes in question which would allow tourists to experience and visit many of the hidden gems that existed in the Donegal countryside. She said that service providers along the Wild Atlantic Way route needed specific answers as to what was happening with road maintenance.

On the proposal of Cllr Bonner, seconded by, Cllr , the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council investigate if the Wild Atlantic Way be extended to include some roads omitted from Wild Atlantic Way e.g. Light House Road Aranmore Island and Back Road at Kilcar."

Members were informed that:-

"The Council will consult with Failte Ireland in respect of this request. The Council will work with any community wishing to develop their area from a tourism viewpoint and we hope to engaged with Island communities in the coming months to develop this further."

Cllr Bonner said that there were a number of routes that warranted inclusion on the WAW route including the back road to Kilraine and the road from Termon past Glenveagh to Dunlewy. He advised that the area around Gartan also warranted consideration. It was imperative, he added, that any opportunity to extend the tourist

season was explored but that this was dependent on the relevant infrastructure being in place.

There was no opposition to the motions as submitted by Cllrs Kennedy and Bonner.

Cllr Kennedy thanked all who had supported the motion and outlined the necessity of sitting down with the various community groups concerned to iron out the issues involved.

C/262/15 PROVISION OF A TIME FRAME FOR THE FILLING OF THE POSITION OF PAEDIATRIC OUTREACH PALLIATIVE CARE NURSE IN LETTERKENNY GENERAL HOSPITAL

On the proposal of Cllr Gary Doherty, seconded by Cllr Quinn, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council calls on the Health Service Executive to provide a time-frame on when the position for the paediatric outreach palliative care nurse will be filled in Letterkenny General Hospital and also calls for an outline from the HSE on what plans are in place for respite and 'end of care' care for under 18's in the County."

Cllr Doherty advised that there were up to 140 children with complex medical needs in Donegal requiring paediatric palliative care at present. It was imperative, he said, that the paediatric outreach palliative care nurse position was filled as soon as possible.

Families, he contended, were being put under extreme stress as care of this nature was now only available outside of the County in Dublin. It was concerning, he said, that there had been no progress on the matter despite the fact that the parents group concerned had met with the Minister for Health back in February 2015. He called on the HSE to take immediate action.

Cllr Quinn also outlined his support.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Doherty thanked Members for their support and paid tribute to the parents group who had lobbied and campaigned consistently for improved paediatric care in Donegal.

C/263/15 CALL ON IRISH WATER BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL TO CARRYOUT A COUNTY WIDE PROGRAMME OF INFRASTRUCTURAL UPGRADES OF THE WATER NETWORK

On the proposal of Cllr Liam Doherty, seconded by, Cllr Mc Monagle, the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council, recognising the need for improving the overall quality of the local public water supply, calls on Irish Water to initiate a county- wide programme of infrastructural upgrades in order to replace all lead piping which at present represents an expansive proportion of the existing overall network; and that this Council, as far as is permissible, further commits to the facilitation of such remediation works by assisting the utility with the identifying of areas of particular concern whereby current inadequacies in the network pose a potential risk to residents."

Members were informed that:-

"The Council has entered into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Irish Water from January 2014 for a period of twelve years. Under the provisions in the SLA the Council is required to provide services to Irish Water in relation to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of water services in the County. This includes services relating to the status of existing infrastructure/assets which will inform decisions in relation to the prioritisation of capital investment and improvements works including pipe replacement works. The Council will request Irish Water to clarify its policy specifically in relation to the replacement of lead pipe networks and will forward the motion, if passed, to Irish Water."

Cllr Doherty asked that correspondence be forwarded to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government and Irish Water, highlighting the need to systematically remove lead piping from the water supply system.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that there was an onus on Local Authorities to carry out an audit in relation to this type of piping and make the results available to Irish Water, and for the matter to be addressed under the auspices of the Service Level Agreement.

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/264/15 ESTABLISHMENT BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL OF A COUNTY WIDE CRITERIA AND STANDARD IN RELATION TO HOUSING REPAIRS AND VERIFICATION

On the proposal of Cllr Crawford, seconded by, Cllr Mc Gowan , the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council establish a county-wide criteria and standard in relation to house repairs and verification of same when works are completed."

Members were informed that:-

The following sets out the existing criteria for the repair of vacant properties:-

- House structurally sound
- House empty and all rubbish removed
- Walls clean
- Chimney cleaned
- Any broken bathroom facilities replaced
- Kitchen units made useable
- Doors/handles/locks ok
- Windows secure and locks checked
- Electrics are in good working order and safe
- All range parts working, grates replaced etc.
- Boiler serviced
- Attic and cavity insulation provided
- Hot water tanks and pipes lagged
- Carbon monoxide alarm fitted
- Battery operated smoke alarms checked

Other than in cases where the existing paint is extremely poor, internal painting is generally not carried out as tenants primarily wish to choose their own colour. Tenant's preference is often that they be given assistance towards the cost of the paint and this is facilitated where deemed necessary.

Prior to any unit being re-let, it is inspected by a member of technical staff in the area to establish that it is brought to the appropriate standard.

Houses owned and provided by a local authority are a long term letting which can be for the lifetime of the household. As the

dwellings are unfurnished, depending on the circumstances of the proposed tenant, they can apply and in most cases do qualify for financial assistance through the Community Welfare Officer to assist them to furnish their new home.

The Council is happy to facilitate a review of this existing policy / criteria through the Strategic Policy Committee. This would be carried out in the understanding that any change to existing practice or criteria is most likely to have a budgetary implication”.

Cllr Crawford said that he disappointed with the reply and that there was presently inadequate expenditure on houses allocated for letting. He referred to a particular problem in the Lifford area. Alluding to the response, he said that budgetary implications should be a secondary issue where the works in question were not completed to a satisfactory standard.

He acknowledged that whilst the existing criteria may have been fine, there was still an obligation to ensure that the completed works were fit for the purposes intended. He said that this should not be taken as a reflection on the local housing staff.

Council tenants, he added, deserved to be treated fairly. He was disappointed that the Director of Service had failed to return a phone call to him in this matter to sort out the outstanding issues but was appreciative of the fact that the Housing Staff were working under considerable financial restraint. It was acknowledged that there was a need also to review Department Guidelines in relation to casual vacancies.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Housing Corporate and Planning Control said that he was somewhat taken aback and disappointed that Cllr Crawford found it necessary to make the remarks that he had made. It appears to be the case that the works referred to by Cllr Crawford had not been completed in accordance with the relevant criteria. Acknowledging that he may not have responded by phone in the case concerned, he confirmed however, that he had responded by email.

He agreed to review the matter and any other similar cases.

Cllr Mc Gowan supporting the motion acknowledged that issues had arisen also in relation to the repainting of Council Houses.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Crawford said that he was happy with the explanation provided in relation to the existing criteria, but that what was needed now was a review of the verification of the standard of work. It was important, he said, that this was done on a county-wide basis.

C/265/15 REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGES THROUGH THE CENTRE OF THE COUNTY

On the proposal of Cllr McGowan, seconded by Cllr Crawford, the following motion was adopted:-

"That a full design is carried out for replacement of bridges through the centre of the County in order to ease traffic congestion given the strategic importance of this route for the whole County."

Members were informed that:-

“Bridge Assessments have been undertaken on all regional road bridges through DOT/NRA grant over the last 3 years and are loaded into the new regional eirspan bridge system which identifies bridges that need urgent or immediate repair or further assessment (mainly repair). There are a number of key bridges in the center of the county (Donegal Town bridge, Logues bridge, Elactagh bridge etc that have had assessments undertaken by consultant engineers over the last few years. Elactagh has been constructed and Donegal Town is ready for construction funding while Logues has yet to be designed.

Under previous funding, Waterstreet Bridge in Donegal Town and Dreenan Bridge in Stranorlar have already been replaced. The bridges team continue to monitor and assess local road bridges as resources permit and any concerns regarding the need for additional assessment and design are raised for consideration and funding opportunities.

A consultant has been appointed to undertake a structural assessment of Logue's Bridge to establish the carrying/load capacity of same. Due to the specialist nature of bridge design, funding would have to be provided to enable the Roads & Housing Capital Directorate to proceed with the procurement of a consultant engineer to undertake the design of any replacement bridge or

structural works to increase the carrying/load capacity of the bridge.

Generally, it is expected that full bridge designs are funded by State Grants based on prioritisation of projects for construction. Occasionally, local Municipal Districts have prioritised local funds to complete bridge designs for their own area. While this could be done for a bridge such as Logue's through the Stranorlar Municipal District, it is difficult to fit such costs into the very limited funds available. It is recommended to await the outcome of the structural assessment for Logue's Bridge before deciding the next step.”

Cllr Mc Gowan welcomed the recent announcement in relation to funding for Cockhill Bridge and said that it was imperative that design works were progressed for bridges in the centre of the County. Logue’s Bridge, he said, warranted immediate attention.

Cllr Crawford supported the motion and acknowledged the fact that that the bridges concerned formed part of a major artery linking east Donegal, whilst also serving as key linkages to the rest of the County.

Mr John Mc Laughlin, Director Roads & Transportation noted that there were monetary implications and advised of the need to look at various options for funding the design works. It might be necessary, he added, to look at sharing funds on a county-wide basis. The matter, he said, needed to be looked at initially by the Stranorlar Municipal District after which it could come back to full Council for review.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Concluding the debate Cllr Mc Gowan called for a review of traffic management and the use of traffic lights in Stranorlar.

C/266/15

REDUCTION IN DEVELOPMENT CHARGES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Cllr O’ Donnell apologised for his late arrival and asked if his motion could be taken at this juncture.

The Cathaoirleach having obtained the consent of the Members agreed to proceed with Motion as submitted by Cllr O’ Donnell.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Donnell, seconded by, Cllr Crossan, the following motion was adopted:-

"Calling on this Council to reduce development charges for first time home occupiers to €500 as the fee is just far too expensive at present for young people on top of the expense of building a house."

Members were informed that:-

"The Review of the Development Contribution Scheme covering all aspects of the scheme is currently under consideration by the Economic, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee. This review is due for further discussion at the next SPC meeting."

Cllr O' Donnell asked that the figure in question be reviewed and amended to an amount more affordable to young people struggling to build their own homes.

Cllr Crossan said such a move would be beneficial also to the Council as it would perhaps ease the demand for social housing.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Michael Heaney, Director Community, Culture & Development Planning Director Community, Culture and Economic Development advised that the matter would be discussed further at the next Economic Enterprise and Planning SPC Meeting.

C/267/15 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:-

- Rita Chapman, Bundoran Library, on the death of her father, Barney Mc Cabe.
- Anthony O' Hanlon , Roads Section , Letterkenny/Milford, on the death of his mother, Julia O' Hanlon
- Mary Connolly, Finance, on the death of her brother, Patsy Connolly.
- Pauline Smyth, Finance, on the death of her sister, Claudine Smyth.
- Caroline Toland, formerly Roads, on the death of her mother, Sarah Toland.

DCC Motions noted by other Local Authorities

Mullingar Municipal District – Westmeath County Council noted the following motions agreed by Donegal County Council:-

Cllr Quinn – January 2015 Meeting

"That the Elected of Donegal County Council unequivocally support the I.N.M.O. in its campaign to have the crisis in all A and E Hospital Departments resolved."

Cllr Mc Daid - January 2015 Meeting

That this Council discusses the urgent need for a Rural Affairs Committee in Donegal to include, farming, essential services and communications, as the lack of an official voice politically on rural affairs has added to the lack of debate and is also leading to population decline."

Date for Workshop –Water Fluoridation

It was unanimously agreed to hold a workshop in relation to water fluoridation in the County House, Lifford on Monday 22nd June, 2015 at 11.00am in the County House, Lifford.

Magill Summer School

The Cathaoirleach informed Members that correspondence had been received from Mr Joe Mulholland, Director Patrick MacGill Summer School regarding the 35th Annual MacGill Summer School which was due to be held on the 19th to the 24th July, 2015. The theme, he noted was 2016- Ireland at the Crossroads.

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 Cllr Crossan, seconded by, Cllr A Doherty, it was resolved to authorise any member, if he/she so wished, to attend the following event, 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

Annual MacGill Summer School to be held on the 19th to 24th July, 2015 in Glenties, Co Donegal.

AILG Training

A copy of the correspondence received from the Local Government Oversight and Governance Section regarding AILG Training for Elected Members in 2015 was distributed to Members. This related to enhanced “in service training” for Elected Members and the approval for attendance at one in service training event held on a weekend outside of the Member’s region from February to end of June 2015 and to one such event from 1st July to the 31st December, 2015.

C/268/15

CHIEF EXECUTIVES MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda and report distributed during the meeting. The received updates in relation to the following:-

- Social Housing Strategy 2020
- Community Clean Ups/Beaches
- Segregation of Household Food Waste
- Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021
- Rural Water Programme: Block Grant Allocation 2015
- Donegal Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)
- Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) – Donegal.
- LEADER/Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 – County Donegal
- Donegal Diaspora
- Launch of Creative Strategy
- Donegal County Development Board Peace & Reconciliation
- Partnership - PEACE IV
- Regional Cultural Centre Programme
- Donegal County Museum - Bell & Shrine of St Conall Cael
- 27th Annual Earagail Arts Festival
- Launch of Donegal Age Friendly Strategy
- Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge
- Malin Head Development
- Fanad Lighthouse
- Donegal Craft Village

- Greencastle Pontoon Project
- Playgrounds
- Cool Route' Cruising Oceans on Latitudes above 510 North
- NEA 3 Project
- Tides of Time Project
- EU Programmes/Projects Update – Donegal County Council's EU Unit
- Interreg V - Donegal County Council
- Notification of appointment of Senior Counsel to prepare a report in relation to Planning Matters in Donegal County Council which were the subject of Judicial Review (2012/04288)
- Approval of the IMPROVE Project under the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (2014 – 2020)
- Donegal County Council – Derry City & Strabane Council Collaboration Arrangements 2015 and Beyond
- The N15 Blackburn Bridge Phase 1 Scheme
- The N56 Boyoughter to Kilkenny Schem
- Walking & Trails – Greenway Development
- Update on preparation of Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)
- LEADER/Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020
- Donegal Diaspora's Global Skills Locator
- Mapping Public Participation Network and Community Facilities – Donegal PPN
- Cultural Tourism Product & Creative Economy on the Wild Atlantic Way
- Killybegs Hub - Exploring the Potential for Collaboration with North America (e.g. New Bedford, Gloucester, and UMass Dartmouth)

- IPB Pride of Place Competition 2015
- Junior Achievement Programme 2015
- The 2015 Tip O’Neill Diaspora Award
- Downings Fisheries Development Initiative (DFDI)

The following questions were noted.

C/269/15 RECRUITMENT OF OUTDOOR STAFF ON OUR OFF SHORE ISLANDS

The following question was submitted by Cllr O’Fearraigh:-

"Have the Council any plans to employ council staff on off shore islands in the future, when the recruitment embargo has dissolved, for the maintenance of roads, housing and the environment?"

Cllr O’Fearraigh was informed that:-

“The Council is currently examining outdoor staffing levels in the context of workforce planning. The exercise is being carried out with a view to determining the most appropriate staffing numbers, how they should be structured and organised, where they should be located and so forth. Any future recruitment therefore will be considered in the context of the final workforce plan.”

C/270/15 KNOCK AIRPORT

The following question was submitted by Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig:-

"Le fiafraí de Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall cén teagmháil a bhí ag an Chomhairle le hAerfort Chnoc Mhuire agus an moladh gur chóir do na húdaráis áitiúla freagracht a ghlacadh i dtaca le fiacha an aerfoirt, agus ar thug Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall aon tacaíocht airgid don aerfort san am atá thart, agus má thug, cá mhéad a bhí i gceist?"

"To ask Donegal County Council what contacts has the Council had with Knock Airport and the proposal that Local Authorities should take on the debt of the airport and whether Donegal County Council has supported the airport financially in the past and if so by how much?"

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig was informed that:-

“Tá iarratas faighte ag Comhairle Chontae Dhún na nGall maidir le páirt a ghlacadh, í gcomhar le sé udaras áitiúil eile, í sceim chun infheistíocht a dheanamh in Aerfort Chnoc Mhuire. Tá moladh maidir le seo ós chomhar an Chomhairle inniu.

A submission has been received by Donegal County Council in relation to their joining with six other local authorities in a scheme to invest in Knock Airport. A proposal in relation to this submission is before Council today.”

C/271/15 MICA/DEFECTIVE BLOCKS

The following question was submitted by Cllr Albert Doherty:-

Mica Defective Blocks

"What Council Housing Stock has been tested to date and what are the Council findings?"

Cllr Doherty was informed that:-

“Arising from suspected cases of occurrence of muscovite mica, the Council appointed consultants to carry out specific tests on a limited number of dwellings. These tests included compressive strength tests, mineralogical composition by x-ray diffraction analysis, and wetting and drying resistance tests. Given the complexities of the testing and in order to determine a definitive position including any remedial actions which may be deemed necessary, this has taken somewhat longer than had originally been envisaged.

Definitive findings and reports on the issue are expected from the consultants within 2 weeks, following which the situation will be further assessed with a view to determining an appropriate response to any suspected cases going forward.

It is intended that a report on the findings and any issues emerging from them will then be brought to the first available meeting of Council.”

C/272/15 LEGAL STATUS OF THE SECTION 140 MOVED BY CLLR JACK MURRAY DIRECTING THE COUNCIL NOT TO PASS TENANTS INFORMATION TO IRISH WATER

The following question was submitted by Cllr Murray:-

"Can the Council outline the advice it was given from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government with regard to the legality of the Section 140 I moved directing the Council not to pass tenants information to Irish Water?"

Cllr Murray was informed that:-

“In considering the Section 140 motion submitted for the November, 2014 meeting of Donegal Co. Council, the Council received advice / communications from a number of sources including the Water Services Transition Office (established by Local Authorities to represent the Sector in the transition period), the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government and from the Council's Law Agent. In terms of considering the legality of the Section 140 Motion, the Council had regard to the advice from our Law Agent which is summarised below:

(i) If Irish Water are legally entitled to request the particular information from the Council, and
(ii) the request is properly made,
the Council is then legally obliged to provide such information and a Section 140 resolution directing the Chief Executive not to comply would be void pursuant to Section 140 (10) (d) which states as follows:

(d) so as to prevent the performance of any function of a Local Authority which the Authority or the Chief Executive is required by law or by Order of a court to perform,....., and any resolution claiming to be passed under this section which contravenes this sub-section is void.”

C/273/15 EFFECTS OF MICA ON COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTIES

The following question was submitted by Cllr McDermott:-

"To ask the Council have any reports been done on the possible effects of mica on council owned properties?"

Cllr McDermott was informed that:-

“Arising from suspected cases of occurrence of muscovite mica, the Council appointed consultants to carry out specific tests on a limited number of dwellings. These tests included compressive

strength tests, mineralogical composition by x-ray diffraction analysis, and wetting and drying resistance tests. Given the complexities of the testing and in order to determine a definitive position including any remedial actions which may be deemed necessary, this has taken somewhat longer than had originally been envisaged.

Definitive findings and reports on the issue are expected from the consultants within 2 weeks, following which the situation will be further assessed with a view to determining an appropriate response to any suspected cases going forward.

It is intended that a report on the findings and any issues emerging from them will then be brought to the first available meeting of Council.”

C/274/15 PURCHASE OF HOUSES IN THE COUNTY

The following question was submitted by Cllr McGuinness:-

“When do the Council intend to purchase houses in the County?”

Cllr McGuinness was informed that:-

“The Council has in the past taken the opportunity to acquire a number of units to meet the special needs of clients where the traditional form of supports would not meet their needs or where there was a lack of accommodation. Towards the latter part of 2014, fourteen such units were acquired.

The Social Housing Strategy as published in November 2014 sets out an ambitious delivery programme to deal comprehensively with the housing list and to reform key elements of social housing policy. The Strategy proposes a range of mechanisms to meet the housing need.

It is this Councils belief that any Programme should contain an element of acquisitions to not only maximise the output under the Programme but also take advantage of value for money proposals which can often be achieved and to meet special needs of clients where there is a lack of accommodation.

Towards this end, it is the Councils intention that the Programme will contain provision for the acquisition of a number of units in each Municipal District on an annual basis and work has already commenced in the context of seeking to identify and acquire a

number of units. The Council is awaiting confirmation from the DECLG in relation to the budget available in the current year to fund this programme of acquisitions.”

C/275/15 COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS ON AIRES DE SERVICE FOR MOTOR HOMES IN CARNDONAGH

The following question was submitted by Cllr Albert Doherty:-

"When will work to establish Aires de Service points for Motor Homes in Carndonagh commence?"

Cllr Doherty was informed that:-

“An order has been placed for the necessary equipment and these Aires de Service facilities will be installed once delivery of the required equipment has been made to us over the coming weeks.”

C/276/15 QUESTION ON TRAFFIC WARDENS IN THE COUNTY PAY DIFFERENCES

The following question was submitted by Cllr Murray:-

"Is the Council aware of any difference in pay among traffic wardens employed by the Council and those working in the County for a private company under a Council contract?"

Cllr Murray was informed that:-

“The Council would not have access to details of wages paid to employees of private companies / contractors. This would be solely a matter for the companies themselves, in line with national employment requirements.”

C/277/15 FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES IN THE COUNTY

The following question was submitted by Cllr Canning:-

"Can this Council confirm what water supplies are receiving fluoridisation in this County?"

Cllr Canning was informed that:-

“The clinics which are provided by Irish Water for the elected members afford members the opportunity to raise issues such as

this directly with Irish Water representatives. The clinics are arranged to coincide with the days when the Council meets in Lifford. Alternatively the information can be requested through the dedicated contact arrangements for elected representatives by emailing localrepsupport@water.ie. The Council will also refer the request for this information to Irish Water for follow up.”

C/278/15 TREATMENT OF WATER SUPPLY

The following question was submitted by Cllr Canning:-

"Can this Council confirm if there is any other treatment being put into the water?"

Cllr Canning was informed that:-

“The Council will refer this request to Irish Water for follow up. The clinics which are provided by Irish Water in Lifford on the day of the Council meeting provide the members with the opportunity to raise issues directly with representatives of Irish Water. Alternatively the information can be requested through the dedicated contact arrangements for elected representatives by emailing localrepsupport@water.ie.”

C/279/15 COUNCIL ACCESS TO AVAILABLE GRANTS FOR REMEDIAL WORKS FOR PIERS IN THE COUNTY

The following question was submitted by Cllr McDermott:-

"To ask the Council have they access to any form of grants for damage to piers around the coast as a lot of piers need remedial works as soon as possible?"

Cllr McDermott was informed that:-

“The Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme 2015 has been the only funding avenue available to the Marine Section of Donegal Co. Council to date this year outside of its very limited Own Resources. From a list of 23 projects for which funding was sought this year only 3 projects were approved for funding. Of the 3 projects where funding has been approved, 2 of these are for incomplete schemes from 2014 and one is for the provision of new Aids to Navigation to upgrade safety of navigation. There are no other sources of funding available to repair areas damaged by storm and areas continuing to deteriorate.

Donegal Co. Council repaired the access to Leenan Pier from their own resources and despite an application for funding being submitted no funding was received here.

It is to be acknowledged that during the exceptional storms in early 2014, the Department did provide a range of funds to deal with certain repairs to storm damage.”

C/280/15

PROVISION OF PUBLIC LIGHTING IN THE COUNTY

The following question was submitted by Cllr McGuinness:-

What is the current position regarding the provision of Public Lighting in the County?"

Cllr McGuinness was informed that:-

“The only specific budget for Public Lighting in Budget 2015 is a provision of over €2million for maintenance of the existing lighting stock including the electricity which now forms a major part of the overall cost. There is no provision for a new lighting programme or Members Lights as there was some years ago.

However, some Members have lights from previous budgets still working through a process to get installed. Separately, based on a combination of budget accruals, we have made available €40,000 per Municipal District for upgrading some of the poorest lights in groups or supplying a limited number of infill lights. This is currently working through the Municipal District process.

It is possible to erect new public lights from normal discretionary roads maintenance monies in critical locations, however, this would then reduce much stretched roads monies for maintenance and would need agreement of all Municipal Members for each case.”

C/281/15

ROAD GRITTING PLAN

The following question was submitted by Cllr O’Donnell:-

“Why did we waste time with a workshop on the road gritting plan when nothing has being changed to the routes and nothing will?

Cllr O’Donnell was informed that:-

“The workshop was held in response to an Elected Member making a representations in relation to extending gritting routes on the Winter Service Plan. The purpose of the workshop was to allow council officials the opportunity to outline the current winter service arrangements/ constraints and to seek the views of all Elected Members as to what amendments were being requested and what resources the Council were being asked to deploy on the winter service. The workshop was very helpful in informing of Elected Members concerns and a very useful dialogue took place on the day. As agreed at the workshop Council engineers will consider the issues raised and will revert to the Elected Members at Municipal District level over the summer months. It is proposed that any changes agreed will be incorporated into the Winter Service Plan for the forthcoming 2015/2016 season. The primary constraints on machinery and lorries as agreed will be taken into consideration.”

C/282/15 FUTURE OF THE A5 PROJECT

The following question was submitted by Cllr McGarvey:-

"Is the A5 no longer a consideration and if when?"

Cllr McGarvey was informed that:-

“The construction of the A5 Route from Derry to Aughnacloy continues to be a key objective of Donegal County Council and indeed all the surrounding Councils. In addition the complete Dublin to Derry/Donegal route is a key access route to the entire northwest. While the A5 is outside Donegal's functional area, the Council participates often in lobby and representative groups. The Irish Government have recently re-confirmed its committment to co-funding the A5 project. It is understood that the A5 Project is currently going through the statutory processes in Northern Ireland and that those may take up to a year to fully complete. Therafter, land purchase and constuction could follow. This is a vital road link to Donegal and it is expected that the spur to Letterkenny from Strabane/Lifford would be addressed in conjunction with the overall road network.”

C/283/15 PROGRESS BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL ON OBTAINING A €1,000,000 EURO FOR A TOURISM PROJECT

The following question was submitted by Cllr Quinn:-

"What progress has been made by Donegal County Council regarding its commitment to acquire an additional 1,000,000.00 Euro for a tourism project, as per the Budget negotiations?"

Cllr Quinn was informed that:-

“Donegal County Council is continuing to advance development in relation to a range of projects in the context of its tourism promotional and developmental work. At present work is being completed or has recently been completed on capital projects led by Donegal County Council (or in the case of Fanad partnered by DCC):

Sliabh Liag – Capital investment of €4,187,000 with allocation of €2,353,500 from Failte Ireland and €1,355,500 from SEUPB Interreg VA Programme and the balance by the Council.

Malin Head – Phase I completed with investment of €280,000 with Interreg VA contribution (through Loughs Agency) of €240,000.

Fanad Head Lighthouse – Phase I of project now being completed with investment of €700,000 through SEUPB Interreg VA Programme.

Wild Atlantic Way – Phase I of Signage and Remediation works completed by Donegal County Council with investment of €740,000 provided by Failte Ireland.

Donegal Craft Village – Upgrading works to the value of €255,000 carried out by Donegal County Council.

Inch Levels – Social phase of development completed with investment of €730,000.

Donegal County Council is now working on a number of proposals for further capital investment in flagship tourism products in the county. These include:

Malin Head – Submission with Failte Ireland for Phase II of development of Malin Head as a flagship tourism project on the Wild Atlantic Way. This phase will cover essential works and will involve an investment of €450,000.

Wild Atlantic Way – Next phase of signage/interpretative signs along the Wild Atlantic Way in Donegal to be implemented under direction of DCC. Investment of €100,000 in this phase funded by Failte Ireland.

Fanad Head Lighthouse – Next phase of capital investment in Fanad Head Lighthouse to be implemented in association with Irish Lights, Failte Ireland and Fanad Community. Members will be updated on details of this.

Greenways – Detailed planning for development of Donegal Greenway based on disused railway lines and other appropriate routes is underway. Submissions to be made to appropriate funds – Interreg, Rural Development Programme, etc. Members will be updated on detail of this.”

C/284/15 RATE REDUCTION FOR STAND ALONE BUSINESSES IN THE COUNTY

The following question was submitted by Cllr O’Donnell:-

“Is it possible for this Council to give some type of rate deduction to business who are stand alone in the county and not availing of public services e.g. sewer paths streetlights proper mains water etc?”

Cllr O’Donnell was informed that:-

“Commercial rates are payable on commercial properties, industrial properties and other non-domestic properties which have been described by the Commissioner of Valuations as list-rateable in the valuation lists. The Valuation Office determines the rateable valuation of the property and this is multiplied by the Council’s Annual Rate of Valuation to give the annual amount payable by the owner/occupier of a rateable property.

Commercial rate charges are a local commercial property tax, the income from which is used to part-fund the annual revenue expenditure (day-to-day expenditure) of the Local Authority. The payment of commercial rates does not constitute payment in respect of any specific service provided to any specific ratepayer but rather commercial rates income contributes to the delivery of Local Authority services across all service headings. There is therefore is no mechanism for a commercial property which is not

served by public footpaths, lighting, etc to avail of any discount or reduction on their annual rates bill for this reason.

However, in 2015 the Council introduced the Small Business Grant Scheme which gives a grant of 5% per annum, subject to a maximum amount of €250 per annum, against an occupier's 2015 rate demand if their account is cleared in full by the end of 2015. Early indications are that there will be a good uptake on the scheme and it is expected that this will be of benefit to the rate payers in the County, particularly those that are small and medium sized enterprises."

C/285/15 ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE THE ADOPTION OF A MOTION IN MARCH CALLING FOR A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH DERRY AND STRABANE COUNCIL

The following question was submitted by Cllr Quinn:-

"What actions have been initiated by Donegal County Council following the adoption of a Motion at our March meeting seeking a Memorandum of Understanding with Derry and Strabane Council?"

Cllr Quinn was informed that:-

"The Chief Executive will be bringing a detailed report to the meeting."

C/286/15 FUTURE PLANS FOR THE COURT HOUSE IN LETTERKENNY

The following question was submitted by Cllr Brogan:-

"Will this Council engage with the Court Service to discuss the future plans for the Court House in Letterkenny when the new one is built?"

Cllr Brogan was informed that:-

"The Council will arrange to contact the Courts Service to ascertain what options are being considered for the future use of the existing Court House in Letterkenny, when the proposed new Court House has been provided."

C/287/15 OUTLINE OF THE TENDERS AWARDED IN THE LAST TEN YEARS BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL IN EXCESS OF €10,000

The following question was submitted by Cllr Shiels:-

"How many contracts in excess of €10,000 have been awarded by Donegal County Council to tenderers in the last 10 years where the tender was not awarded to the tenderer submitting the lowest price and in relation to each such contract provide details of (1) the project involved (2) the price submitted by the lowest tenderer (3) the price submitted by the tenderer to whom the contract was awarded (4) the identity of the party to whom the tender was awarded and (5) what final monies were then actually paid to the party to whom the contract was actually awarded?"

Cllr Shiels was informed that:-

"The Council acknowledges the question submitted and the engagement with the Councillor in relation to the scope and range of the question. Notwithstanding the threshold of 10,000 that has been introduced, it is estimated that to respond in detail to the question as submitted will require the application of a significant resource over a considerable period of time. This could equate to two members of staff for a 3 month period. As this work was not planned, this would mean the recruitment of additional resources (requires sanction) or the standing down of some planned work programmes. In light of the above, it is not proposed to assign this resource at this time in terms of the detailed nature of the question submitted.

Nevertheless, the Council is happy to engage with the Councillor, if it is possible to further limit the scope of the question or indeed to follow up or reply to some specific areas of concern"

C/288/15 TIMEFRAME FOR THE HOLDING OF PUBLIC WORKSHOPS IN EACH ELECTORAL AREA TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The following question was submitted by Cllr Brogan:-

"When will this Council hold its public workshops in each Electoral Area Office to discuss economic development and employment opportunities for Donegal as agreed by this Council?"

Cllr Brogan was informed that:-

“The Council will organise facilitated workshops with the relevant agencies in the coming months to discuss economic development.”

C/289/15 WALKING MAP FOR ALL DONEGAL

The following question was submitted by Cllr McGarvey:-

"When will a walking map be made available for all of Donegal with places visited and why?"

Cllr McGarvey was informed that:-

“The recently launched Donegal Tourism brochure includes 25 walking trails throughout the County. The Council is currently undertaking a body of work in relation to existing walks and also to further develop the walking infrastructure in the County. Further detailed mapping will form a part of this work.”

C/290/15 QUERY ON HOW MANY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT BONDS CALLED IN BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

The following question was submitted by Cllr Shiels:-

"How many development bonds required to be put in place by planning permissions have been called in by Donegal County Council in the last 5 years and how much money has actually been received by the Council in respect of such bonds?"

Cllr Shiels was informed that:-

“Arrangements are being made to collate the requested information and the full position will be made available as soon as is possible.”

C/291/15 PROGRESSION OF THE “GREENWAY” ALONG THE OLD RAILWAY TRACK IN THE FINN VALLEY

The following question was submitted by Cllr Gary Doherty:-

“Will this Council undertake to actively consult with all stakeholders and funding bodies to progress the proposed 'Greenway' running along the old railway track in the Finn Valley, from Strabane through Barnesmore Gap.”

Cllr Doherty was informed that:-

“The development of the full potential of the Greenway in Donegal is a key priority area of work for Donegal County Council. Towards this end, we are working with community groups and with other stakeholders to advance work in this sector in various parts of the county. As part of this the Council is currently part of a study being undertaken by the NWRCBG with regard to the cross-border potential for a Greenway. The Council is anxious that a full range of walking routes is within the remit of the study including the old railway tracks such as Barnesmore. It is intended to utilise all available resources and funds to advance development of walking and trails in all parts of the county over the next no. of years.”

C/292/15 REPORT ON THE INTER-AGENCY LOCAL AREA TEAMS

The following question was submitted by Cllr McGowan:-

"Please can a report be given on the Inter-Agency Local Area Teams which were established over ten years ago across the County, including the following:-

-What is the outcome of this initiative and will there be any follow up to help support community groups across the County especially in light of the cut backs to Family Resource Centres and Community Development Projects? and

-The progress if any in developing Day Care Centres across the County in consultation with the HSE as per my motion submitted to the May 2013 Council Meeting?"

Cllr McGowan was informed that:-

“The Local Area Teams set up as pilot projects under the County Development Board are now no longer in operation, the last LAT to complete operations was Castlefinn and one of its last actions was a the completion of an needs analysis for the area.

Castlefinn LAT was also the longest running LAT, this was achieved through a tri partite funding agreement between HSE as lead partner and Donegal County Council and Castlefinn CPI , which ensured provision of funding to cover the costs for employment of a Community project worker to support the Project Team and implement the initiatives.

This resulted in good cooperation and partnership between Community and local agencies on a number of fronts with regard

to social services and welfare provision, along with provision of youth services and additional training opportunities.

The Local Needs Analysis clearly identifies the current needs within the community and therefore as funding comes online, the community groups or existing agencies can be encouraged to support applications to be made to address the needs now identified within the Castlefinn area

The Council are developing objectives relating to community support and community facilities resulting from the consultation that has already taken place through the preparation of the Community Element of the LECP. The LECP will also highlight actions which responsible agencies such as the HSE will implement over the coming years. Consultation has taken place with the SIM Co-ordination Group in this regard with the Draft LECP being finalised in the coming weeks.”

C/293/15 TRAINING OF STAFF TO RESPOND TO THE REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE ELECTED MEMBERS

The following question was submitted by Cllr Gary Doherty:-

"Will this Council undertake to train and inform staff of the need to respond to representations and queries submitted by Elected Members, as this is a vital facet of the democratic process?"

Cllr Doherty was informed that:-

“It is Council policy to respond in a timely and efficient manner to representations and queries submitted by Elected Members. It is accepted that this is a significant part of the role played by Elected Members on behalf of their constituents. The Council executive is committed to ensuring that Elected Members enjoy a satisfactory level of service in this regard. Should examples be brought forward, where the level of service is less than what could be considered as being satisfactory, the Executive is committed to dealing with such cases and ensuring that the level of service is improved. Arrangements will be made to remind all employees of the Council's policy in this matter.”

C/294/15 PROGRESS ON THE OPENING OF A CITIZEN INFORMATION IN EAST DONEGAL

The following question was submitted by Cllr McGowan:-

"In relation to having a proper Citizens Information service across the County which is available in all the large population centres has there been any progress to date with having a CI Office opened in East Donegal (C/151/11 26th April 2011) and can a report be brought to the next Council meeting outlining the work of the CI service across the County and include the responses as to why the service is not equally accessible to the majority of Donegal Citizens because of locations, as an opportunity also exists to attract additional MABS services according to recent Government announcements?"

Cllr McGowan was informed that:-

"The provision of Citizens Information Services in Donegal is the responsibility of County Donegal Citizens Information Services Limited and is not under the control of Donegal Co. Council. The request to have a report on Citizens Information Services in the County will be brought to the attention of the Board of the Company and any response received will be provided in due course."

C/295/15 FEEDING OF THE MAINS WATER SUPPLY THROUGH LEAD PIPING

The following question was submitted by Cllr Liam Doherty:-

"How many old housing estates and towns in Donegal are getting their mains water supply fed through lead piping?"

Cllr Doherty was informed that:-

"The Council will refer this request to Irish Water for follow up. The clinics which are provided by Irish Water for elected members provide members with the opportunity to raise issues directly with representatives of Irish Water. Alternatively information can be requested by emailing the dedicated contact for elected representatives -localrepsupport@water.ie."

C/296/15 MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES

The following motions from other Councils were noted:-

THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CARRICKMACROSS –
CASTLEBLANEY

“That this Council calls on the Minister for Transport, Paschal Donohue TD, and our local Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Heather Humphreys, TD to ensure that decisions regarding the removal of school bus services are not taken without a four week period of prior consultation with the Local Authority, local schools and Parents Associations. The four week consultation period will enable the Local Authority to undertake necessary road repairs considering we have now received our lowest amount of funding in the last twelve years.”

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

“At present Parking Fines issued by the Council’s traffic wardens and subsequently not paid and which go to court and upheld the money accruing from those is retained by the state. Offaly County Council calls for a change to allow councils to benefit from this revenue as all the work and expense is borne by the Council.”

BALLINA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

“That Ballina Municipal District calls on the Minister for the Environment to take the necessary steps to restore Town Councils or alternatively to give the new Municipal District Councils the power to strike a rate and spend the money raised in each Municipal District in that district, that this Notice of Motion is circulated to all Councils for their support.”

LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL

“That, Limerick City and County Council call on the Ministers for Agriculture and Finance to reinstate the Early Retirement Scheme and Installation Grants for our Farming Communities.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.